CHAPTER FOUR

'LIBRARY LANGUAGE' - CONNOTATION

"Our students who are undergoing training at schools which will admit them either to a university or to a vocation must acquire sufficient mastery of English to give them access to the treasures of knowledge, and in the universities no student should be allowed to take a degree who does not acquire the ability to read with facility and understanding works of English authors."

—Report of the University Education Commission (1948-49)

It has been noted in Chapter Two that, after independence, a shift in the emphasis of teaching English came about in India, and reading came to be regarded as the most useful of the four (English) language skills. The shift and rationale of it are, one feels, precisely spelt out when it is said that English should be taught as a 'library language'. There is no need here to dig out who first used this term; but it is worth noting that the Education Commission (1964-56) was instrumental in making the term popular among the educated.

Though the term neatly underlines the idea basic to the teaching of English in the changed circumstances, the finer implications of the concept, have not yet been spelt out. It was necessary for this investigation to spell out these implications at the outset so as to be able to evolve a criterion, to be used later on, for the evaluation of the present courses and for recommendations of new courses relevant to the professed objective.
There was no need to start from scratch. The role written English is capable of playing in the sphere of learning, and students' curricular needs their mother tongue is incapable of meeting with, at least today, are only too evident. In the light of these, the investigator assumed certain implications of the term 'English as a library language'. He, however, thought it advisable to verify his assumptions with educationists, teachers of English, pedagogicians and the elite in order to offset their inevitable subjectivity and give them a touch of objectivity. The formal tools used for the purpose were the questionnaire and the interview. Besides, the correspondence this investigator had with a few knowledgeable people in the field, was an invaluable additional source of knowledge on related matters.

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

For a brief and yet extensive preliminary opinion-survey, the questionnaire was considered a handy tool. It was designed to verify the investigator's assumptions relating to the following:

(a) the area of reading implied by the term 'library language'

(b) the kind of vocabulary that should help one increase the competence to comprehend the required material
(c) the medium suitable for the teaching of the desired vocabulary

(d) the abilities other than reading implied by the concept of teaching English as a library language

Incidentally, the questionnaire sought further suggestions related to the aspects it touched as also information regarding special course designs, if any, followed in India or abroad with the objective of teaching English as a library language.

The Design:

The questionnaire (Appendix B-1) comprises five questions. The first four questions, all close-end with adequate space for suggestions, cover the assumptions mentioned in items (a), (b), (c) and (d) above. The fifth, an open-end question, is meant for the information regarding special course designs, if any, followed anywhere.

Question 1: Question One states the idea basic to the concept of teaching English as a library language— that it implies reading comprehension. The query that it presents is on the specific area of reading. Should it be of general or of special interest? No distinction need be drawn if the objective of teaching English were to fully develop all language skills. When the
objective is to have a maximum gain in a limited sphere through minimum expenditure of time and efforts, the language course has to be selective. Reading skill, it was the assumption of the investigator, should be attacked from the direct front of one's specialization.

That is, the question offers two responses. A student who desires to use English as a library language should be able to comprehend (i) the literature of his specialization or (ii) the literature of general interest. The respondent can choose either or both of these responses.

Question 2: Reading is the principal skill involved in the teaching of English as a library language. There are a number of offshoots of this skill which are immensely useful to the student desirous of using English as a library language. These have been stated here in responses (a) to (f) and respondents are asked to suggest which of them, they think, are the ones the student should command to be able to use English effectively as a library language.

Responses (a) and (c) are not, indeed, linguistic skills; but they are parts of the mechanism that takes the consumer of the printed word right to its source.
They are here irrespective of whether their teaching should form part of the English teacher's responsibility or not.

Reading implies comprehension; it should also imply speed if it is meant to be extensive. Hence response (b) in this question.

If English is to be used only as a library language, it follows that the medium of expression (also of learning) is a language other than English. In India, the other language is generally the student's mother tongue. What he obtains through the medium of English is to be put to use in his mother tongue. He is required to communicate in his mother tongue what he reads in English; on most occasions, he might just summarize in his mother tongue what he has read in English; occasionally, he will quote verbatim from the English sources. These have been taken care of in responses (d), (e) and (f).

Question 3: This question deals with the type of the vocabulary that should form part of a syllabus of English. The question is connected with question 1. If the area of reading has to be that of general interest, obviously the general vocabulary is a satisfactory answer. It is not a satisfactory answer if the area of reading has to be that of special interest.
The question is based on the assumption that a special vocabulary should be taught to the student whose objective is to acquire proficiency in comprehending the literature of his specialism. The responses to the question draw a line between a technical vocabulary involving the learning of new concepts in a given field and a special vocabulary which does not involve the learning of new concepts and yet is related to the given field.

'Law of Formation' (Mathematics) and 'Marginal Utility' (Economics) are illustrations of the former. 'Form' (v), 'Marginal' and 'Utility' in their general meaning are illustrations of the latter. The teacher of English is competent enough to teach the latter. He is not competent to teach the former satisfactorily. (Incidentally, the subject-teacher can provide the student with a glossary even in the former case; but he cannot prepare a base upon which the student can further build up his special vocabulary.)

As pointed out in the stem of the question, the responses offered are relevant only if the respondent has ticked against response (a) in question 1.
Question 4: This question is intended to elicit views on how best to introduce the desired vocabulary to students. Three ways have been suggested for the respondent's consideration:

(i) If presented in isolation, all the items of the desired vocabulary can be covered. In the absence of a living context, however, the learning of these items is doubtful. Response (a) suggests this way and points to its advantage as well as disadvantage.

(ii) Vocabulary teaching in classroom, generally depends on fictitious contexts for the presentation of its items. Passages specially written to include most, if not all, of the desired vocabulary items can be used for vocabulary teaching. This alternative is also defective in that the passages are written with the sole purpose of introducing a certain vocabulary and, therefore, they tend to be dull; the contexts are contrived, not natural. To make such passages interesting must be hard for even the most talented editors. Who could be expected
to have creativity at call any time he writes on any subject under the sun? The CIEFL prepared two text-books with a view to introducing about 900 words related to Physical Sciences and about 1,200 words related to Social Sciences. The two books - "A Preparatory General English Course for Colleges: Physical Sciences" and "A Preparatory General English Course for Colleges: Social Sciences" - which consist of passages specially written to introduce the desired words, are a very sincere, gallant effort to prepare need-based courses. In a survey, however, the students on whom the courses were tried are said to have described the text-books extremely dull.

(iii) The third alternative is to introduce the vocabulary items through selections, mostly from creative literature and journals on students' specialism. The number of the vocabulary items covered thus might further go down; but the items introduced in this manner, it can be safely assumed, are easily learnt because they come to students in a very lively context.
So the choice to be made in this question is from the introduction: all, most, or many of the items of the desired vocabulary. The three alternatives involve, respectively, hardly any, a little, and a good deal of interest in the learning situation. The wording of the three alternatives is intended to underline both the aspects.

Incidentally, the questionnaire was prepared at a very initial stage when the investigator was as yet trying to come to grips with the problem. The unhappy wording, which could have been easily avoided had the questionnaire been drafted at a more mature stage, has, therefore, made to appear the responses in question 4 loaded. A couple of respondents, indeed, pointed this out.

The Sample:

The sample (Appendix B-2) comprises noted individuals of the following categories:
(i) Educationists: The inclusion of educationists in the sample of respondents needs no apologies. They are the people, if none else, who must be alive to the problem. Also, they are supposed to be able to see the problem in perspective.

(ii) Teachers of English: Teachers of English are the people who successfully or unsuccessfully try to deliver the goods. They know the customer and his needs. They know the stuff supplied to the customer today, and the experienced one among them must have thought as to how to improve the quality of the goods in accordance with the customer's needs.

(iii) Pedagogicians: Eminent teacher educators concerned with the teaching of English can contribute to a study of the problem. They are in constant touch with teachers of English and can understand the problem, especially in the light of the latter's equipment, and think of practicable ways of solving the problem.

(iv) The Elite: Educationists, teachers of English and pedagogicians are directly concerned with the problem under investigation and are, therefore, expected to have specific views on it. The Elite, though they are not directly under any obligation to have thought
about the problem, can, being educated, see the problem and apply their common sense to solving it. Besides, some most of them must be guardians of students who are directly affected by the problem.

The coverage was intended to be quite extensive, geographically and numerically. The actual coverage, however, is not quite extensive numerically, though geographically it is fairly so. The sample, though accidentally drawn, tends to be select, qualitatively. There is a large number of reputed pedagogicians, including those from the CIEFL and regional colleges of education. On one hand there is the Head of the Department of English, Bombay University, among the respondents; on the other, there is the Secretary, Society for Promotion of Education in India. A dignitary from industry is on the list, too. Unfortunately, a proportion could not be maintained as regards the number of respondents in each category, thanks to the indifference of some of the educationists and the elite to the questionnaire mailed to them.

Geographically, the coverage ranges between Srinagar and Madras, and Jamnagar and Gauhati. The geographical extensiveness of a sample serves a
special purpose. The views of the people of the same state tend to be moulded by peculiar forces working within that state. Views obtained from the people of other states offset the regional bias that might have characterized the views of the state luminaries.

It was not possible to execute the idea of having a sample, also numerically large, because there was a disappointing, very low return in the case of the first bunch of copies mailed to prospective respondents.

(Incidentally, a poor return was disheartening to the investigator at that stage because he was as yet trying to get warmed up for his project. The consolation, however, by way of information that in even research-minded nations like the U.S.A., low return was a problem faced by researchers, saved him frustration. The investigator, however, failed to explain to himself the silence of the vice-chancellors of the universities under study, over the questionnaire sent to them).

In view of the fact that the responses already received were largely in conformity with the assumptions
to be verified, it appeared that enlarging the sample would meet only a formal requirement. In proportion to the time the completion of the formality would have required, the gain would not have been significant.

A category-wise division of the 39 respondents to the questionnaire is given below:

- Educationists: 7
- Teachers of English: 13
- Pedagogicians: 16
- The Elite: 3

The Responses:

In accordance with the assumptions, which the questions sought to confirm, the responses obtained have been classified as follows:

(i) Area of Reading
(ii) Related Abilities
(iii) Type of Vocabulary
(iv) Material to Present the Vocabulary

Area of Reading: Responses to QUESTION 1 have been classified (Table 4.1) into the following:

1. SPECIAL, that is, responses favouring literature of the field of specialization for comprehension
2. GENERAL, that is, responses favouring literature of general interest for comprehension

3. BOTH, that is, responses favouring both the field of specialization and of general interest for comprehension

TABLE 4.1: RESPONDENTS' VIEWS REGARDING THE KIND OF LITERATURE STUDENTS NEED TO COMPREHEND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views</th>
<th>SPECIAL</th>
<th>GENERAL</th>
<th>BOTH</th>
<th>Nil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Respondents</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of the responses in favour of SPECIAL literature is four-times larger than the number of those, in favour of GENERAL literature. At the same time, respondents who favoured both the special and the general literature have, obviously, recognized the importance of the student's need to comprehend literature of his field of specialization.

Related Abilities: QUESTION 2 was on the abilities related to an effective use of English as a library language. Table 4.2 states the abilities mentioned in the close-end question and shows respondents' preference for them.
TABLE 4.2: RESPONDENTS' PREFERENCE FOR ABILITIES RELATED TO THE USE OF ENGLISH AS A LIBRARY LANGUAGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Ability</th>
<th>Percentage of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>ability to trace the required books in a library</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>ability to read English with speed and comprehension</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>ability to extract information on his (student's) subject from encyclopaedias, dictionaries, indexes of books, etc.</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>ability to quote (in English or in the mother tongue through accurate translation) from books to support his statements on a subject</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>ability to summarize in the mother tongue the whole or part of his reading with precision</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>ability to communicate in his mother tongue what he reads in English</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As many as 95% of the respondents favour (c). This means that the basic importance of (c) to an effective use of English as a library language has been recognized by nearly all the respondents though it is not linguistic.
ability. The next choice of a large majority (79%) of the respondents is (b). The choice of a large majority in this case was only expected because reading is the prime language skill in teaching English as a library language. The next in order is (e), which claims the favour of 66% of the respondents. The logic the respondents have understandably followed is that having got to the source (c), the student should be able to go through the material in the shortest time possible (b); now, what he reads is to be put to practical use in his mother tongue, normally in a summary form (e).

Abilities (a), (d) and (f) have been favoured by 58% each. In other words, the writing ability even to a limited extent of quoting from the source in English, the linguistic transference skill and the non-linguistic ability of tracing a book in the library have not been considered important by so many as those who consider the reading skill, the reference technique and the ability to write precise notes in the mother tongue on what is read in English.

Type of Vocabulary: Responses to QUESTION 3 have been classified as under:

1. TECHNICAL, that is, 'a technical vocabulary involving the learning of new concepts in their (students') special field'
2. GENERAL YET RELATED, that is, 'a vocabulary of a general nature which does not involve the learning of technical concepts yet is related to their (students') special field'.

3. BOTH

| Table 4.3: Respondents' Views Regarding the Kind of Vocabulary Students Need to Learn |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Kind of Vocabulary              | Percentage of Responses         |
|                                  | As Related to Total Number      |
|                                  | of Respondents                  |
| As Related to the Field of Specialization for Comprehension |
| TECHNICAL                        | 29                              | 33 |
| GENERAL YET RELATED              | 26                              | 30 |
| BOTH                             | 34                              | 37 |
| Nil                              | 11                              | -  |

Section 2 shows percentages of responses as related to the total number of questionnaire respondents. Section 3 shows percentages of responses of the respondents - 87% of the sample - who have recommended (Table 4.1) the field of specialization for comprehension by the student.
The responses are fairly divided in either case. It appears many respondents have not clearly seen the distinction between a technical vocabulary and a vocabulary which is general in nature and yet related to students' special field. A technical vocabulary, as explained with illustrations in the section 'The Design', involves the learning of concepts peculiar to a discipline. Hardly anyone would believe that the teacher of English is competent to teach such concepts. A very large number of respondents - 86% of the sample - have suggested that the desired vocabulary be introduced through selections from literature. By implication, they have favoured the teaching of a general vocabulary; creative literature does not have technical vocabulary items in a large number.

**Material to Present the Vocabulary**: As regards the introduction of the desired vocabulary to the students, QUESTION 4 suggested three ways:

1. Presentation of the vocabulary items **IN ISOLATION**

2. Presentation of the vocabulary items **THROUGH SPECIALLY WRITTEN PASSAGES**

3. Presentation of the vocabulary items **THROUGH SELECTIONS FROM LITERATURE**
TABLE 4.4: RESPONDENTS' VIEWS REGARDING THE KIND OF MATERIAL MOST SUITABLE FOR AN INTRODUCTION OF THE DESIRED VOCABULARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of Material</th>
<th>IN ISOLATION</th>
<th>THROUGH SPECIALLY WRITTEN</th>
<th>THROUGH SELECTIONS FROM PASSAGES</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Responses</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the respondents have seen the educative value of introducing the desired vocabulary through literature. The percentage of those who have favoured the introduction in the other two ways, which are obviously defective, is a meagre 11.

Taken together, the questionnaire responses broadly confirm the investigator's assumptions regarding the area of reading implied by the term 'English as a library language', the abilities related to the concept, the type of vocabulary students desirous of learning English as library language must be taught, and the material through which the desired vocabulary should be introduced. It is true that the responses as to the
type of vocabulary sound ambiguous if they are read in isolation; but, as pointed out in the discussion on these responses, with reference to the responses regarding the kind of material through which the vocabulary should be presented, they clearly confirm the relative assumption of the investigator.

**INTERVIEW**

In his attempt to spell out the implications of the term 'English as a library language', the investigator used also the interview as a tool. As a tool of research, the interview has many advantages over the questionnaire. Of them, the unambiguity of the views obtained and their fullness were of special value to the investigator for the purpose of sharing views with knowledgeable people on the subject.

The broad objective of the interviews was the same as that of the questionnaire - a verification of the investigator's assumptions regarding the area of students' reading, the kind of vocabulary students need to be taught, the way most suitable for the introduction of the desired vocabulary, and abilities other than the ability of reading implied by the term 'library language'. The
technique of scheduled interviews was, therefore, used at the initial stage and the interviewees also completed the questionnaire at the end of the interview. But after a couple of interviews it was realized that the scheduled nature made the interviews rather uninteresting both to the interviewer and the interviewee. The interviewee, in addition, felt inhibited and did not feel involved in the problem, with the result that one tended to doubt the genuineness of the responses. It was felt that a free discussion could put the interviewee at ease and help him recollect and air significant views on the subject and useful suggestions regarding an approach to the problem under study. The investigator, therefore, switched to free interviews.

As against their highly valuable advantages, the free interviews had a remarkable disadvantage. A formal verification of the assumptions, one after another, was not possible during free discussions. Implicit comments on the items specified were discernible from the discussions but they were not clear enough to be formally tabulated. The real gain was the enrichment of the investigator's perception of the problem through lively discussions with the enlightened.
The Sample:

The sample of interviewees (Appendix B 3), which is accidentally drawn, consists of noted individuals falling into the following categories: (i) Educationists, (ii) Teachers of English, (iii) Pedagogicians, (iv) - The Elite. The reasons why these categories are preferred are the same as those mentioned in a discussion on the sample for the completion of the questionnaire.

In view of the time the interviews consumed - in many cases, an appointment could be fixed only after contacting the prospective interviewee time and again - the idea of having a sample evenly spread over the four categories was ignored.

A category-wise division of the sample comprising 27 interviewees is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educationists</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers of English</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogicians</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Elite</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Responses:

In view of the objective of sharing views on the problem with the interviewees through a free interview,
no attempt is made here to categorize the 'responses'; instead, a summary of significant views expressed by the interviewees is given below.

These views are not all necessarily original. Some of them, by virtue of being identical to those held by him, confirmed the reliability of the investigator's premises, whereas some helped him bring to his consciousness ideas which were only lying dormant. Indeed, some interviews gave him an opportunity to learn from the horse's mouth views on controversial aspects of the teaching of English in Gujarat as also justification of the courses followed in Gujarat, generally. In a number of cases, it was disconcerting to see that cliches had usurped the place of views on the problem. There were refreshing moments, however, when views generated by a fresh approach to the problem were heard.

Changes at the Root: There was unanimity among the interviewees as regards the need for a change in the syllabuses of English which, they thought, were not based on needs and reality. Some of them thought that the change could not be brought about so easily. The change should be contemplated, they said, as part of an overhaul of the whole educational set-up.
Do we teach and test students so that the library becomes an inevitable part of education? Have we made it inevitable for students who desire to complete a course or pass an examination to go to the library? Let alone reading English books, do they read enough even in their mother tongue? Quite a few interviewees posed these searching questions.

**Basic Command over the Language - a Prerequisite:** A refreshing awareness of the problem of teaching English as a library language was found with some of the interviewees. They did point out that a basic command over the language was a prerequisite to the teaching of English as a library language.

With the teaching of the fundamentals of the language, the basic vocabulary and a fair amount of structures and idiomatic expressions at the school stage, the student should be able, as he comes to college, to consolidate and enlarge his knowledge even in the absence of a planned teaching in these areas, Prof. V.M. Desai, an experienced professor of English, suggested. The need for the knowledge of structures, idiomatic expressions etc. on the part of the student desirous of using English as a library language was stressed by a couple of other interviewees also.
Well-informed People like Prof. V.V. John underlined the importance of measuring the language attainment of college-entrants and spelling out the terminal linguistic behaviour expected of them.

Suggestions for a Complete Course: As regards a specific, full programme of teaching English as a library language, concrete suggestions were hard to come by. One could construct a full programme, however, from stray suggestions obtained during the interviews. Incidentally, Mr. P.G. Mavlankar advocated the need for a uniform course of teaching English as a library language, based more on an imaginative than a theoretical approach, for the whole nation.

Language Orientation: The need to introduce language orientated courses in English was largely accepted by the interviewees. In most of the cases, however, they thought it desirable to caution the investigator against any attempt to divorce language from literature. Understandably, they saw a correlation - an 'objective correlation' as Prin. V.J. Trivedi put it, recalling Eliot's phrase - between language and literature. A language cannot be studied without a living context, they meant.
Vocabulary: Vocabulary was recognized as an important part of a special programme of teaching English contemplated. A difference of opinion as regards the practicability of teaching a special vocabulary to the student of a particular discipline was rather sharp. Some interviewees thought that a general vocabulary, free from any bias, could serve the purpose.

As to an effective introduction of a vocabulary of special interest to the student, there was no satisfactory answer with most of the interviewees.

Some of them were of the opinion that what was needed was that the student be exposed to the relevant vocabulary, as also to the relevant structures. The requirement could be met with by supplementary readers. A special vocabulary might not form part of the usual classroom teaching of English. Dr. R.N. Ghosh suggested a replacement of the study of one text-book in detail by five or six rapid reading books.

Mr. S.A. Sabnis did not see any point in considerations of the readability of the passages through which the relevant vocabulary should be presented. He said, the 'mathematics' of the language is of practical value to the student and he ought to learn it at any rate. He must take pains to learn it. Don't they learn other subjects irrespective of their interest value?
Mr. Damubhai Shukla was also of the opinion that there was no harm in presenting the words useful to the student of a discipline in isolation. Once he knows the words are useful to him, he is going to remember them.

Inspite of the soundness of the argument of both these interviewees, one wonders how practical their proposition is in the light of a very unfavourable environment in which English is being taught in India to-day. It must have been on the basis of the principle of interest in the learning situation that Dr. R.N. Ghosh suggested a teaching material containing 70% vocabulary of general use and 30% technical words.

The idea of presenting a large part of the vocabulary of special interest to the student of a discipline through selections from literature was greeted with interest by all, though with a little skepticism by some. Selections from popular writings on a given subject in journals, from Galbraith or the Preamble to the Planning Commission's Report (Commerce) and from Snow, Einstein and Vishvasaraiya (Science) were suggested by a couple of interviewees.

Prof. V.V. Jhon made an interesting suggestion. Why should passages, he asked, be specially written to cover the desired vocabulary? Passages should be picked up
from standard books by native speakers on the student's subject. What would be the difference then, he was asked, between subject-teaching and English-teaching in the class? His answer was: The subject-teacher teaches his subject in the student's mother tongue; the English-teacher goes to the class with a passage on the subject in English. He teaches them how to follow it; he teaches the relevant language points.

**Reading:** Reading with speed and comprehension was, surprisingly enough, not recognized by all as an important item that should have a place on the new courses contemplated. An educationist who was the vice-chancellor of a university when interviewed, was of the view that though reading fast was a useful attainment it could be had with practice and need not be specially taught. An experienced professor of English had a point to make when he said that a student's comprehension must be perfect but the area covered need not be extensive; a slow, repeated reading could well serve his purpose. Mr. P.G. Mavlankar suggested that if students were increasingly exposed to good, interesting literature, they were bound, by habit, to turn to it time and again.

No skill can be taught in isolation; language skills are inter-related; said many. While some stressed
the point in perspective, some appeared to be satisfying their foundness for using cliches. The investigator made it a point to touch the aspect of the inter-relationship of language skills - at an appropriate stage during his investigation.

**Syntax**: One more aspect of language teaching mentioned by some of the interviewees was that of syntax. In the context of the problem, teaching structural patterns most frequent in and peculiar to commerce and science respectively, it was suggested, was as important as teaching a special vocabulary was.

**Three Controversial Points**: Three points made by three distinguished interviewees which sounded controversial to the investigator, have been summarized below. They will be dealt with, without any reference to the interviews, directly or indirectly in the thesis.

(i) An educationist was of the view that one of the reasons of falling standards of students' proficiency in English was the lack of any opportunity for them to be exposed to good English being spoken. He said, if English were the medium of instruction, students would have been regularly exposed to English being spoken and, therefore, they would have been at an advantage as far as learning English was concerned.
(ii) A professor of English felt that English literature of merit, irrespective of whether it subserved the mundane needs of students, must have a place in study for its emotional value. When it was pointed out that the purpose could be served, perhaps even more satisfactorily, by putting students in touch with beautiful literature in the mother tongue or even that in other languages translated into the mother tongue, the interviewee promptly expressed his agreement with the proposition linguistically but could not hide his emotional disapproval of the idea.

(iii) The vice-chancellor of a university held the view that the subject-teacher should suggest reference books available in English on his subject, and from time to time, introduce English words connected with the subject. When asked what the teacher of English would do then, the vice-chancellor said: "Why should there be a teacher of English?" He had a second thought. He added: "The teacher of English will teach English to other teachers."

On the whole, the interviews were of immense value to the investigator in getting to the heart of
the problem. The investigator's views on certain basic issues connected with the problem were largely in conformity with the consensus on them among the interviewees. This provided him with the necessary assurance to start the investigation with. Some interviews greatly enriched his insight into the problem.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

The investigator had very useful correspondence with the following on some of the aspects related to teaching English as a library language:

(i) Dr. Ramesh Mohan, Director, Central Institute of English and Foreign Language, Hyderabad.

(ii) Mr. D.Y. Morgan, O.B.E., British Council Visiting Professor, Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad.

(iii) Dr. R.N. Ghosh, Professor and Head, Department of Methods, Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad.

(iv) Mr. J.M. Hardman, Assistant Education Adviser's Section, Office of the British Deputy High Commissioner, Bombay.

The four distinguished gentlemen were not approached all at a time nor with the same set of inquiries. They were approached at different stages during the course of
investigation with queries which were uppermost in the
investigator's mind at that moment. The views expressed
by them on certain aspects of the problem have been
summarized below.

Dr. Ramesh Mohan: Reading is the Thing:

A good reader, Dr. Ramesh Mohan suggested, should
be able to read materials in 'different subject specialisms'
and was required to have different speeds for different
purposes.

Commenting very briefly on the nature of a course
design of English as a library language he said, one
should begin with a good oral course without neglecting
reading; after a year or two, reading should be concentrated
on.

The best approach to the problem, he concluded,
should be to prepare a course in English as a library
language and try it out in practice.

Prof. D.Y. Morgan: From Listening to Reading:

Prof. Morgan defined a 'library language' as
"a language which is used for purposes of serious academic
and professional reading." "No country can achieve or
maintain modern international standards in science, technology, commerce, and so forth, " he added, "if members of its professional classes do not possess a reading knowledge, at least, of one major language in which professional books and journals are published copiously."

At the school level, an oral approach would be the best approach, he said, even though reading may be the primary objective. "When beginners first learn to read, they will find their first step in reading very difficult to take unless what they are learning to read is familiar to them in speech." For the first two or three years the four skills should be paid equal attention to, he went on. The order he suggested for the presentation and practice of the language, however, was listening, speaking, reading and writing. After about three years, "reading can go ahead faster than other skills" and the reading vocabulary should be expanded faster than the vocabulary commanded in speech and writing.

Prof. Morgan had specific views on teaching English at the school level. The following paragraph
From personal observation I can affirm that many countries enable secondary-school leavers who have learnt English for about five years as a foreign language (i.e. as only one subject among many and with all other subjects taught in the mother tongue) to have an excellent reading proficiency, excellent enough for them to use it in their reading studies in English of any subjects which interest and concern them. This happens without detriment to their proficiency in the other skills, provided a really good oral foundation has been laid in the first three years of the school course. Once reading becomes fluent, independent of the teacher, and enjoyable, sheer exposure to good English in print has an excellent effect upon their writing. Consequently, my general recommendation for the planning of a school five-year course is to concentrate upon the oral skills for the first two years (though following up the work with simply reading all the time), in the third year to begin placing increasing emphasis on reading, and in the fourth and fifth years to push reading on as fast as possible.

Coming to the college level, he said, many students come up to college with poor proficiency in reading. They have two handicaps: smallness of vocabulary and slow reading habits acquired from the wrong emphasis on loud reading at school. On the basis of experiments conducted by researchers under his guidance, he claimed that 'quite dramatic improvements' in reading efficiency could be achieved even at the college level in a very short time.
Dr. R. N. Ghosh: A One-Skill Course, a Viable Proposition:

Reading with speed and comprehension was regarded by Dr. Ghosh as an important aspect of the problem. The other aspects he mentioned were the vocabulary load and the difficulty level of the materials included in the textbooks prescribed for various courses.

As regards courses to be prepared with a view to training students mainly in the skill of reading, taking into account the interrelationship of language skills, he recommended a three years' oral work "for its own sake and for the support it gives to reading and writing" in the early stages. In the later stages, he suggested, progressively more attention could be paid to the improvement of reading "so that students are capable of independent reading by the end of the higher secondary stage." "At the college level," he added, "a one-skill course viz. a reading course is a perfectly viable proposition."

Mr. J. M. Hardman: Possible to Teach Reading Alone:

The Assistant Education Adviser's Section of the Office of the British Deputy High Commissioner, Bombay, was approached with a request to send information regarding
special courses, if any, prepared by any country for the purpose of teaching English as a library language. In his reply Mr. Hardman wrote that they did not know of any ELT course attempting to teach English "only as a library language". He added, "There is currently strong emphasis, as you probably know, on teaching spoken forms, and while ELT courses at various levels do concern themselves with such aspects as reading comprehension, extended reading, use of reference materials, etc., no course that we know of is concerned exclusively with this area of language competence". In another letter he said, it is perfectly possible "to teach reading alone and none of the other skills".

The correspondence with the four distinguished people was on specific queries made by the investigator. The correspondence proved invaluable in that it contained expert opinions on matters related to the problem.

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the confirmation of his basic assumptions by the respondents to the questionnaire, interview and correspondence, and the fresh views obtained from them, the investigator drew the following
conclusions related to the implications of the concept 'English as a library language'.

1. The following abilities, mentioned in order of importance, are related to an effective use of English as a 'library language':

(i) ability to extract information on his (student's) subject from encyclopaedias, dictionaries, indexes of books, etc.

(ii) ability to read English with speed and comprehension

(iii) ability to summarize in the mother tongue the whole or part of his reading with precision

(iv) ability to communicate in his mother tongue what he reads in English

(v) ability to quote (in English or in the mother tongue through accurate translation) from books to support his statements on a subject

(vi) ability to trace the required books in a library
2. The use of English as a library language underscores the importance of the reading comprehension of the literature of a student's special subject.

3. Vocabulary should be an important part of a programme of teaching English as a library language. The vocabulary should be general in the sense that it does not involve the teaching of technical concepts; at the same time it should be special in the sense that it is a collection of items 'useful' to the students of a particular discipline in reading books on their subject. Special vocabularies should be prepared for different disciplines.

4. The desired vocabulary should be introduced to students through selections from creative literature.