CHAPTER - I
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INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHAT IS LANGUAGE?

Language plays an important as well as inevitable role in our life and one cannot think of a society without language. It is highly essential for human progress and it is the flesh and blood of human culture. There would be no civilization without language and it is the means of social culture. It involves us in the process of interaction and human co-operation develops only through language. Language is a vehicle of thought as it helps us to convey or express our ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Japerson defines language as “set of human habits and to express our thoughts and feelings”(8). According to Sapir,” Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of system of voluntarily reduced symbols”(1). Nicolos Hans says, “Language is one of the symbols of a Nation”(15). Language expresses the mental character of people who speak it and reflects features of their natural surroundings. There are two functions for any language. They are,

1. Social

2. Non-Social

Socially it is used for expression and communication and its non-social use is the inner life of each person for provoking thoughts. It is an aid to think and thus it serves as
the mind. Language is a tool for communication and it has a variety of features based on its usage and practice in our day-to-day life.

1.2. LANGUAGE FEATURES

1.2. a. LANGUAGE IS A SYSTEM

Language is a system like that of the human body. Our body functions through various organs – heart, lungs etc., and in the same way language functions through sounds, structures and words. Without sounds there is no utterance and without utterance there is no structure or words.

For example, ‘Sanjay played foot ball,’ is a sentence which consists of very many sounds. It follows a particular structure, i.e. **Subject, Verb, Object; Sanjay, played, foot ball.** So language is a system of phonological, grammatical and lexical items. That
is why in language teaching one follows the structural method and uses selected vocabulary items.

1.2.b. LANGUAGE – SYSTEM OF SYMBOLS

In this principle one finds no relation between symbol and object denoted by it. For example, one calls a particular thing a table and another a stone. There is no natural relationship between the object and the word. It is a matter of convention. It is true in the case of question and answer forms. Is this a table? – Question. This is a Table – statement. It is nothing but convention. So in the above sentence, the word table is not a table. It stands for table.

1.2. c. LANGUAGE IS LEARNED

Learning a language is an activity and it cannot come automatically as walking does. No child is born with the skill of speaking and he/she acquires it after he/she is born. If a child is separated from society or brought up in the company of deaf people, it will remain as it is and it cannot pick up any language. It picks up language by listening to the people around. First, a child listens to its mother and then listens to others. Hence, language is a learned activity.

1.2.d. LANGUAGE FOR COMMUNICATION

The main purpose of language is communication and one uses language as a vehicle to convey one’s ideas. One makes use of it to inform others, to express one’s feelings or emotions. So it is of paramount importance to learn the correct pronunciation. It is for
the teachers to pay attention to correct pronunciation, and the teachers must serve as a perfect model for their students.

1.2.e. LANGUAGE – A CULTURE

Language is a symbol of culture of a society and it has meaning only in relation to that society and culture. For example, Eskimos use many words for ‘Snow’ because ‘Snow’ plays an important part in their life. But other speakers do not have that number of words for ‘Snow’. While learning a foreign language one learns not only speaking that particular language but also gets acquainted with the culture of the people.

1.2.f. LANGUAGE – MADE UP OF HABITS

Language is a set of habits. The system of language is mastered at the habit level. When one speaks one’s mother tongue one does not bother about the position of tongue, speech organs etc and one does not bother about the ‘order of words’. It is because it has become a matter of habit. Unless one masters the language which is made up of habits one cannot learn a language. This principle implies that the students should have meaningful practice in the use of language.

1.2.g. LANGUAGE – A SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Language is a social behaviour and there is no part of heredity here. A child picks up the language of his/her environment. A child that is born in Tamilnadu, if it is brought up in England, he/she will pick up English. If it is brought up in France, it will learn French.
1.2.h. LANGUAGE – KEEPS CHANGING

Language is not static and a living language, like human beings, changes. The history of English language shows the numerous changes that a language has undergone. Changes take place in all aspects of language and this is more so in the case of vocabulary. English too has borrowed words from various languages.

1.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

English is the most widely spoken language in the world and it stands out as the most popular language on earth. No language, ancient or modern can be compared with “English in the number of geographical distributions of the homes, shops, factories and offices in which the language is spoken, written or read”( F.G.French,1994). Apart from being native or first language in countries as widely apart as the United Kingdom, The United States of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, English is an important second language almost everywhere in the world. M.C.Chagla, when he was the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court, once ruled that English was an Indian language and the Supreme Court upheld this judgment. The Sahitya Academy of India recognizes English as one of the Indian languages. Statistics show that over half the world periodicals are printed in English ; three quarters of the world’s mail is written in English and three fifth of the world radio stations broadcast in English. The latest and the most accurate information about the advancements of science and technology is immediately available to us through the medium of English. English and information are inextricably interwoven.
The whole world has accepted English language as the medium of intellectual exchange for the following three reasons,

1. The commercial weight
2. The technical importance
3. Translation from other languages

A person who can speak English can travel all over the world without any difficulty. Anyone who can read English can keep in touch with the world without leaving his home. It is not easy to write about the place of English in India, when the country is changing everyday and the place of English in it continues to change.

English has been caught in that ceaseless flux which is Indian life and thought at the present time. English, therefore, will continue to enjoy the status of an associate official language of the Indian Union for an indefinite period. The National Policy of Education states that “Special emphasis needs to be laid on the study of English and other international languages” (Edn.Report.1964-66, 15). World knowledge is growing at a tremendous pace, especially in science and technology. India must not only keep up this growth but should also make her own significant contribution to it. For this, the study of English should be specially strengthened. The teaching of English should continue to be promoted from the school stage. Soon after independence, the place of English in Indian education has become a matter of controversy. Some States propose that English, being the language of the aggressor, must be taken out of the country, along with those who enslaved the nation for more than 15 decades. The National Integration Council (NIC) in its meeting at Chennai, clearly pointed out that the
teaching of English must be allowed for the following purposes have been recognized by all.

1. English as an international language
2. English as a national link language
3. English as a library language
4. English as a ‘Gateway of Knowledge’.

English will serve as a link language in higher education for academic work and intellectual inter – communication. “A working knowledge of English will be a valuable asset for all students and a reasonable proficiency in the language will be necessary for those who proceed to the university” (Edn. Report, 334). English will be the most important library language to be studied at all stages in our schools and colleges.

1.4 IMPORTANT ROLE(S) OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

1.4.a. ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

It is true that English is a foreign language to us. It was introduced by the English. But as a world language it occupies an important place. One cannot remove it out and out. If at all we neglect it, it would be a great loss to us and we will be in the dark of western developments in science and technology. As a foreign language, English gives us rich resources that we need. English language links us with the European people, thought and tradition.

The study of English has enabled us to understand and pursue the wisdom of the western countries and as reciprocation; the west has evinced keen interest in knowing
our intellectual and spiritual heritage. Through this language one can study the great authors like Stuart Mill, Edmund Burke, and Ruskin etc. This language has given world recognition to our stalwarts J.C.Bose, C.V.Raman and Baba. English is undoubtedly a world language which can make one a world citizen.
1.4.b. ENGLISH AS A LINK LANGUAGE

English serves as a link language at two different levels. At the first level, it is responsible for our contacts with the outside world. As in the words of Prof Narayan, “English links with the west, English is bound to retain an important place” (Arun.K., 10). No country can remain alone nowadays, as every country needs political, economic ties with other countries. India remains as a member of the British Commonwealth, and Indians have been learning English for more than a century and half now. Indians have a strong connection with international business and politics, western thought and culture.

Secondly, English serves as a link language between the States of India, as India is a vast country of multi-lingual languages. Every state has its own mother tongue. It is only English that serves as a link between one State and the other State. A person from Kashmir will not be understood in Tamilnadu except through English. English is the language of Trade and Industry in India. The southern States make correspondence to the centre and the northern States only through English. Though Hindi is the official language of India, English is used more for interstate purposes. English is likely to have an important place in the foreseeable future.

1.4.c. ENGLISH AS A LIBRARY LANGUAGE

The most important role that English has to play in India today is as a Library Language. Library language means the language that has the rich storage of knowledge. All important books have been translated into English. In every country one can find, though they follow their own language, they do not fail to make use of English as a library language. The Kothari Education Commission has recommended “Our aim may
be adopting regional languages as medium of instruction, but we should like to stress again that this does not involve elimination of English” (Edn. Report, 5). As a library language, English has a vital role in higher education. Every student of Master’s degree should acquire a reasonable proficiency in English to make himself a fully qualified one for the degree. It is for the following two reasons:

1. All teachers in higher education should be essentially bilingual in the regional language and in English.

2. All students, particularly graduate students should be able to follow lectures and use reading materials in the regional language as well as in English.

1.4.d. ENGLISH AS A ‘GATEWAY OF KNOWLEDGE’

It will be more appropriate to quote the opinion of Jawaharlal Nehru, who designed the vision and mission of Indian education after independence. According to him, “English is our major window of the world… English language gives us all we need for development equal to the other people in the world” (Kamala Rao,3). English Language provides us with the essential needs of modern language in all walks of human activity. According to F.G.French, “If one can speak English he will find somebody who can understand him wherever he may go”(15). Anyone who can read English can keep in touch with the whole world from his house. The University Education Commission headed by Dr. Radhakrishnan Sarvappalli has observed, “English is a language, rich in literature – humanistic, scientific and technical. If under sentimental urges we would give up English, we would cut ourselves off from the
living stream of ever growing knowledge” (Arun.K. 10). If we neglect English we will have no access to knowledge of science, technology etc.

The elimination of English in India will result in the deterioration of our standard and the participation of India in the world movement of thought will be negligible. Its effects would be disastrous for Indian political life. English is the only means to prevent our isolation from the world. It is not wise to fold ourselves in a dark curtain of ignorance. Our students, who seek admission to university studies, must acquire sufficient mastery of English. Otherwise one cannot attain the treasures of knowledge. So it is the right time to uphold researches to find out not only the effective ways to teach English, but also making the teaching and learning process an interesting one, which is the need of the hour.
1.5. THE PRESENT CONDITION OF ENGLISH

The teaching of English in our schools is far from satisfactory. The students who learn English for about six periods in a week for six years hardly know 150 words by the time they join a college. This means they have not been able to learn English words at the rate of one word per period. They do not know how to use the commonest structures in English. The conditions of teaching English are different from State to State. The performance of the students in urban schools is better than the students in the rural schools. Likewise, the attainment of students in public schools /model school is better than that of their counterparts in ordinary schools. For this we can enlist some of the shortcomings as follows.

1.5.a. LACK OF CLEAR – CUT POLICY

After independence, the place of English in India has not been well – defined. It has been changing from time to time. In some of the States in India, English is not a compulsory subject. It is not necessary to study English to get through the high school examination. Hence the students are not serious about the study of the language.

1.5. b. AIMS ARE NOT CLEAR

The teachers who teach the language has little understanding of the aims of teaching the language. The only aim is to make the student pass the examination. The students depend more on memory rather than to master the skills of the language. The aim is on the percentage of pass only.
1.5.c. COMPETENCY OF TEACHER

All teachers of English are not similar in their capacity to teach the language. In other words they are not fully competent to do full justice to their assignment. The UGC Committee has remarked that “There is a shortage of Teacher” (UGC Report, Vol.3,7). This statement refers to not only the number but also the quality and competency. In the high school level, most of the teachers who teach English have just passed school final examination through rural schools. They themselves do not know the correct usage and pronunciation and their vocabulary is limited. It is awful to note that many teachers who did not offer teaching of English in their training period teach this subject. It is wrong to say that any graduate can teach English language to secondary level. Most of the teachers are not in a position to know the latest developments in their subjects. On the other hand, considerable mass of teachers are not interested in improving competency and other relevant skills.

1.5.d. IMPROPER METHODS OF TEACHING

In most of the high schools of Tamilnadu the subject & language ‘English’ is taught by the science teacher since the teacher studied a Language paper in his Teacher Training Programme. So most of the teachers use translation method. They teach English through Tamil (First and the official language of Tamilnadu State). This translation method enables the pupils to understand the parallel & equivalent terms of both languages whereas the different types of grammatical functions of those terms become big troubling–factors. Students are rarely allowed to express/ speak in the class which makes the process of learning, a dull one.
1.5.e. OVER - CROWDED CLASSES

Due to the ‘ Mass Education Policy ’ of the Government, classrooms are overcrowded. In the government schools of Tamilnadu, a teacher is expected to manage 100 students. Within the time slice of the period (45 Minutes) a teacher is expected to check the attendance; verify the given home-work; keep up the discipline of the class then the teacher is expected to give a general introduction to the topic followed by lecture/demonstration and feed-back. Hence teachers cannot pay individual attention to students.

1.5.f. UNSATISFACTORY SUPERVISION

Speaking practically, there is no supervision on the work of the English teachers. So teachers have no opportunity to get any guidance from experts. No symposium/seminars are conducted for the teachers to update and enrich the subject knowledge.

1.5.g. LACK OF TEACHING – AIDS

Most of the government schools do not have the facilities of Audio –Visual aids as, Linguaphone records, Filmstrips, Radio, Television and other latest tools to teach English. Even the schools that have some aids, do not make use of them.

1.6. REMEDIAL MEASURES

As early as 1958, the Government of India, under a farsighted Prime Minister felt the need for urgent and positive measures to bring about an improvement in the teaching of English. As in the words of V.K.Gokak, “A great deal of research had to be carried out into the particular problems of teaching English to Indian students and of reshaping the
current course in high school and colleges” (12). The study group appointed by the Government of India to go into the problems of the teaching of English reported that “New commissions and new courses are necessary to halt the deterioration of standards on the one hand and to introduce much needed improvements on the other” (Report, 26). The group felt that the three factors are mainly responsible for the success or failure of a teaching programme. Those three factors are as follows,

1. **Man**

2. **Materials**

3. **Methods**

Dickson correlates the teacher competence with some factors. According to him, “Teaching competency is a demonstrated repertoire of competencies involved with teaching plans and materials, classroom procedures, interpersonal skills and learner’s reinforcement and involvement reflected in teacher behaviour” (ARUN K. 37).

After independence, lakhs of rupees have been spent on committees and commissions to deliberate and recommend methods of bringing about qualitative improvement in Education. As a result, it has been endeavoured to develop better curriculum, text books and teaching – aids. Considerable efforts have been made to improve the techniques of teaching English through computer instead of conventional **Chalk and Talk** method of teaching, especially in the teaching of a different subject like English.
1.7 CRISIS IN EDUCATION

It is true that the destiny of our country is shaped in the classrooms by the teachers, so they hold a great responsibility of providing the learners with the suitable instructional materials which would help them to derive the maximum benefit, while taking care of the individual differences too. When A Perspective Paper on Education was released by Acharya Ramamurti, Chairman of the Committee to review the National Policy on Education 1986 (NPE Review Committee), rightly pointed out the concerns and problems that remained unresolved. “Our education is tied down to unreadable textbooks and totally unreliable examinations” (5). The following words of T.S. Eliot rightly match with the state of the present education system.

Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? (Kamala Rao, 7)

In these days of profit and loss, the utilitarian or functional aspect of education has totally eclipsed its formative aspect. Education has gradually drifted away from its humanizing role to that of a means for getting a job. In other words, education has become subservient for examination and employment. The major crisis in this material endeavour is the substandard of education at all levels. The question arises, “Is not no education better than bad education?” Whether one is a teacher of English, Technical Subject, Commercial Subject, Physical Sciences, Mathematics or Humanities, one has to perform certain functions in every classroom. One sort of teachers live with the following statement. “How many times”, says the exasperated teacher, “have I got to tell you”. The other sort of teachers live with the constant statement, “I am always telling them but they go on making the same mistakes”. But educational experts say
that, “Telling is not teaching”. So teaching is a complex activity carried in the complex situation of the school by complex organizations, human beings (Teacher) directed towards more complex organisms (Students), who are constantly undergoing complex changes.

According to Gagne “Teachers are expected to play various roles” ( ) which are shown as follows:

1.8 AIMS OF TEACHING

Teaching is derived from the root word ‘taikjon’ which means ‘show how’. Teaching is useful only to the extent that it facilitates learning – “a teacher can no more teach unless someone learns than a seller can sell unless someone buys” (Arun.K. 21). The ultimate criterion against which the efficiency of the teaching skill is to be assessed is thus the change in behaviour of the learner. Thus, the task of teacher centres on:
• Motivating the learner towards desirable objectives

• Facilitating his attainment of these objectives through providing suitable learning experiences.

According to Gerald Cortis, “Effective education is a matter of the teacher finding the right niche” ( ) i.e. appropriate situation in which to operate. Dickson correlates the teacher competence with some factors. According to him, “Teaching competency is a demonstrated repertoire of competencies involved with teaching plans and materials, classroom procedures interpersonal skills and learner’s reinforcement and involvement reflected in teacher behaviour”( 12 ).

1.9 THE SYLLABUS IN ENGLISH

The present syllabus in English for the college students in Tamilnadu aims at a complete mastery of a 1750 word –vocabulary in association with the 217 teaching items, which consist of sentence patterns and structural words. The syllabus of English for the engineering college level is a skill based one. The syllabus gives a good exposure to communicative skills of English language. In addition to that the syllabus gives the ‘Communicative English knowledge ’ which is very much required for an arts college student. The text book deals with the exercises in Letter writing, Basic grammar, Making definitions, Explanation of compound nouns, essay writing, and other common skills like reading, listening, speaking skills of English language.
1.10 PREPOSITIONS

According to Philip Boswood Ballard, “Prepositions came into existence as substitute for certain case endings which were breaking down under the burden of work imposed on them, and had to be dismissed for inefficiency” (98). In modern usage prepositions are a means of constructing new adjectives and new adverbs. As Philip humorously states that “the prepositions have helped us in preventing our English dictionaries becoming elephantine in size and elbowing all other books from our shelves” (15).

Prepositions, adverbial particles and conjunctions, the post–babel parts of speech, as Ballard labels them, form one of the three bones of modern English. The clarity, the precision, the brevity and even the complexity of English language, all these become possible only with the use of prepositions. Thus it is seen that mastery of English language demands the mastery of prepositions as a prerequisite. Despite, these “little prepositions, like little urchins, prove to be the most troublesome element” (Martin Wilker, 98) to the language learner, especially to those who learn this as second language. Ballard quotes an investigation made by an American psychologist to find out a simple, reliable criterion to determine the difficulty of the various school books that would discriminate the students of different standards in high schools. After testing several different criteria, he found the preposition criterion as good as any. The simpler language has a few prepositions; the more complicated language has many.
1.11 PROBLEMS OF PUPILS IN THE USE OF PREPOSITIONS

Every class teacher in English is baffled by the prolific mistakes committed by pupils in the use of prepositions. When the pupils learn English as a second language they stumble with many intra language and inter-language difficulties in the use of prepositions. If the first language is non-cognate with the second language the pupils are confronted with added difficulties. English has shed many of its inflexions and has become almost uninflexional. Prepositions have replaced most of the inflexions in English; but the language ‘Tamil’ is one of the highly inflected languages. In Tamil language, one cannot find an exact corresponding part of speech to compare with preposition.

The case endings that mainly take post-positions do the functions of prepositions in Tamil language. In Tamil language the prepositions are called ‘Oorupidiechol’, which means a suffix which explains the relationship between noun and the other noun in the sentence. Apart from these difficulties that are due to the contrasting characteristics of the two languages, the student has to cope with the difficulties to learn the foreign language. The presence of prepositions in the sentence structure may seem to be unimportant but it plays a major role in conveying the meaning of the sentence. Look at the following sentence,

The cat jumped (on/over/from/in/off) the wall.

In the above sentence, words given in bracket are prepositions and each preposition gives a different meaning when they are used in the sentence. So knowing the meaning of the preposition is not only essential but also their context – usage will help the pupils to excel in learning a foreign language.
Branford explains how the simple “**spatial sense denoted by the preposition originally have been overlaid by a profusion of others**” (1986). Among the large number of prepositions, nine form the nucleus of the English prepositional system. Among these nine Branford lists out three as the most common and “they are, ‘of’, ‘to’ and ‘in’” (152). Each of these three seems originally to have denoted a simple relationship in space. The preposition ‘of’ today has sixty three separately numbered entries in the new English dictionary. This range of usage reflects the frequency with which the basic prepositions occur in speech and in writing. The wide range of usage as **Bransford** is careful enough to point out does not reflect a “**range of separate meanings so much as a range of distinguishable relationship between the items that the prepositions connect**” (173).

1.12 PREPOSITION – A PART OF SPEECH

It has been a task for the traditional grammarians to find a proper definition for the grammatical term – preposition. Some of them have adopted an extreme stand by not giving a definition at all. Since definition in general are either too broad or too narrow. Some have given circular definitions. **Martin Wilker** explains how “**most definitions result from an attempt to make definition harmonize with the etymology of the name**” (2008). He quotes Morris, Mason, Smith and Hall, Abbot and Bain and he shows how some of the definitions directly contradict with the others. Most of the definitions of prepositions (praepositum verbum) insist on the prefixing of the prepositions though one knows in many cases it may follow its noun–word. For the purpose of this research work, the need is for an empirical definition rather than etymological quibbling.
The compact edition of *The English Language Dictionary* defines the word ‘Preposition’ as “One of the parts of speech; an indeclinable word or particle serving to mark the relation between two notional words, the latter of which is usually a substantive or pronoun, as, now in hope, good for food, one for you, Stratford on Avon, late in time” (Jacc Collins, 174). The following subject of pronoun is said to be ‘governed’ by the preposition and inflected languages stand in an oblique case. Originally, as still often, the term was applied also to the same words when combined as prefixes with verbs or other words, and to certain other particles of similar force which are used only in combination as ‘inseparable prepositions’. One therefore, concludes that prepositions are small grammatical units which are essential to the structural pattern of English in signalling meaning. They are ‘function words’ that link a variety of lexical items. ‘Lexical’ items may be compared to bricks and structural ones to mortar and cement.

### 1.13 EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY - IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

We are in the position to set a trend for ELT in this 21st century. The vision of the 21st century presents an admixture of both challenges and opportunities. The electronic era is very much on the anvil. Pupils should have access to information technology and more sophisticated devices and systems. ‘Time’ magazine voted the personal computer as the ‘Machine of the Year-1982’, breaking away from the convention of the man of the year award. Eric Ashby has identified four revolutions in education. He says that,
The first revolution excurred when societies began to differentiate adult roles and the task of educating was shifted, in part from parents to teachers and from home to the school…the second was the adaptation of the written word as a tool of education…The third revolution came with the invention of printing and the subsequent wide availability of books… The fourth revolution is portended by developments in electronics notably those involving the radio, television, tape recorder and computer' (The Fourth Revolution, 18).

Asbhy says that, “Any technology, which increases the rate of learning, would enable the teacher to teach less and the learner to learn more” (25). The development and use of a modern educational technology is viewed in different ways by different people. It is acclaimed as the basis of revolution in the educational system aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching at different levels.

1.14. NEED FOR RESEARCH IN ELT

The adaptation of the regional languages as the media of instruction at both the primary and secondary level naturally has its repercussions on higher education. When a student comes to college from a regional medium school, his greatest difficulty is in adjusting himself to the medium of instruction, which is English. Many English teachers are forced to use the mother tongue even though they are supposed to teach through English. If some teachers refuse to use any language other than English, they cannot communicate with their students. The students have to resort to the use of guide books and substandard bazaar notes when they cannot follow lectures delivered in English.

The result is a steady corrosion of the learning and teaching of English.

In the large classes, the poor standards of students and inadequate time impose severe restrictions on the teacher. He cannot give his students enough practice in the use
of English language. His main concern seems to be to cover the syllabus within the time available; students are concerned only with the passages to be memorized and reproduced in the examination. In such a situation, there is hardly any chance for the student to learn the language. Almost every year the reports of the Board of Examiners in English at various levels lament over the fall of standard of our students in English. English, as the medium of instruction in higher education, becomes a thorn in the flesh of many students who are unable to understand teaching in English and to express their ideas in writing as well as speaking in English. Moreover it is noticed every year that English as a subject ranks first in the percentage of failure not only at the higher secondary but also at the college level.

Thus there is an urgent need for research in this area. In the classroom, it is the technique of instruction that ultimately decides the returns on our educational investment. So the researcher is interested in finding out what type of instructional medium i.e. whether the computer assisted instruction or traditional instruction influences better pupil achievement in English at Engineering College level.

1.15 NEED FOR THE STUDY

We have to face a new technology, which promises to change the process of teaching. Every teacher is aware that ‘Change’ is the only word, which is permanent in the avenue of language teaching. As in the words of Sarvappalli Radhakrishnan, A good teacher must know how to arouse the interest of the pupil in the field of study for which he is responsible, he must himself be a master in the field and be in touch with the latest developments in his subject, he must be a fellow traveller in the exciting pursuit of knowledge. (Education that India Needs, 12).
In the educational applications of computer, one can see the emergence of technology, which is more powerful than any teaching aids we have been accustomed to use hitherto. For the first time, we have the teaching materials which can adapt in real time to the needs of the individual student. This is tremendously exciting prospect whatever the criticisms that are levelled against the present day students in relation to their academic standards, surely none would deny that they are considerably better informed than the generations that preceded them largely as a direct consequence of exposure to computers from an early age. An effective use of computer will be extremely necessary for the classroom teacher who has to do away with the age-old tendency of lethargy, conservatism and aversion of using hardware for teaching.

The National Policy of Education of 1986 (Report of NPE, 4) has pointed out the several efforts which have been made to use technological aids like computer, television for improving the quality of teaching. With the introduction of ‘CLASS’ (Computer Literacy And Studies in Schools) the teachers need to be trained in how to make the best use of an unfamiliar tool like computer for the teaching of not only subjects like Mathematics and Science but also English which is considered as a thorn in the flesh by most of the students. So we are in need of a research to explore the potentialities and relative effectiveness of a new medium like computer in English language learning as well as teaching.

Computer can prove effective not only because it involves more than one sense, but also because it leads to more learning. Scottish Council for Educational Technology has drawn our attention to what it calls ‘TECHNOLUNACY’ where by as many
different media as possible are invoked as being essential to a particular learning package for no better reason than that they exist. Hence the researcher feels the need for this study to assess the relative effectiveness between the computer aided instruction and conventional instruction in English language teaching. Because of the above said conditions and facts, the researcher has decided to execute the research in the following title, “USE OF COMPUTER IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY”

1.16. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Very often the developing countries like India, in order to reach the level of developed countries, go in for hardware and machine. This has resulted in the teacher either developing total apathy towards the medium or feeling threatened by the medium. Many teachers are of the impression that the sophisticated gadgets like computer will play havoc on our younger generation transforming them into mechanical robots incapable of abstract and creative thinking. If the teacher recognizes that computer is there to help them to improve the teaching-learning process, their acceptance of these teaching devices will be assured. The present study by the investigator is a sincere attempt in this regard. The study will reveal how one can cut the roots of the conservatory drudgery of the conventional system of chalk and talk method of teaching English language.

One can see that the production and availability of hardware or machines is much ahead of the software. Computer is available but the teaching materials for which these machines have to be used are scarce. Neither can one produce one’s own software in
areas such as computer-aided instruction in the teaching of English. The software programmes developed by the researchers in computer will serve as instructional aid at the college level. This will also enable the English language teachers to know how an instructional programme could be best designed with multimedia through multiple media.

1.17 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Working with computers is a process of endless experimentation, where one is discovering new tricks and possibilities all the time. The more one works with computer, the more one realizes how enormous the potentials are in terms of content, technique and flexibility.

Investment in computer in colleges has to be backed up by investment in software and investment in staff, if they are to become effective aids in the class room. Hence the problem under the present study i.e. “USE OF COMPUTER IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY” is to develop a software programme in computer to teach English grammar and compare the relative efficacies of the computer aided instruction and conventional instruction in English language teaching.

1.18. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

The following statements are the definitions for the words mentioned in the title of the research i.e., “USE OF COMPUTER IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY”
**COMPUTER IN TEACHING**

The word Computer means to a researcher as a device for making calculation; storing memory; facilitated to enter or take print out or examine the information stored in the machine. Since this research glorifies the new platform i.e., **CATT** (Computer Aided Teaching and Testing), the term ‘computer’ includes the computer –software to teach English language. In other words, it means as an instructional technique, which makes use of computers to promote the teaching and testing process.

**ENGLISH**

The researcher means this word ‘English’ as the grammar of the English language. It is known that grammar of English is an ocean. Creating a software package to teach all the grammatical items is absolutely a time consuming process. So the researcher wants to create software to teach prepositions in English grammar.

**HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL**

This research is conducted among the Higher Secondary level students and students studying plus two were taken for the study. All the plus two students have to study two English papers in their course.

**AN EMPIRICAL STUDY**

This research involves both teaching and testing modules as well. After the detailed demonstration of preposition lesson, every student has to take up a test a on line
test which will tell them their learning strategies. The obtained results were processed in statistical analysis and detailed interpretation is given for variables.

1.19. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To examine the conditions of a conventional instruction in teaching prepositions in English language.
2. To find out the types or errors committed by the students in the use of prepositions.
3. To develop an achievement test in English.
4. To develop a computer lesson package to teach and test prepositions in English grammar.
5. To find out the effectiveness of computer-aided instruction in learning prepositions in English language.
6. To compare the effectiveness of computer-aided instruction with the conventional instruction in learning prepositions in English language.
7. To make suggestions as related to the major findings in the research.

1.20. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The title of the research is “USE OF COMPUTER IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY” In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses are made.

The hypotheses are as follows:
1. There is no significant difference between the effectiveness of conventional instruction method and computer aided instruction.

2. There is no significant difference between the achievement of the groups in terms of the variations in the exposure to the computer.

3. There is no significant difference between the achievement of the groups of computer assisted instruction in terms of variables like rural and urban.

4. There is no significant difference between the achievement of the groups of computer assisted instruction in terms of variables like Tamil medium and English medium.

5. There is no significant difference between the achievement of the groups of computer assisted instruction in terms of variables like boys and girls.

1.21. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Though the research study is entitled as “USE OF COMPUTER IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY”, only one aspect of English grammar, i.e. Prepositions in English grammar is studied. The constraints of the availability of the computerized language laboratory, time slice and co-operation of the institutions to conduct the study, forced the researcher to limit the study to a manageable sample. Due to the above said factors the researcher decided to conduct the research only in the following schools. In these schools, there is an ultra modern English Language Laboratory with contemporary softwares are in use.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Classification &amp; Type</th>
<th>Students at Plus Two Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Govt. Hr. Sec. School , MMDA Colony, Chennai – 116</td>
<td>Government, City School and Co-Education</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kellet Hr. Sec. School. Triplicane, Chennai – 600 005</td>
<td>Govt. Aided, City School Co-Education</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Danish Ahamed Mat.Hr.Sec. School, Kolathur, Chennai - 15</td>
<td>Self finance, City School and Co-Education</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>730</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table No. 1.1. Details of Schools taken for study

The details of the sample are given below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Classification &amp; Type</th>
<th>Students at Plus Two Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Govt. Aided, City School Co-Education</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Danish Ahamed Mat.Hr.Sec. School, Kolathur, Chennai - 15</td>
<td>Self finance, City School and Co-Education</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2. Details of sample for this study
1. The above said 450 students are put into the variables like Gender (50% boys & 50% girls); Medium of instruction (50% students of Tamil Medium & 50% students of English Medium), Locality (City Students, Suburban and Village) and Mother Tongue. Though it is mentioned in the title that the study is at higher secondary level the researcher has planned to conduct the research only on the plus two students of the above said schools.

1.22. METHOD AND PROCEDURE OF THE RESEARCH

The present research was done in the following stages,

1. A detailed conventional instruction was given on the topic i.e. preposition to the students. Various doubts were clarified through the most suitable examples by the researcher.

2. Construction and standardization of test.

3. A test was conducted after the conventional instruction. The students were given two days for preparation.

4. Evaluation of the test

5. Analysis of errors committed in the test.

6. Based upon message of the error analysis, tool was planned.

7. Lesson package was created and designed to teach and test prepositions.

8. Students were taught the operation of the computer and the particular lesson package.

9. The lesson saved in the server and students were learned and took the test in computer (Both learning and testing done by Computer)

11. Comparison of scores of the two tests, against variables.

12. Analysis and interpretation of the data

1.2.3 ORGANISATION OF CHAPTERS

The present study, “USE OF COMPUTER IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY” is divided into five chapters.

The first chapter deals with the various features of language, role of linguistics in language teaching, condition and importance of English language and its major roles in India, crisis in education, aim of teaching, features of modern English syllabus, educational technologies in the class room, need for the study, scope of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, limitations of the study, operational definitions for the terms involved in the title and method and approach of the research.

The second chapter is divided into three major divisions, Part – A, Part – B and Part – C. Part – A contains a summary of the grammar item taken for the study – Prepositions. It deals with definition, functions explained with suitable examples. Part – B contains a summary on Teaching – aid and its varieties and functions; Computer and its functions. Part – C contains a review of related literature, and it gives a detailed account of similar researches conducted in the same field.

The third chapter deals with the choice of method, plan and procedure, various methods involved in the collection of data, development of tool, opinion of the Jury, selection of samples for the construction of tool, details of the sample, administering
the test, creating software package to teach prepositions and administering and monitoring the CALL on line test.

The fourth chapter deals with the interpretation of both TALL and CALL tests scores. The results are supported by tables, charts, pie diagrams and other relevant figural form. Necessary graphical representations are also added.

The fifth chapter deals with the summary of findings, result outcome, suggestions, recommendations, scope for further research and investigation in the same area followed by conclusion. This fifth chapter is followed by a select bibliography and appendix, which contain relevant documents involved in this research.