PREFACE

The study is an outcome of the investigator’s observation and experiences of English language teaching/learning at the tertiary level in the colleges affiliated to the University of Kerala. He had occasions to make himself acquainted with various problems of English teaching/learning at this level as a classroom teacher, examiner and a member of the academic bodies responsible for curriculum planning, syllabus designing, text book preparation and evaluation. Though the study is confined to Kerala alone, the investigator is fully aware of the proliferation of approaches and methods in teaching/learning, second/foreign language across the world. The fact that teachers have a wider variety to methodological options to choose from, than ever before, has also been considered. Inventions of new classroom practices and approaches to designing language programmes and material have made language teaching more effective. Recent developments in this area make provisions in choosing methods and materials according to the needs of the learners.

The study is confined to questions, problems and issues related to teaching/learning. The focus of it is to list as many problems as the classroom teacher encounters, in order to achieve the instructional objectives. The problems have been mainly classified as curriculum centred, text-centred, teacher/student centred and evaluation centred, and these problems have a direct bearing on the teaching/learning of English.
The purpose of the study is to explore the possibilities of bringing about a qualitative and quantitative change in language teaching/learning, to equip the learners to take up the challenges posed by the emerging global educational and employment scenario.

Within the limited scope of the study the investigator has tried to synthesize the major developments from all relevant aspects of teaching English as a second/foreign language. Most significantly, the investigator has been inspired to make a study, as this, as he has been aware that effective learning takes place because of providing the best conditions for learning.

The introductory chapter outlines various questions and issues, which form a major part of the analysis. It also states how the investigator has become interested in this study. The aim of the study, its scope, its social and educational relevance, the procedures and research tools used and the methods of data collection and analysis - all form part of this chapter.

The second chapter deals with the present socio-cultural, political and economic contexts, which call for a fresh look at the policy and programmes concerning the place of English in the education at the tertiary level in Kerala. This chapter examines, in the historical perspective, the role of language in educational advancement and cultural development. The emerging global scenario also calls for the need of re-defining the roles and functions of English and the reformulation of the entire teaching/learning programme.
Chapter Three is an analysis of the curriculum centred aspects of teaching English at the tertiary level. This part shows, what exactly is the role of a well-planned curriculum / syllabus, in the light of the developments in this area of study in India and abroad. Whether the curriculum, syllabus and teaching materials under consideration fulfil the basic requirements expected of them is another focus of this chapter.

Chapter Four provides an objective analysis of the text centred problems, which to a great extent hinder effective learning of English. Recent research findings on the socio-cultural and linguistic aspects of the selection and gradation of text books have been examined in relation to the text books already in use at the tertiary level.

Chapter five attempts an analysis of certain features of English teaching/learning at the tertiary level concerned with teachers, learners, classroom atmosphere, social environment, time allowed for teaching and a few other similar issues. This chapter provides an objective analysis of these issues prevalent in the majority of affiliated colleges in Kerala. This chapter also focuses on the need for teacher training programmes, and an attitudinal change of the teachers and students.

Chapter Six outlines the features of the present evaluation system, in terms of various developments the world over in testing and evaluation. It also stresses, why it is imperative to bring about a total replacement of the system of evaluation that is in practice at present.

The last chapter in the light of the analysis made in the previous chapters envisages the new course and curriculum, which the investigator believes would bring about qualitative and quantitative change in the tertiary English education. The second part of chapter seven is the summary and conclusion.

The documentation of the study is based on the latest edition of the MLA Handbook.