It was during the initial years of my teaching career at Goreswar College that the idea of doing research on the problems of teaching English in the vernacular-medium (Assamese-medium) secondary schools in the district of Kamrup, my home district was born into my mind when I found that most of the students I had to teach had a very poor foundation in English. Being a vernacular-medium product myself, I was well aware of the kind of instruction in English they had passed through, but I simply found it difficult to justify the state of poverty they displayed in the language even after they had studied it for long six years during their schooling period. I was still more astounded when I saw English teachers working at the secondary level trying to put the whole blame on the students – their lack of aptitude, lack of interest and motivation, lack of guardian consciousness and what not – when asked about the causes of the poor achievement of students in English. The subsequent years saw the gradual consolidation of my urge as it was seen that the situation deteriorated further rather than start looking up with the passage of time.

The present study is, thus an attempt to investigate the problems of teaching English in the vernacular-medium (Assamese-medium in this case) secondary schools in the district of Kamrup, Assam. Based on the descriptive survey method the study endeavours to look at the problems from three different angles – the teachers’ point of view, the students’ point of view and the Heads of the institutions’ point of view – all synthesized into one integrated view together with that of the investigator’s gained from his own observation of the whole teaching-learning scenario as it exists and works. Besides, another aspect that makes the present study important is the specificity of focus on the problems hypothesized to
study them into their proper magnitude rather than lean on vague generalizations. The students' point of view incorporated into the study brings in the problems of learning English along with those of teaching English thus giving the study an added dimension. The study comprises seven independent chapters as described below-

Chapter one is entitled Introduction and deals with the historical overview of the global perspective of teaching of English followed by a brief historical discussion on the English Language Teaching practices in India as well as in Assam with particular focus on the present scenario. This chapter also comprises the statement of the problem, its objectives, hypotheses, delimitation and justification. Chapter two is titled Theoretical Foundation of the Study. This chapter presents a discussion on the dominant theoretical concepts and insights of second language learning and teaching with particular focus on the factors or variables that influence the teaching and learning of English as a second language. A critical exploration into some expert views on the problems of teaching English as a second or foreign language is also attempted here which is expected to give the present investigation into the problems of teaching English in the chosen universe the proper direction. This is followed by the third chapter entitled Review of Related Literature. In this chapter a review of similar studies done in the field or some related areas is undertaken. Studies reviewed in this chapter include a number of studies done in India, few others done abroad and a few done in Assam and the Northeast. Chapter four of the study describes the research design, methodology, construction and administration of tools, sample selection etc. and is titled Methodology – and the Research Design. Chapter five is named Analysis and Interpretation of Data where the data collected for the study have been analysed and interpreted quantitatively and qualitatively in the light of the
objectives set forth for the investigation in order to arrive at results and findings. Chapter six is entitled **Findings**. This chapter provides a comprehensive summary of the findings as well as the recommendations of the study. The seventh and last chapter is entitled **Conclusion**. This is the concluding chapter of the study where an effort is made to establish the need of the investigation on the strength of its findings and outcome. This chapter also summarizes the whole study in brief.

The findings of the study, presumably, the first of its kind, it is hoped, will go a long way towards improving the ELT situation not only in the vernacular-medium secondary schools in the district of Kamrup in particular but also in the whole lot of secondary schools in the state of Assam and beyond in general.

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(Sarat Chandra Deka)
Research Scholar