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Chapter-I
Introduction

1.1 Background
With the introduction of the vocational courses at the undergraduate level the university education system in India begun to take new strides towards “integrative development” (Kolb, D., as quoted by V. S. Singh 1999). By integrative development, Kolb refers to the development of the unique capabilities of the person towards creativity, wisdom and integrity whereby learners develop “the capacity to adapt oneself to reality plus the critical capacity to make choices and to transform that reality.” (ibid. 1)

Primarily intended to promote “the development of capabilities required for self-employment and diversifying the informal sector and for upgrading the productivity of household occupations” (University Grants Commission, Vocationalization of First Degree Education (1993, Preface), these courses also aim at providing vertical mobility to students. The purpose of this emerging trend towards the Vocationalization of education is mainly to enhance employment opportunities.

‘Functional English’ initially designated as Communicative English, is one of the nearly three dozen subjects introduced by the University Grant Commission at the undergraduate level as a part of a very comprehensive exercise to vocationalize higher education. It aims at “training enterprising young men and women in various communicative skills—oral, written and communicative.” In order to put in perspective the relevance and
appropriateness of the vocational course, it is necessary to discuss the undergraduate education scenario of India.

1.1.1 The Undergraduate Education in India: an Overview

According to the statistical figures the higher education system in India is probably one of the largest in the world (as 450,000,000 students, employing 2,63,125 teachers out of which 58,661 teach in university departments and constituent colleges, and 2,04,464 teach in colleges affiliated to universities). (1991 UGC Report cited in Rao, S., 1995:237). The increased enrolment at the undergraduate level over the years has led to the mushrooming of colleges.

All these expansions in the educational sector in the post-independent Indian university scene were apparently meant to meet the manpower requirements of the country. However, in reality there has been little effort during the past several decades to link educational opportunities with employment opportunities.

An average undergraduate student presumably looks upon the university as a means of getting degrees or diplomas, but without any well-defined purpose in terms of employment prospects. Traditional subjects like History, Political Science and Languages, it was realized, did not hold much potential in terms of the learner's employability in the current market conditions. The result of this complete lack of co-ordination between what was taught in the colleges and what was required in the market was an ever-growing mass of unemployed and unemployable young man and women. The situation gradually assumed proportions of a grave national problem calling for remedial measures.
The situation therefore calls for special efforts and programmes in the university sector to develop human resources compatible with the requirements of contemporary society and to evolve mechanisms for the generation of new employment opportunities in the private and public sectors, both in conventional and non-traditional areas (Khanna, 1991).

However, it is becoming important that "educational and training institutions should show an awareness and appreciation of the social and economic changes which make demands on the system to produce with the knowledge, skills and attitudes for assuming productive and creative roles in society." (UGC Report on Vocationalization of Education, 1993:1). Thus a policy is required to produce the enterprising citizens geared towards the developmental needs of the country.

1.1.2 The Position of English in India

Even after 50 years of independence in India, English is treated as the 'link language', 'library language', and 'window to the world'. No other language has risen in status yet to substitute the all-encompassing influence of the English language in the socio-economic and educational arenas. As Krisnaswamy and Sriraman (1994) put it,

"Learners of English in India have realized that English is not necessary for shaping of characters, the development of the aesthetic sense, ... but English is needed for mobility and social and economic success; English is the language of opportunities because it takes one outside one's own community, to places where more opportunities are available for professional and economic reasons... it has a lot of 'surrender value' and learners want to cash in on that." (p.25)
English not only gives the information in every conceivable branch of knowledge; it has also the power to change the world that changes us. However, it is important to note that “English is the language of modernization not of westernization.”(ibid.26) Students of India have realized that English is necessary to talk about their identity, language, literature, science, technology, society, economy, polity, values and culture to the world outside.

English is being learnt and used not out of any imposition but through the realization that it has certain inherent advantages. Today in the context of global English there is a new awareness about communicative English. Everyone who is anyone is desperately eager to acquire communicative competence in English. Parents as well as learners have realized that to acquire fluency in English is a means of survival as well as of empowerment.

1.1.2.1 Teaching of English at School Level in Gujarat

The state of Gujarat was formed on 1 May 1960 after the bifurcation of Greater Bombay. The policy on English language teaching was modified to change the situation; as a result a new language policy was announced for the state of Gujarat. The integration committee on secondary education held on 26 May 1960 declared that English could be taught voluntarily form standard V to VII, in a meeting attended by the Vice Chancellors of universities of Gujarat, Chairmen of Municipal school Boards, and some members of Gujarat Vidhan Sabha.

The Government of Gujarat was anxious about the poor state of affairs in English language Teaching and it announced a decisive policy on 2nd June 1960. With the result English was taught in std. VIII, IX, and X as one of the
subjects. In class X, which was the year of Public Examination, it was taught as an optional subject. Furthermore, during graduation also it was an optional subject. However, if a student desired to opt for English at the college level, she was allowed to do so after going through a short 'Bridge Course'. It enabled them to specialize in English as a major subject, thus placing these students at par with those who had been studying English since class VIII without a break. All these years, the situation of English in the state of Gujarat, remained in a state of flux. Most of the students did not have even elementary knowledge of English language, which could enable them to cope up with the challenges of the time posed by inadequate command of English. As Dr. Rajedrasinh Jadeja and Dr. S. Natraj have rightly said in their book 'Communicative Approach':

"...in the 60's the approach to the teaching of English was bookish and rule-governed. Ability to translate from and into English and Gujarati was considered the hallmark of learning English. Use of the language in real life situations was not conceived to be important." (p.6)

With a view to giving an impetus to vocational courses, when Gujarat opted for the 10+2+3 pattern of education, English was introduced as an optional subject in classes V, VI, VII and VIII. In class VIII, there used to be two categories of students (a) those who had studied English for three years, and (b) those who were total beginners. During this time, once again the subject was compulsory in classes VIII and IX but optional in X, XI and XII and also in a few universities, leaving little motivation for schools to take the teaching of the subject seriously. By the 1990's, however, most schools offered English in classes V, VI and VII. Nevertheless, the approach to the teaching of English was mainly structural. On the positive side, now some attention was paid to oral work. However, by and large the focus still
remained on the transmission of information about the language, viz. rule-
memorization and word-lists.
Towards the end of the 80's, however, some change was noticed in the
textbooks and teacher -training programmes. There were a few teachers and
teachers -educators trying to relate classroom language teaching with the
real language use outside. With increased mobility of people across the
globe, use of English was not only considered more acceptable but also
desirable. Numerous private institutions flourished by offering help to those
who wanted to go abroad, appear for competitive examinations, and appear
for interviews of different types etc.
Keeping in view the present need of English language from 2000 onwards
the Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board started
upgrading and updating the syllabi of English for standards VIII, IX, X. It is
designed to consolidate and further expand the language acquired at the
primary school level and equip the learner with a vocabulary repertoire of
about 3000words and to develop the skills of LSRW .The main thrust of the
new syllabus is on:
   a) meaning and use rather than form of the language
   b) communicative skills and language functions
   c) interactive classroom practices for learner-centred activities and
   d) evaluation of communicative ability rather than formal grammar.
   (GSHEB English Syllabus, 2003-2004)
The perspective to English language teaching as reflected in this syllabus is
communicative. That is, the teaching of English is need-based, learner
centred, interaction -oriented. The teacher's role is of a facilitator of
learning who creates opportunities for the students to use English in the
classroom, at school as well as outside. This approach envisages centrality of exposure to spoken English as well as oral interaction for language learning acquisition. The evaluator of all the skills i.e. LSRW thinking, appreciation, library skills is comprehensive and continuous. Both the print and electronic media are to be used extensively.

1.1.2.2 Teaching of English at the UG level in Gujarat

In most of the universities of Gujarat there are two types of English courses at the B.A. level: (i) English major, (ii) General (compulsory English). In some of the universities even the general English courses have not been made compulsory for all students, despite the fact that all students need English for academic and professional purposes and for social interaction. The special English course, on the other hand, has been provided on an elective basis for students who need a higher level of proficiency in English and are interested in the study of English literature. This course is expected to enable them to “undertake a specialized study of English language and literature and to acquire advanced use of English for communication.” (Curriculum Development (CDC) Report, 1989:29).

An examination of the existing curricula in English at the undergraduate stage reveals that, it does not generally take into account the entry-level linguistic competence of the students who join the colleges’ universities or the linguistic demands of the jobs they seek later. The demands for future employment expect a fair degree of proficiency in spoken and written English which most of the university courses do not cater to.

Though the aims and objectives of the General English, Special English, are intended to cater to the ‘heterogeneous tertiary level student population’,
they do not equip learners with the language skills for functioning in English.
Thus, though English is an important need for the students for career mobility and social advancement, for most students (except English medium students) the courses offered at present at the undergraduate level do not lend themselves to immediate usefulness in terms of proficiency or job-related skills development.

1.1.3 Reasons behind the failures of General English courses in the development of language use

It has been observed that the General English courses in general do not cater to the varied requirements of language use that students need after the course (e.g., at the workplace, use of communication skills for interpersonal and interactional needs).

The traditional GE courses predominantly show a lack of emphasis on the cultivation of communication skills, as they adopt a classical humanist approach to the curriculum. The classical humanist has the philosophy that learners will eventually be able to communicate, once they have mastered the rules of sentence construction and have acquired an adequate vocabulary (Clark 1987:11). It presumes that the learners do not claim the return on his investment in learning until that learning has been proceeding for some years (Wilkins, 1974: 121). But in the Indian context, even after several years of learning, students fail to use English effectively for communication. This indicates the reduced degree of usefulness of the GE courses offered at the undergraduate level.

The prevalent pattern of the GE courses seems to be the prescription of reading texts (anthologies of poetry and prose, short stories, novels and
plays) along with some exercises in reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar and composition. Though 'language items' are used in some universities, there has been no attempt to understand the learners 'needs and interests' in a systematic way. This is evident from the design of the syllabuses and their implementation in the classrooms.

The teaching methodology is often examination -oriented and teacher-centered, done largely through lecturing, text explication, translation and dictation of notes. Not much remedial teaching is done, though the provision exists in some universities. Testing and examinations mainly assess learners' memory rather than skills.

Therefore, learners end up memorizing select sections of the syllabus for the examinations, without developing the readiness to break from the confinement of prescribed practices (Hudson, 1967, as quoted by V.S. Singh, 1999). In other words, students tend to rely more on convergence to certain established patterns of knowledge and behaviour, and not divergence towards creativity to cope with problems which have no readymade formulae solutions. This points to an urgent need to relocate English learning in a more practical, skill-oriented package for the students, as in the Functional English Course.

1.2 The Vocationalization of Education

In the previous section, while looking at a glance at the undergraduate educational scene in India and particularly in Gujarat we have briefly examined the role of the vocational Functional English (FE) Course in training students for self-employment in contrast to the General English and English main courses.
In order to bring the importance of the development of the Functional English course, it is necessary to have a clear idea about the concept of Vocationalization of education. In the FE course, an attempt has been made to shift the emphasis from teaching to learning, from individual to social objectives and from a mere acquisition of information to experience-based development of skills and character formation.

1.2.1 Defining Vocational Education

It is necessary for us to look at some of the definitions of vocational education in order to relate it to the Vocationalization aimed at the undergraduate level. Traditionally, vocational education has been understood as:

"...education designed to prepare skilled and semi-skilled personal, junior and middle level personnel, semi-professionals for one or more groups of occupations, trades or jobs" (Rao, S., 1995:240).

This means that vocational education entails a combination of general education, practical training for job-related skill development and its associated theoretical frameworks, the emphasis being on practical training.

A comprehensive definition of vocational education provided by UNESCO (1974) embraces those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes and understanding of knowledge related to occupations in the various sectors of economic and social life. Such education would be an integral part of general education and a means of preparing for an occupational field and an aspect of continuing education." (Rao, S., 1995:239)
Finch and Sheppard (1975:111) further elaborate the definition of vocational education as having one or more of the following characteristics:

(a) education of less than college degree on baccalaureate* degree;
(b) more emphasis on fitting a person for a job and less emphasis on exploring and establishing one's self in a career;
(c) preparation for gainful employment;
(d) preparation for careers that require less than a baccalaureate degree;
(e) emphasis on skill development or specific job preparation; and
(f) focus of attention at the upper middle grades, senior high, two-year college and adult levels.

Finch and Sheppard's definition of vocational education focuses mainly on equipping students for employment, with not much emphasis given on further education or intellectual development. The targeted groups are expected to give more importance to skill development as preparation for jobs.


1.2.2 Relevance and Viability of the Vocationalization of Education in India

In India, consistent efforts are apparently made to strengthen the economy by linking education with productivity (Education Commission, 1964-66). Such a linkage has two aspects: first, how to make our system of education strengthen our developmental efforts by making available the kind of manpower need for the purpose, and second, what can be done to ensure that all those who receive education can get usefully employed and not remain...
jobless (Jha, 1986; Chauhan, 1989) ideally, education should prepare
students for a fuller life; but the general education offered at present in the
traditional curricula at the school and college level does not equip all with
the "tools for earning a decent living" (Rao, G., 1977:24).
The majority of those who complete university education ultimately have to
train themselves for skilled jobs. In this context, it is important to realize that
a country like India can not offer only white-collar jobs; nor can it provide
jobs to all who are educated or trained in government departments and
establishments. The current system of education which is only capable of
catering to "a mass learning clientele" (Naik, 1975, as quoted by V. Singh:
27) or producing a mass of educated unemployables, gives little thought to
the future of the students while the uneducated manage to get unskilled and
semi-skilled jobs, those who are educated up to the graduation stages is
severely hit by unemployment. It therefore becomes necessary that each
individual should be encouraged to discover his own aptitude and choose the
type of education, which offers sufficient scope for the exploitation of
his/her abilities (ibid. 27).
We need not merely training but education, not indoctrination but the
development of the potential in each individual—a process that should be in
the educational institution and continue throughout life. It is in this context
that our universities can play a major role in motivating and preparing
students for self-employment as well as in equipping them better for
available positions.
At present, university degrees lend credibility to the training and skills
development that students acquire through vocational courses. Colleges
should therefore be accountable regarding the proper implementation of the
programmes; and this should be reflected in the internal and external
examinations. However, the dangers inherent in the popularization of vocational courses can be seen in the mushrooming of alternative institutions, which lure students with promises of 'quick success'. For instance, the availability of vocational options for English at the +2 level has indirectly led to the mushrooming of Spoken English and Personality Development Institutes offering short duration courses. This trend has confused the undergraduate students, who ultimately prefer quick remedies for their 'ailments' in language proficiency. A review of the implementation of the vocationalization of education, in the Indian context, therefore merits an in-depth study of socio-economic factors like, density of population, job preferences of each income group, and prospects for self-growth and development in innovative enterprises in a developing third world country like India.

In order to make the vocational programme viable in India; we need to be also aware of some of the problems associated with its implementation. It is important to ensure that new patterns of education should take care of the expected level of general education and also impart skills to enable students to get jobs or to engage themselves in enterprises of their own. Hence, skills surveys would be necessary to identify activities related to societal needs. The curriculum plan should include objectives, content, methods of teaching-learning and evaluation techniques of the programme and should involve employers and learners in the planning process. In-service orientation programmes for teachers, improving infrastructural facilities, mobilizing public opinion and public awareness, and promoting employment of vocational passouts in relevant areas are some of the ways in which the implemented vocational courses and the proposed ones could be
made to have relevance and practical utility for the learners, employers and society.

1.2.3 Selection of English as a Vocational subject

Following the first reason i.e. to avoid the duplication of the courses the Committee on Vocationalization of First Degree Education (1993) introduced languages as vocational subjects. Though language is important for communication purposes, it was never considered seriously as vocational subject to develop job potential among the students. Introduction of English as vocational subject is an important decision taken by the Committee on Vocationalization of First Degree Education (1993). Earlier in 1989 Curriculum Development Centre’s Report in English declared English as a subject of human resource development, but mentioned that “time was not yet ripe.”

Growing importance of English in public and private sector demands proficiency in spoken and written English. Candidates with proficiency in English are preferred by the employment sector. In the modern world certain opportunities are available for the learners to work as free-lancer or see, self-employment using English language as means. In this regard opportunities like journalist trainee, scriptwriter, commentator, compere, receptionist, newsreaders, tutors are available for the learners. Realizing these changes in situation, Committee appointed by the UGC (1993) introduced English as a vocational subject.
1.3 Introduction of the Functional English at the Undergraduate Level

The main objective of this course introduced by the UGC in 1993 is to 'motivate young men and women to seek self-employments well as to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship in young graduates'. The primary aim of the FE course is to 'prepare self sufficient, self-reliant young men and women'. It is also thought that this course would make the young graduates confident and enterprising enough to undertake self-employment and to seek employment in new areas.

The FE course attempts to activate and enrich learner's English language and further improves their communicative competence to help them play their roles effectively in commercial and administrative situations. Thus the FE course mainly focuses on language skills to improve the communicative ability of the learners to grow and develop in a competitive world undertaking self-employment.

1.3.1 What is Functional English?

The English Language Teaching (ELT) Pocket Dictionary defines the term 'functional 'as "designed for use". It implies anything (say a language teaching course) structural so as to serve a definite purpose.

Bearing this in mind, 'FE' could be defined as using English for a specific purpose. This, obviously, means using English for the purpose of carrying out language communicative functions –oral, written and conversational. Furthermore, it includes all those ways in which English serves as a key to fulfill a definite purpose such as enabling learners to pursue vocations involving active communication in English.
1.3.2 The Role of the Functional English course: Scope and Possibilities

The Functional English (hereafter, FE) course has been introduced under the discipline of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. In this section, we shall take closer look at the criteria with which the Functional English course was introduced at the undergraduate level. We shall also see how the course content is related to the aims and objectives as indicated in the FE syllabus.

The report on the Vocationalization of First Degree Education (RVFDE) states that “… in recommending vocational subjects for introduction at the first degree stage (B.A., B.Com., B.Sc. etc.), the Committee considered three options:

1. deepening and diversifying the skill component of courses which are by their very nature expected to provide usable vocational skills.
2. designing and developing a number of three-year vocational courses for introduction at the first-degree level.
3. introducing one vocational subject in the existing first degree programme while allowing students a choice of other two/three subjects as prescribed by the university” (RVFDE, 1993: 9).

The FE course was thus introduced as an optional three-year vocational subject with focus on language skill development. By making the course optional, the RVFDE underlined that, “the desirability of ensuring that students opting for one vocational subject will continue to have the opportunity for post-graduate education in one of the non-vocational subjects that they will continue to choose. (ibid., 10)

This was intended to ensure horizontal (in terms of self-employment or immediate job prospects) and vertical (continued education and or
upgradation of existing proficiency in skills) mobility to students. The FE course is at present primarily tuned towards a small group of students who may be interested in pursuing a career as a journalist in the electronic print media, a receptionist, conversational English tutor or sales-representative. The task of preparing students for these jobs will require specialized job-related training, which seems to be outside the purview of universities. Moreover, the FE course gets into a restricted framework, as the admission prerequisite stated in the UGC syllabus is that students should have studied English as one of the subjects at the +2 level, with preference given to the English medium students. Thus, though conceptualized as job oriented course with the main aim of enabling “young graduates to become efficient communicators in English who will undertake, with confidence, self-employment in new areas” (Prototype FE Syllabus: 1), in reality the course caters only to select group of students with a fairly good English language background. The RVFDE also highlights the need for “a realistic assessment of the skills requirements of the employment market” and the need to “build into courses elements which will promote entrepreneurial competencies needed for self-employment etc.” (ibid., 9). In a course like FE, identification and development of usable vocational skills will vary according to the requirements of each group of students. Therefore, though there is a recommended syllabus for the course, each institution is expected to adapt the syllabus to the local availability of resources, projected requirements of the employers and the identified needs of the students.

In general, the FE course mainly develops in students communication skills (oral, written and conversational) in English. The course, spread over six semesters of fifteen weeks duration each, has a content of 12 papers.
1.3.3 Teaching of Functional English Course in Gujarat

For accommodating the UGC syllabus in the framework of Gujarat University, certain changes have been made keeping in view the declaration made in the prototype of the syllabus in regard to the structure and organization of the course.

"A great deal of flexibility has to be envisaged in the structure and organization of the course. For this is the aspect of the course on which the specific needs of the group of students under local resources and constraints, the area of job-training etc., has the greatest influence. However, no basic components of FECE could be left out, though the weightages given to the different components could vary." (Focus R.I.E. March 1999, XVII-XXIV, p.17)

In the annual examination system of Gujarat University the two papers- 'Remedial Grammar' 'and Introduction to Phonetics' are introduced at the First Year B.A. level, aiming at eradicating grammatical errors in students speech and writing and make them enable to acquire phonetic skills requires for 'oral skills'.

In B.A. Second Year syllabus 'Conversational English' and 'Writing Skills' papers are introduced. 'Conversational English' paper (III) focuses largely on a discussion of the situational variants of the language, while 'Writing skill' paper (IV) focused on both mechanics of writing and the different ways of manipulating the language to convey subtle shades of meaning.

In the B.A.III syllabus components such as Entrepreneurship development, On-the-job training and Radio\Broadcasting are incorporated.

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A preliminary analysis of the contents of the papers in relation to their aims and objectives shows that the course mainly helps to improve the students' proficiency in grammar, phonetics, writing and conversational skills.

1.4 The Importance of need-based materials for teaching Functional English students

For teaching 'Functional English' Course, numerous books such as “BBC Beginners’ English”, “Keep Talking”, “Five Minute Activities” etc., are available. Although these books are good enough, covering several communicative activities, it is observed that these books are designed keeping in view the foreign/second language learners. Thus, they cannot fully satisfy the needs of Indian classrooms. The following points also reinforce this viewpoint.

1. In India and particularly in Gujarat, most of the students come from vernacular medium schools. Though to some extent, they are found linguistically competent, they are not confident of uttering a single sentence in English even after passing their intermediate examination with good marks. The reason is mechanical and isolated teaching of grammar and prescribed text, in which most of the lessons are taken from the writing of British writers with whom Indian students find themselves alien, and thus can not generate interest in Indian learners.

2. In listening tasks ‘Received pronunciation’ (RP) technique is used with which students are not at all familiar. With the result, students are not able to comprehend a single sentence.

3. The major difference between students and these books is the difference of culture, life-style, and setting and of situations. So it becomes difficult to
comprehend the tasks and respond properly, unless the teacher simplifies or redesigns them.

4. “English is the language of superiors”, or “It is very difficult to be an effective communicator of English”. These are the sentences often heard in society, which show the attitude of people in general. Secondly, a common belief prevalent in society is that those who speak English fluently are the intelligent ones.

5. The last but not the least point is that some sections and groups fear the dominance of English, as it may westernize the youth and compromise Indian tradition and culture. To meet such fears innovative materials could be designed keeping in view the local setting, regional themes and festivals and also based on the day-to-day requirements of students.

The above discussions indicate that the teaching materials used in Functional English classroom at present are inadequate to develop the communicative competence of learners. Though a lot of research has been carried out in many parts of the world to teach language effectively, not much has been done in Gujarat to prepare materials suited to the learners of Gujarat. This study seeks to analyze the needs of Gujarati learners and prepare materials to help them in enhancing their communicative competence.

1.5 Implications for the Present Study

The following implications are kept in mind while making the plan for this study:

1. Due to the influence of structural approach, the teaching of English has become grammar centered as well as mechanical since grammar is taught them in isolation. That’s why the need of introducing FE was felt. But it seems to us that the shadow of grammar centeredness and
mechanical teaching directly falls on the teaching of Functional English too. In real sense it should go far beyond this. A careful study of teaching of Functional English needs to be carried out, as part of the review and this will be the basis for devising new techniques and materials.

2. The main drawback of the present way of teaching Functional English is the lack of coordination between syllabus designers, materials producers and teachers of Functional English. Syllabus is designed by a central agency; no doubt, a little freedom of making some modifications has been given. Materials producers prepared the materials according to the contents given in the syllabus. A teacher, who teaches in the FE class knows better what are the needs of his learners and what they want to learn, is kept away from syllabus designing and materials productions.

3. Learners are not aware that a particular function can be expressed in a number of ways and what is appropriate to one situation and one particular person may not be suitable for all times and all situations. Actual use of language is not mechanical and too formal. Ways of using different language items for one function and in the learners' familiar situations, particularly of semi urban areas, is a genuine need to be thought of.

4. Learners are at present involved in the activities which make very little sense to them. They should be given a chance to express their own ideas and feelings. There is a need to find ways of making the activity more meaningful to the learners by relating it to their personal lives. They should be given chance to make their own selection of topics.
5. Apart from informal class tests, there is a need to have objective tests to measure accurately the improvement of the learners in their ability to communicate. An attempt needs to be made to prepare such objective tests.

According to the needs analyses, learners need to learn to use English for a number of specific purposes. But the analysis of classroom practices indicate that there is a lack of fit between the needs of the learners and the way of teaching and testing English as it is undertaken in colleges. Therefore, the need for producing such innovative materials is felt strongly, which could satisfy the needs of students of Functional English.

1.6 The problem

"Preparation and Tryout of Materials for teaching Functional English Course' at the Undergraduate Level."

1.7 Definitions of Terms

1. Vocational course: A course to equip the students with the vocational skills.

2. Functional English: To use English for performing various functions viz., social functions, academic functions.

3. Communicative Competence: The ability to use and comprehend English in day-to-day affairs appropriately and effectively.

4. Materials: It is an essential teaching aid through which communicative competence of learners can be developed.
1.8 The Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aims of the study being reported here are the following:

(a) to assess the relevance and scope of the vocational Functional English Course at the undergraduate level in India and particularly in Gujarat;
(b) to analyze the syllabus recommended by the UGC and the prototype syllabus designed by CIEFL, Hyderabad, and RIE Chandigarh’s syllabus to examine the possibilities of adopting one or the other or both the syllabuses for implementing the FE syllabuses;
(c) to assess the needs of the Functional English students through the questionnaires given to learners and teachers of the FE course and ELT specialists.
(d) to prepare the materials for teaching different functions.
(e) to try-out the materials in the first year B.A. class;
(f) to suggest different techniques for using the innovative materials in the classroom;
(g) to conduct the pre-test and post-test and to analyze the scores to know the effectiveness of the materials;
(h) to suggest modifications in the teaching of the FE course, if necessary.

1.9 Hypotheses

1. Functional English is not taught with the need based materials in the colleges of Gujarat.

2. It is possible to analyze the needs of the learners of Functional English course.
3. It is possible to prepare materials which will be based on the needs of the learners and also involve natural use of language and which present appropriate models of learning.

**Null Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and to be tested:

1. The achievement level of the learners in the experimental group which is to be exposed to the new materials will be no better than the achievement level of the controlled group which is to be taught through the existing materials.
2. The existing and innovative materials do not differ significantly from the point of view of learners’ performance in the tests designed to test their language proficiency.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean score of pretest and post-test of female students of experimental group.
4. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of pre-test and post-test scores of male students of experimental group.
5. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of pre-test and post-test of students whose parental education is high.
6. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of pre-test and post-test of students whose parental education is low.

**The Research Hypotheses:**

1. The new materials are more beneficial than the existing materials.
2. The achievement level of the learners in the experimental group will be better than the achievement level of the learners in the control group.
1.10 Procedures

This section gives details about the research design, the sample population selected, the tools used, the data collected and the procedures of data analysis and interpretation.

1.10.1 Research Design

This study uses more than one research procedures. The 'survey type' is used for analyzing the needs of the learners and for obtaining information about the present way of teaching and testing of FE course in the colleges of Gujarat. The experimental design is used for the try-out of the new materials in a representative sample.

1.10.2 Sample

SPT Arts and Science College, Godhra was selected as the experimental group for trying out of the new materials. Two colleges Anand Arts College, Anand and R.R. Lalan College, Bhuj in which Functional English is offered as first subsidiary subject, were chosen as controlled group. Each group had 30 students as maximum 30 can be given admission to this course. The control groups were taught through the existing materials which were reviewed in next chapter.

1.10.3 Tools

The tools used in the study include three questionnaires and two test papers. (A leveling test was used for the purpose of equalizing two comparable groups.) A pre-test was administered to all the groups before the try-out and
a post-test was administered to all the groups after the tryout. The questionnaires and tests were piloted before finalizing.

1.10.4 Materials
Preparing of materials for the experiment began with the identifying of the 'language functions to be taught'. This had to be decided after analyzing the needs, topics of interest and their usability to FE students and the review of FE syllabuses.

1.10.5 Treatment
Having identified two comparable groups, one 'control group' was taught with the existing materials and the 'experimental group was taught with the new package of materials using the same teaching techniques. Both the groups were given a pre-test and a post-test before and after the tryout respectively.

1.10.7 Data Collection, Analysis and Interpretation
The data collected through the teachers’ and students’ questionnaires were analyzed to draw conclusions about the needs of the learners, topics of their interest and about the present practices of teaching and testing FE. The new package of materials was also redrafted after drawing the conclusions from the questionnaire sent to the academicians along with the proposed package.

The data collected through the tests were analyzed statistically to find out if the new materials have been effective. For this 'mean' and 'standard deviation' were calculated for both the groups.
1.11 The Scheme of Presentation

The scheme of presentation of the thesis is as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction
This chapter provides background information about the teaching of English in Gujarat, with particular reference to the Functional English Course. Then it talks of the relevance and viability of the Vocational courses in India, selection of English as a vocational course and scope of Functional English Course. It is followed by discussion on the importance of need-based materials, which provides evidence to the fact that the present materials are inadequate to meet the needs of the learners. This leads to the statement of the problems which is followed by the details of the research procedures.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature
This chapter presents a review of various theories of language learning which influences either directly or indirectly the advent of communicative approach which is the basis of Functional English course. Then it discusses the different syllabus drawn from the communicative approach, which leads to the designing of Functional English syllabus. It is followed by a review of all the three syllabuses prepared for the ‘Functional English Course’. After reviewing the syllabuses, communicative materials have been reviewed. In the end, the review of different research studies was made both in the Functional English course and in the field of materials production. The implications drawn from this review help the researcher in analyzing the needs of the learners and preparing the materials for teaching of ‘Functional English Course’, which would suit the needs of the learners of Gujarat.
Chapter Three: Materials Development

This chapter begins with the description of materials development: its background, importance of instructional materials, issues in materials development, role of materials in the present day, factors to be considered in the selection and production of materials and language learning models used for the production of teaching materials. It is followed by the description of task-based model of learning, which has been used for preparing the need-based materials for Functional English students.

Chapter Four: Experiment

In the beginning of this chapter different steps which were followed in the construction and development of data gathering tools used in the study and methods adopted in the selection of the sample, collection of data, methods of scoring and analysis are given. It is followed by the description of procedures adopted for preparing the instructional materials. Then it explains the syllabus for the present study, the criteria used for preparing materials and different activities used. After this, the procedures and strategies adopted for conducting the research experiment in different groups have been discussed covering sampling of data, equalization of groups etc. In the end the construction of tests, their scoring scheme and administration of the tests have been given.

Chapter Five: Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter has been divided into three parts. In the first part, the analysis of the teachers and the students’ questionnaires is made which was used for analyzing the needs of the students. The second part covers the analysis of tryout of all the modules such as a description of the task performed in the
class, problems faced and solutions offered and students' responses. It is followed by the general observations made by the investigator and the external observer, and students. In the third

Chapter Six: Findings, Implications, Suggestions & Conclusions
This chapter presents the findings of the research study and also its implications for the betterment of Functional English course at undergraduate level. Based on these findings, suitable pedagogic recommendations and suggestions have been given and conclusions are drawn.