CHAPTER 5

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROPOSED SYLLABUS DESIGN

5.1 INTRODUCTION

No formal learning process could occur without a well formulated syllabus. So inferentially, a syllabus needs to present items, topics and themes and describe the concomitant methodology and evaluation processes in order that teaching and learning processes are effective. For the processes to be successful, a syllabus must provide the aspects and elements of a course that is apt and appropriate to the student body who take up the course.

Our students learn English for twelve years in schools; but still face problems while communicating with others in English. Hence, it is necessary to design an alternative common syllabus for the first year students of engineering and technology to develop their language skills especially listening and speaking, which have been neglected in traditional language teaching classes.

An ideal syllabus should have clear unambiguous objectives. In this chapter, objectives are defined to suit the needs and interests of learners. These are derived from the responses of students, English teachers of engineering colleges and working engineers obtained through questionnaires. It is also evident from the responses that speaking and listening skills are neglected skills
in engineering institutions. There is also a debate going on among teachers whether to teach pronunciation in classes or whether to teach grammar implicitly or explicitly. Hence, the teaching of listening and speaking skills and pronunciation and grammar are discussed in detail in this chapter. Taking all these factors into consideration a new syllabus has been proposed and analysed in this chapter. Teachers' role in implementing this syllabus has also been described.

5.2 FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

Findings and implications of the survey questionnaires administered to the first and final year students, English teachers and working engineers

5.2.1 Findings based on the first year students' questionnaire entries

- Almost all students accept that they cannot listen well and that they would like to develop the listening skill.
- 67% of the students agree that they do not have enough language ability. 78% say that they don't have practice in speaking. They need training in English for speaking fluently. It is evident that students do not have the required exposure to language use. They use regional language (Tamil) for communication.
- 57% of the students agree that it is necessary that they develop reading skill. As they are technical students, they give importance to the reading of technical journals. They don't seem to have regular practice in reading. Almost all Tamil
medium students from towns and villages have difficulty in reading, as they don’t read anything other than what is there in their textbooks.

- Majority of students know the importance of writing skill. Unlike in the case of other skills, 50% of the students have difficulty in writing. They need practice in writing.

- 55% of the students say that the English syllabus followed in schools did not train them effectively to take up engineering courses where the medium of instruction in all courses is English. The Teaching / Learning process in the school was not effective to the extent required. They want to have their knowledge brushed up through a bridge course. Interaction with their bright classmates may also help them develop language skills and do better.

- While 56% of the students find the present I year B.E. Degree syllabus useful, others don’t like the present syllabus. Syllabus needs to be revised.

- While 51% of the students find the present English textbook useful, others don’t like the present English textbook. The prescribed English textbook needs to be revised and made interesting and useful. Compared to first year students, more number of final year students stated clearly that the English textbook did not help them much by way of preparation for them to develop four language skills.
70% of the students want to have English in their third year syllabus. It seems that they are fully aware of the importance of English.

While 64% of the teachers use English textbook with other books and handouts, 19% of the teachers use only the English textbooks.

49% of the students accept that teaching material prepared by their class teacher can help them learn the language. They believe that their class teacher knows their level and can produce materials accordingly. A textbook can be designed from simple one to complicated one to cover all students standard.

52% of the students give priority to lessons on topics like energy, food production, computers, industry, pollution, environment etc. and 51% of the students give priority to lessons on English pronunciation (accent, rhythm and intonation). They (41%) also show interest in including lessons on a collection of articles and letters to the editor from newspapers and magazines on politics, religion, culture and life histories of scientists, discoverers etc.

5.2.2 Findings based on the final year students’ questionnaire entries

All final year students (100%) are aware of the importance of listening and the need for developing listening skills. Compared to first year students final year students have less of language
problems. 63% say that they did not have much of practice in listening. Students do not practise listening as much as they should. 80% of them find it difficult to understand TOEFL questions and radio / TV. Programs.

• 49% of the students say that they have difficulty in reading and 40% complain of lack of practice in reading.

• All final year students (100%) are aware of the importance and the need for developing speaking skills. Compared to I year students, final years students have better oral fluency. About 80% of final year students find speaking difficult. 51% of the English medium students from city schools also have difficulty in communicating with others. 34% of the students say that didn’t have exposure to language use. They use mostly regional language (Tamil) for communication.

• 48% of the students find to be problematic in writing. 43% did not have the required amount of practice in writing. It is clear that almost all final year students know the importance of writing skill. 68% of the students do not find the present syllabus useful. Unlike first year students, more number of final year students stated clearly that the syllabus did not help them much. They felt that the syllabus should be revised.

• 68% of the students state that their English textbook did not help them much.

• 60% of the students want to have English during the fifth or sixth semester to train them for group discussions and interviews.
• 38% of the students want to have English in their third year syllabus and they want to have coaching for GRE and TOEFL in colleges. They seem to have very well understood the importance of English.

• 50% of the students agree that teaching material prepared by their class teacher is enough to learn the language. They can learn English with the help of the material properly prepared by the teacher. They believe that their class teacher knows their varied levels and can produce materials accordingly.

• 48% of the students give priority to lessons on topics like energy, food production, computers, industry, pollution and environment and 52% of the students prefer lessons on English pronunciation (accent, rhythm and intonation). 50% opt for a collection of articles and letters to the editor from newspapers and magazines on politics, religion, culture etc.

5.2.3 Findings based on the English teachers' questionnaire entries

• Majority of teachers (83% and 85%) feel that students face problems while speaking and writing. It is clear that students find speaking and writing more problematic than listening and reading.

• According to majority (90%) of teachers, weak students are from Tamil medium schools.

• 83% of teachers say that weak students do not have sufficient practice in the use of English and students do not have the
required language ability. The main reason for their poor performance is that students have not practiced the use of language adequately.

- Majority of teachers say that about 10 to 20% of the first year students approach them for help.
- Because of shyness, students do not approach them for help and they have no self-confidence.
- Half the teachers (52%) say students are not aware of the importance of English.
- 30% of teachers feel that students have no free time to meet teachers.
- Only 5 to 10% of final year students approach them for help. Compared to first year students, final year students have more self-confidence.
- Final year students expect teachers to prepare them to face group discussion and interview. Students who want coaching in GRE and TOEFL are slightly less in number than those who seek help for training in group discussion and interviews.
- Only half the teachers (53%) are able to help students to face group discussions and interviews and write GRE and TOEFL. Remaining (47%) teachers are not able to help students to face group discussions and interviews and write GRE and TOEFL, as they do not have free time.
- 62% of the teachers say coaching is needed as a part of regular timetable in fifth/sixth semester to perform (communicate) well
in group discussions, interviews and training in writing GRE and TOEFL.

- 74% of teachers recommend one common syllabus for all universities in Tamilnadu.
- 60% of teachers feel that the prescribed textbook does not cater to all levels of students.
- 84% of teachers want freedom to prepare their own material according to the different needs of learners.
- 84% of teachers need autonomy in teaching. 46% also say preparing their own material according to the different needs of learners will not be practicable.

5.2.4 Findings based on the working engineers’ questionnaire entries

- 70% of engineers use English in their offices.
- 74% of the engineers used English and Tamil when they were in colleges.
- All working engineers confirm that interviews are conducted in English and engineering students should be given training to face interviews in colleges.
- 80% of engineers use English in offices with their superiors. It is evident that most of the engineers use English with their superiors at the work place. Majority (60%) of the engineers use both English and regional language while communicating with their equals.
• Almost all (98%) working engineers feel that future engineers need a good command over English to be successful in their jobs.

• 93% of the working engineers say it is necessary to have a course in speaking and listening in engineering colleges.

• 75% of the working engineers feel that their use of English in official reading material is high.

• 81% of the working engineers feel that their use of English in official writing is high.

• 82% of the engineers use English for writing letters. They agree that they have to dictate or write Letters in English.

• 81% of the engineers use English for writing reports. They accept that they have to dictate or write reports in English.

• 75% accept that they have to dictate or write in English, notes and comments in files, as a part of normal duties.

• All working engineers say it is necessary for them to have the ability to read and write effectively.

• 63% of the engineers feel that higher secondary school English syllabus and examination question pattern could have prepared the students to be able to do well as students of engineering.

• 37% of the engineers also say that a short English Bridge course could have been arranged for, before the weaker engineering students were put along with others on equal footing to be able to do well as students of engineering.
95% of the working engineers suggest that help could be given as a part of regular curriculum during the fifth/sixth semester to perform (communicate) well in group discussions and interviews. 72% of them also say that students should be given training for taking up GRE and TOEFL during the fifth or sixth semester.

95% of engineers would like to recommend one common syllabus for all universities in Tamilnadu.

70% of the working engineers would like to recommend selected pieces of scientific and technical information on topics like energy, food production, computers, industry, pollution and environment. 72% also opt for lessons on letters to the editor and a collection of articles from newspapers and magazines on topics related to politics, religion and culture.

5.3 PROPOSED SYLLABUSES

Syllabus suggests an interaction between teacher and students. The traditional syllabus is primarily a source of information for students. The syllabus should become an important learning tool that will reinforce the intentions, roles, attitudes and strategies to promote active, purposeful and effective learning.

Syllabuses prescribed by most of the universities are not complete. They have just a list of items to be completed within the period of the course. The aim, goal, long term and short-term objectives are not stated in the syllabuses. They also focus only on reading and writing skills. An ideal syllabus
should give a complete picture of the whole course covering all points without any ambiguity. These proposed syllabuses include the teaching and testing of neglected skills like listening and speaking and give importance to all four language skill.

The following reference points can be used while creating a syllabus:

- Are the major goals / objectives of the course listed?
- Who is going to be the target group for the course? e.g. I year II semester, code numbers, course title.
- What should their entry level be? Is it meant for a specific level of students?
- What is expected of them? List the knowledge, skills, or experience expected from students.
- Why do they need this course?
- Is any bridge course offered?
- How can students refresh their knowledge through bridge course, if they are not clear about the units?
- Why should they learn these language units? Give reasons.
- Why are these topics chosen and arranged in a particular order?
- What type of activities they will be involved in doing during the teaching and learning process? For e.g. lectures, seminars, projects, group discussions, pair work, role-play.
- Will students be able to do better after completing this course?
- What skills or competencies will be developed in them?
- Are the lessons/topics /units and the time allotted for each item listed?
• What kinds of materials will be used during the course? Software? Simulations? Laboratory equipment?
• What kinds of instructional technologies will be used?
• Are the textbooks and reference books with authors and editions listed?
• Are the information about the Publishers, price of the textbook prescribed and the list of bookshops where books are sold included?
• Is a list of web sites and links given, if reference materials are available on the Internet?
• Is a list of assignments, term test papers and examinations given?
• What type of assignments? State how these assignment topics help to achieve the objectives/goals of the course.
• What should be the nature, length and format of the assignments?
• When assignments should be submitted?
• What are the test and examination dates?
• Is the nature of the tests indicated? (objective type, short answer, multiple choice and essays)
• What is the duration of the tests? One hour or three hours
• What is the pattern of an examination question paper?
• Is a model question paper given?
• What is the minimum attendance requirement?
• What are the responsibilities of students and teachers in teaching learning process?
• What are the evaluation and grading procedures?
• How internal marks are calculated?
• What marks are allotted for each continuous assessment / term test, assignment and final examination?
• What is the minimum mark required for promotion?
• When is the contact time for students with any type of physical or learning disability who need special coaching?
• Is a course calendar / time schedule provided?
• What is the deadline for the completion of lesson units for teachers and dead line for the submission of assignments etc., for students?
• Is there any supplementary information given for students?
• Is there a glossary of technical terms used in the course given for regional (Tamil) medium students?
• Is a list of reference books, which give more in-depth knowledge, given for bright students?
• Are model lesson plans for teachers provided?
• What is the mode of getting ‘end-of-term students’ feedback on teaching?

5.3.1 Syllabus for first year first semester engineering students

Subject Code: HS041

Semester – I

Aim of this course

To develop and to reinforce students' knowledge of the communicative use of language.
Objectives of this course

To familiarise learners with the rhetorical functions of scientific English and the specific features of technical English.

To help them increase their vocabulary and develop communication skills. (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing)

Language Study

Correction of grammatical errors both in spoken and written forms, vocabulary building, sentence formation, transformation of sentences, concord, tenses.

Note: As language skills are naturally integrated they should be generally taught and practised in an integrated way.

Listening I

Listening for general ideas and key words (extensive listening)
Listening for specific information (intensive listening)
Identifying sounds in contexts, rhythm and intonation
Filling in incomplete dialogues
Distinguishing stressed and unstressed syllables
Taking notes from lectures
Table 5.1 Listening I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Parameters</td>
<td>Means</td>
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<tr>
<td>comprehend</td>
<td>single sentence</td>
<td>general and technical</td>
<td>as in evaluation</td>
<td>‘wh’ questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>note take</td>
<td>one paragraph</td>
<td>and</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘yes’ or ‘no’ questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infer</td>
<td>two paragraphs</td>
<td>technical</td>
<td></td>
<td>statements fill blanks</td>
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<tr>
<td>summarise</td>
<td>long / short</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>interpret vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deduce</td>
<td>dialogues</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>analyse</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>imply</td>
<td>group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>locate ideas</td>
<td>discussion</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

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Speaking I

Greeting and Introducing
Asking and giving directions
Expressing likes, dislikes, intentions/hopes/wishes, opinions, ages, dates, weights, measures, etc.
Ordering - offering - requesting - lending - borrowing
Suggesting - agreeing - disagreeing - negotiating
Telephoning - advising - predicting - warning - clarifying, etc.
Stressing and pronouncing correctly
Giving / following instructions
Conveying scientific information
Stating reasons
Comparing and contrasting
Describing
Paraphrasing
Summarising
Table 5.2 Speaking I

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parameters</td>
<td>Means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greet, introduce</td>
<td>group discussion</td>
<td>student and teacher</td>
<td>as in evaluation</td>
<td>'wh' and yes/no questions question tags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express likes and dislikes, wishes, hopes</td>
<td>15 minutes dialogue, debate</td>
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<tr>
<td>future plans opinions</td>
<td>stress pronounce questions and answers</td>
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<tr>
<td>stress pronounce object</td>
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<tr>
<td>order offer request, suggest agree disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td>interact convey</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Parameters
- clarity
- fluency
- vocabulary
- verbal expression
- tonal accuracy
- accent, rhythm and intonation
- modulation styles (formal)
- logical sequence content
### Table 5.3 Reading I

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<td></td>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Parameters</td>
<td>Means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comprehend</td>
<td>letters</td>
<td>general and technical</td>
<td>as in evaluation</td>
<td>filling blanks T/F questions</td>
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<td>make notes</td>
<td>reports</td>
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<td>reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>predict</td>
<td>paragraphs</td>
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<td>as in performance</td>
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<td>imply</td>
<td>essays</td>
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<td>infer</td>
<td>short</td>
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<tr>
<td>discuss</td>
<td>dialogues</td>
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<td>pronunciation</td>
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<td>argue</td>
<td>long</td>
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<td></td>
<td>styles</td>
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<td>summarise</td>
<td>dialogues</td>
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<td>précis</td>
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<td>analyse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skim, scan</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>expression</td>
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<td>study</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>note making</td>
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<td>Writing 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar (sentence structure, correcting errors, vocabulary etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paragraph structuring and arranging sentences in order to test the ability to use cohesion and coherence (use of discourse markers and connectives)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal and informal letters</td>
<td>Letters of congratulations, condolence and complaint (letters to the editor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Invitations, acceptances and regrets</td>
<td>Enquiries</td>
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Table 5.4 Writing 1

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehend correct errors</td>
<td>reports</td>
<td>as in textbook and handouts</td>
<td>written as in evaluation</td>
<td>writing performance</td>
<td>clarity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write letters</td>
<td>short</td>
<td>grammar items</td>
<td>summarization</td>
<td>mean</td>
<td>logical sequence</td>
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<td>Write essays</td>
<td>short paragraphs</td>
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<td>essays</td>
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<td>Vocabulary</td>
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<td>Summarize</td>
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<table>
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<th>Expression</th>
<th>Discourse Markers</th>
<th>Logical Sequence</th>
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Means as in performance.
Reference books

Evaluation of the programme

Max marks-100
Final written examination – 60
Internal marks –40
Internal marks include
Tests 2x5=10 marks

Two one-hour written tests of reading comprehension, vocabulary and grammar

Testing listening skills – 15 marks
Listen to a recorded cassette – e.g. telephonic conversation
Listen to short monologue, conversation, interviews, discussion etc. and Identify topic, context, functions
Listen for writing short answers-filling the gaps- TOEFL test model

Testing speaking skills – 15 marks
Student introduces himself
Gives personal information, discusses past experience, plans etc. (3 marks)
Mini presentation by students on a given topic (3 marks)
Two way conversation – agreeing, disagreeing, explaining, comparing and contrasting (4 marks)
5.3.2 Syllabus for first year second semester engineering students

Aim of this course

to assist the non-native speaker of English studying in the medium of English at tertiary level to comprehend more fully the material of the kind that he or she may be required to read and benefit from the course.

to enable a non-native speaker of English to follow lectures, discussions, or demonstration in English at degree level and write adequate notes on these.

Note: Like the syllabus for the first semester, it is a notional - functional syllabus where grammatical structures are depicted through various tasks, activities, themes, contexts and topics. Moreover, students are given analytical texts to sharpen and widen the thinking of their minds.

Objectives of the course

to strengthen students' linguistic knowledge acquired in Semester I
to familiarise students with the cohesive aspects of long texts
to train them read texts with a critical eye.
to empower students to participate competently, confidently and appropriately in communication in English in the classroom, in real life and in the field-specific workplace.
to develop students' cognitive skills
to encourage critical and creative thinking

Note: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing skills are consolidated through more complex exercises than those devised in first semester. Skills naturally overlap and are not taught or practiced in isolation from one another. However, they are separated out here for the sake of clarity and convenience.

Language focus: passive voice, prepositions, conditional statements, instructions, question tags, verb, noun, adjectives, adverbs

Listening II

Sub-skills to be covered:
Listening for gist
Listening for key terms
Listening for sequence/chronological order
Distinguishing facts from opinions
Distinguishing statements from examples
Listening for digressions
Discriminating sounds in contexts
Following a range of accents, rhythm and intonation
Making notes from what is heard
Table 5.5 Listening II

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<tr>
<td>distinguish sounds</td>
<td>long dialogues</td>
<td>general and technical</td>
<td>content</td>
<td>( 'wh' ) questions</td>
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<td>follow accents</td>
<td>paragraphs</td>
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<td>tonal</td>
<td>( 'yes' ) or 'no' questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>gist</td>
<td>group discussion</td>
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<td>accuracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>specific information</td>
<td>talk</td>
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<td>pronunciation</td>
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<tr>
<td>make notes</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>teacher cassette news broadcasts CDs TV interviews</td>
<td>clarity</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>expression</td>
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<th>Medium</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distinguish sounds</td>
<td>long dialogues</td>
<td>general and technical</td>
<td>content</td>
<td>( 'wh' ) questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>follow accents</td>
<td>paragraphs</td>
<td></td>
<td>tonal</td>
<td>( 'yes' ) or 'no' questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gist</td>
<td>group discussion</td>
<td></td>
<td>accuracy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specific information</td>
<td>talk</td>
<td></td>
<td>pronunciation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make notes</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>teacher cassette news broadcasts CDs TV interviews</td>
<td>clarity</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>expression</td>
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Speaking II

Sub-skills to be covered through group discussion, debate, conversation, interviews and formal addresses
(use of Paralinguistic features such as eye movement, facial expressions, tonal variations, postural and gestural systems are stressed)

Expressing likes, dislikes, intentions/hopes/wishes, opinions, ages, dates, weights, measures, etc.
Suggesting - agreeing - disagreeing - negotiating
Telephoning - advising - predicting - warning, clarifying, etc.
Stressing and pronouncing correctly

Comparing and contrasting
Describing
Paraphrasing
Summarising
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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parameters</td>
<td>Means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discuss, debate</td>
<td>long</td>
<td>general and technical</td>
<td>content, clarity</td>
<td>'wh'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speak, express</td>
<td>dialogues</td>
<td></td>
<td>tonal accuracy</td>
<td>questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>report, define</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pronunciation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plans, explain</td>
<td>10 minutes speech</td>
<td></td>
<td>fluency, styles</td>
<td>'yes' 'no'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seminar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>expression</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>defend work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sentence structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stress, accent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>verbal and nonverbal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>summarize</td>
<td>30 min GD</td>
<td></td>
<td>expressions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>justify</td>
<td>interview talk</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Table 5.6 Speaking II
Reading II

Skimming: reading for gist
Scanning: reading for specific information
Reading for thorough comprehension
Inferring meaning from context
Reading for criticism
Developing analytical skills, etc.
Sub-skills to be covered through reading a wide range of text types and styles:
Identifying topic sentences
Supplying headings for texts
Dividing texts into sections carrying sub-topics
Distinguishing fact from opinion
Interpreting graphic information (tables, charts, graphs, etc.)
Representing lexical information graphically
Making notes from texts
Table 5.7 Reading II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
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<td>Parameters</td>
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<td>Act</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Means</td>
<td>Parameters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>predict</td>
<td>long</td>
<td>books</td>
<td>clarity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>find topic sentence</td>
<td>reports</td>
<td>worksheets</td>
<td>accuracy</td>
<td>'wh' questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make notes</td>
<td>short news items</td>
<td>journals</td>
<td>pause</td>
<td>'yes' or 'no' questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skim and scan</td>
<td>books</td>
<td>general and technical journals</td>
<td>stress accent</td>
<td>fill blanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specific information</td>
<td>journals</td>
<td>newspaper</td>
<td>intonation</td>
<td>T/F questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infer meaning</td>
<td>reports</td>
<td>summaries</td>
<td>pronunciation</td>
<td>short long questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>develop analytical skills</td>
<td>letters</td>
<td></td>
<td>comprehend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distinguish fact and opinion</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Evaluation Parameters: clarity, accuracy, pause, stress, accent, intonation, pronunciation, summarize, comprehend.
- Performance Means: 'wh' questions, 'yes' or 'no' questions, fill blanks, T/F questions, short long questions.
- Evaluation Parameters: clarity.
Writing II

Enable students to produce coherent and appropriate formal academic writing.

The focus is on the process of writing, rather than on the product.

Language Study: vocabulary, grammar and punctuation are studied in contexts. Remedial work in these areas is given as required.

Formats to be covered:
- letters of application, writing CVs/resumes
- minutes, reports
- paragraphs, essays, reports and pieces of extended writing that:
  - illustrate, distinguish between facts and opinion
  - list, sequence, compare and contrast
  - examine advantages and disadvantages
  - discuss, express opinion
  - justify / give reasons
  - summaries, paraphrases
Table 5.8 Writing II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
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<td>Kind</td>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Parameters</td>
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<td>write</td>
<td>books</td>
<td></td>
<td>clarity</td>
<td>'wh' questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>applications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>style</td>
<td>'yes' or 'no' questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>CVs</td>
<td>worksheets</td>
<td></td>
<td>vocabulary</td>
<td>filling blanks</td>
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<tr>
<td>minutes</td>
<td>Powerpoint</td>
<td></td>
<td>presentation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>memos</td>
<td>CDs</td>
<td>general and technical</td>
<td>discourse markers</td>
<td></td>
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<td>summaries</td>
<td>essays</td>
<td></td>
<td>expression</td>
<td>short</td>
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<tr>
<td>essays</td>
<td>letters</td>
<td></td>
<td>punctuation</td>
<td>long answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reports</td>
<td>reports</td>
<td></td>
<td>logical sequence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>describe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>summarize</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>illustrate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>comprehend</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Textbooks:
Reference books:
Supplementary reading:

Evaluation of the programme

Max marks-100
Final written examination - 60
Internal marks - 40
Internal marks include
Tests \(2\times 5=10\) marks
Two one-hour written tests of reading comprehension, vocabulary and grammar

Testing listening skills – 15 marks
Listen to a recorded cassette – e.g. telephonic conversation
Listening for writing short answers-filling the gaps
Test of English As a Foreign Language (TOEFL) model
Listen to short monologue, conversation, interviews, discussion etc.
and identify topic, context, functions etc.
Testing speaking skills – 15 marks
Student introduces himself
Give personal information, past experience, future plans etc., (3 marks)
Mini presentation by a student on a given topic (3 marks)
Two-way conversation – agreeing, disagreeing, comparing and contrasting (4 marks)
5.3.3 Syllabus for sixth or seventh semester engineering students

The aim of the course:

to prepare students for the workplace and for international English examinations by empowering them to participate in oral communication effectively, appropriately and confidently in real-life, workplace and classroom contexts.

Objectives:

to help students to be more aware of what is involved in seminar activity and to supply them with some of the interactional language that is used there.

to read with comprehension and write with accuracy a variety of text genres.

to train them for Test Of English As a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

Note: Language skills are naturally integrated and will be practiced in an integrated way. However, they are separated out here for the sake of clarity.
Listening III

Listening for gist and for specific information to a variety of formats such as conversations, talks, news broadcasts, etc.

Following a variety of accents

Exam focus: TOEFL listening exercises

Speaking III

participating effectively, appropriately and confidently in conversations, interviews, group discussions, role-plays, etc.

Public speaking: e.g. formal debates, speeches, presentations, etc.

Defending one’s own written work

Correction of significant errors in pronunciation and stress

Additional suggestions or requests from students

Exam focus: IELTS and other Tests of spoken English

Reading III

Reading with comprehension a variety of text genres such as newspaper and magazine articles, Internet materials, journal articles, academic papers, technical reports, speeches, etc.

Following anaphoric, cataphoric and exophoric references

Understanding lexical / semantic signposts

Using contents pages, indexes, glossaries and chapter summaries

Exam focus: academic and general reading tests, TOEFL reading comprehension and vocabulary test.
Writing III

Taking notes while listening and while reading
Researching, planning, drafting and writing a variety of text genres such as newspaper and magazine articles, speeches, reports and essays
An extended piece of writing based on research
Additional suggestions and requests from students
Exam focus: academic and general writing tests, TOEFL essay-writing test

Evaluation of the programme

Max marks-100
Final written examination – 60
Internal marks –40
Internal marks include
Mini project =10 marks
An extended piece of writing, done in the students' own time and based on research.

Tests 2x5=10 marks

Two one-hour written tests of reading comprehension, vocabulary and essay writing.

Testing listening skills – 10 marks
An oral test, in which students will defend the written work they have done for mini project
A mock TOEFL listening test

Testing speaking skills – 10 marks
A mock interview
Group discussion

5.4 TEACHERS’ ROLE IN IMPLEMENTING THE SYLLABUSES

In the present ELT situation in Tamilnadu, we have different types of students joining professional (engineering) colleges after completing 12 years of schooling. Some of them are students who are from elite, urban areas. They would have studied through English medium for a minimum of 12 years. Hence, they use the language fairly well. They have good exposure to the world through TV channels and the Internet. Their culture and linguistic patterns are totally different from those of the other sets of students who are from vernacular medium schools situated in rural areas. In our context we (the teachers) have the very significant advantage of knowing the learner’s first language.

Hence, we have two major groups of students in one classroom who are culturally and linguistically from different environments. In this situation, the first job of the teacher is to minimize this cultural mismatch among learners. To help reduce the weight of this psychological barrier the teacher can begin the class with ‘ice breaking’ sessions, ask students to introduce themselves to each other and make them mingle and thus improve the prospects of affinity between
them. He can make this introduction as light and as humorous as possible. This helps ease any tension of facing a gathering for the first time. In the first class, students are asked to provide information about themselves like their name, hometown and birth date. More in-depth questions can be asked to make students talk about themselves by sharing their favorite music, hobbies and activities, favorite TV shows and movies. The researcher found that this icebreaker activity allows students to learn more about themselves, about others in the class and promotes an open exchange of information.

Generally speaking, syllabus, topics and objectives are not different from those of the world’s ELT scene. But learners are different. Naturally, every teacher has to find a way of teaching and tackling different classroom learning situations. The main aim of learners is to understand their main subject well through language. Only the classroom teacher is fully aware of his students’ cultural and linguistic environment. The teacher can identify the variety of English needed by a particular group of learners by analyzing the linguistic characteristics of the specialist area of work or study and introduce students to a particular kind of English. Hence he must be able to prepare his own materials and suggest appropriate methods that are suitable for the local situations and needs of learners. He can also use different methods and materials for different levels of students in a class. At the beginning of every semester the teacher can spend some time with his students to find out the type of activities (like group discussion, debate, role play etc.) they are interested in, so that they can actively participate in the classroom activity with full involvement and make teaching and learning much more meaningful.
The first objective in the classroom is to engage student's interest on a topic in the target content area. This can be done by presenting a reading passage taken from the textbook or a newspaper or magazine. The teacher should ask open-ended questions that bring out the students’ passive knowledge and understanding of the topic while eliciting new vocabulary. Next, present some task, situation or problem. Let the students take charge. Have students break into small groups to formulate their own ideas using gambits, target grammar structures and the content-based vocabulary that has been previously elicited. The role of the teacher during the small group interaction time should be to move around the classroom and act as a resource person asking questions that aid the students’ understanding. After spending sufficient time on discussion, the small groups share their ideas and conclusions with the rest of the class, which will then try to reach a consensus.

These proposed syllabuses include teaching of listening and speaking skills, which have been neglected for more than five decades. Listening and speaking skills are also very important for communication and required for the future development of learners. They can also develop their own materials and methods for teaching listening and speaking skills according to the level of their students. The proposed syllabus emphasizes not only teaching speaking and listening skills but also testing and evaluating these skills. It clearly states the objectives and the methodology of teaching these skills.

5.4.1 The teaching of listening

Listening is essential for communication. It is the ability to understand what others say. This involves understanding simultaneously a speaker's accent
or pronunciation, his grammar and his vocabulary, his meaning and message. The skill of listening comprehension is usually neglected in the teaching of foreign languages and due importance is not given by learners and teachers to this basic linguistic skill. For most people, being able to claim knowledge of a second language means being able to speak and write in that language. Listening and reading are therefore secondary skills. But listening is one of the fundamental language skills. It is a medium through which students get their education. During these days of mass communication, it is of vital importance that our pupils are taught to listen effectively and critically. As Rost points out, “listening is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learner. Without understanding the input at the right level, no learning can take place” (Rost, 1994).

In listening activities, we listen for a purpose. We make an immediate response to what we hear. There is an association between expectation, purpose and comprehension; therefore a purpose should be given to our learners. We should train students to understand what is being said in conversations to get them to disregard redundancy, hesitation and ungrammaticality. The major problem is the actual way listening material is presented to students. We should give a clear lead in what they are going to hear; use some kind of visual back up for them to understand; give questions and tasks in order to clarify the things in their minds; and be sure that these tasks help them to learn, not confuse them. Students should learn how to use the environmental clues; the speaker’s facial expression, posture, eye direction, proximity, gesture, tone of voice etc.

The teacher should help his / her learners acquire accurate and intelligent listening capabilities which provide the very foundation for learning
and functioning in a language. While listening, the learner can exercise no controls over the structural and lexical range of the speaker to whom he is listening. The listener can be taught to focus on significant content items and learn to listen selectively. Helping learners to distinguish sounds, teaching them to isolate significant content and informational items for concentration may be provided by controlled listening exercises. One exercise is to give him certain performance objectives -to give him general informational questions that he should be able to answer after he listens to the material for the first time. These questions should require only the isolation of facts clearly revealed in the material.

More controls are necessary at a less advanced level. Worksheets containing organized and significant questions on context and content - questions that call for one-word answers - serve as useful guides for the student. Such questions help him filter out and listen for significant information. The questions themselves suggest the content and provide the student with an organizational frame for selective listening. Since most of the actual listening is likely to be real-life conversation, it is appropriate to use materials cast in real-life situations for listening comprehension exercises; at least at the beginning. If the oral instruction of the course is contextualised it should be easy enough to contextualise the aural practice as well. Listening exercises should be as natural as the situations from which they grow. A teacher has a great work to do and has to be a very creative person in order to teach listening communicatively.
5.4.2 The Teaching of Speaking

What objectives should be set for our students in the teaching and learning of pronunciation in an English-as-a-second-language situation such as ours in India? To what standard should the students’ pronunciation aim at? Some time ago it was said that the objective should always be native-like pronunciation, but today most people say that this is an inappropriate goal for most learners. Very few teachers today would claim that a pronunciation that is indistinguishable from that of a native speaker is necessary or even desirable for their learners. Instead, it is generally accepted that intelligibility is the most sensible goal. It goes without saying that intelligibility is not the final aim of correct pronunciation, but just a means to achieve communication. To achieve oral fluency, students should speak in an effective and efficient way, within the context of the given situation in which they might find themselves. Students should have the basic knowledge of stress, accent, intonation patterns and rules in order to be a successful speaker. Pronunciation, grammar, fluency and vocabulary are the chief characteristics of effective speeches. Pronunciation is an important part of communication and, like all other language skills, it should be taught in contexts. Gilbert has stated emphatically that, “Pronunciation is inherently linked to listening comprehension and [they] should be taught together” (Gilbert, 1993). Along similar lines, Brown observed that listening and pronunciation go “hand-in-hand” as “perceptive and productive processes” (Brown, 1994).

The communicative approach has placed the effective teaching of speaking as the most important objective of the course offered. Most students of English would like to speak the language as perfectly as possible, in order to
communicate successfully with native and non-native speakers of English. “Outside the classroom, listening is used twice as often as speaking, which in turn is used twice as much as reading and writing” (Rivers, 1981). “Inside the classroom, speaking and listening are the most often used skills” (Brown, 1994). Students seem to be more worried about their speaking abilities, because interactive communication is the order of the day, especially in professional circles. To develop their confidence and ability in speaking and improving their listening comprehension they suggest measures like Group Discussion, Debates/Speeches/Quizzes, Seminar Presentations, Brain-storming Sessions, Question-Answer Sessions and Conversation Classes. They require training to attend interviews, to take part in Group Discussions and for inter-personal relations. To achieve active participation from students the approach of teaching should be changed from lecture-based classes to discussion based classes (seminars) and action-dominated classes (simulations).

Lessons meant for teaching speaking can follow the usual pattern of preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation and extension. The teacher can use the preparation step to establish a context related to the learners’ everyday life for the speaking task (where, when, why and with whom, it will occur) and to initiate awareness of the speaking skill to be targeted (asking for clarification, stressing key words, using reduced forms of words). In presentation, the teacher can provide learners with a preproduction model that furthers learner comprehension and helps them become more attentive observers of language use. Practice involves learners in reproducing the targeted structure, usually in a controlled or highly supported manner. Evaluation involves directing attention to the skill of being examined and asking learners to monitor and assess their own progress. Finally, extension
consists of activities that ask learners to use the strategy or skill in a different context or authentic communicative situation, or to integrate the use of the new skill or strategy with previously acquired ones (Brown, 1994).

The researcher has tried this successfully with his students. Students were divided into four groups. They were shown a Charlie Chaplin's movie on a video. As Charlie Chaplin's movies are silent, one group was asked to write dialogues, another one was asked to comment on the direction. One group was directed to narrate the story and the last one to discuss the characterization. It worked very well and it can be tried in any classroom. Although dialogues and conversations are the most obvious and most often used speaking activities in language classrooms, a teacher can select activities from a variety of tasks. Brown lists six possible task categories:

Imitative-
Drills in which the learner simply repeats a phrase or structure (e.g., "Excuse me." or "Can you help me?") for clarity and accuracy;

Intensive-
Drills or repetitions focusing on specific phonological or grammatical points, such as minimal pairs or repetition of a series of imperative sentences;

Responsive-
Short replies to teacher or learner questions or comments, such as a series of answers to yes/no questions;

Transactional-
Dialogues conducted for the purpose of information exchange, such as information-gathering interviews, role-plays, or debates;
Interpersonal-
Dialogues to establish or maintain social relationships, such as personal interviews or casual conversation role-plays; and

Extensive-
Extended monologues such as short speeches, oral reports, or oral summaries (Brown, 1994).

These tasks are not sequential. Each can be used independently or they can be integrated with one another, depending on learners’ needs.

When presenting a task, teachers should tell learners about the language function to be produced in the task and the real context in which it usually occurs. They should provide opportunities for interactive practice. Teachers should also be careful not to overload a speaking lesson with other new material such as numerous vocabulary or grammatical structures. This can distract learners from the primary speaking goals of the lesson.

Teachers can do extra work and prepare material to teach these items. Teachers don’t need to be experts in writing a dialogue or a paragraph suitable to their learners’ level in ten sentences and use it as a teaching material. Any situation related to the student can become the topic of classroom activity. Newspaper cartoons, one page stories from magazines, TV advertisements or any incident that happened the day before in student’s family may be used to develop their listening, speaking and writing skills. Learning through such sources will be high because they form a part of students’ daily routine. Teachers who are new to the profession may take experienced teacher’s advice and help to prepare suitable and simple teaching materials. When teachers are not able to produce their own materials, textbooks can be prescribed as
reference books in the syllabus and those teachers can refer to these books to teach their students. Syllabus, topics and objectives may be the same. But teachers are different. Every teacher has his own unique way of teaching and tackling different classroom situations.

A good teacher must go beyond the syllabus and improve all the four language skills. An ideal teacher may not get job satisfaction in teaching a textbook that is not suitable to all levels of students in the class. Some of them may be quick; others may be weak or slow. So it is the moral responsibility of the teacher to spend some time in developing extra materials to help learners. Only such dedicated teachers are remembered by students throughout their lifetime.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking the analysed data of the students' questionnaire and their free responses into consideration, these recommendations are formed so that the syllabus designers can take care of these while framing a suitable syllabus for I year B.E. Degree Learners.

- Need for change in teaching methodology in schools
- Speech practice in colleges should be made compulsory
- Introduction of bridge courses
- Framing of suitable common syllabus
- Text books to cater to all levels of students with interesting topics.
- Inclusion of novels as supplementary readers
• Introduction of English for Final year students
• Freedom for teachers in preparing their own variety of classroom materials like handouts, worksheets etc. and other supplementary materials
• Teaching of pronunciation (stress, accent, intonation)
• Practice in Group Discussion, Interviews and Seminar skills
• More of speaking and writing practice
• Coaching for GRE and TOEFL
• Testing Listening and Speaking skills
• Examination pattern should be changed and Internal marks should be based only on genuine real performance of students. Awarding grace marks and boosting up the scores are to be avoided.
• Organising orientation programmes for English teachers.