2. ENGLISH TEACHING IN INDIA

2.0 English Teaching in India

A retrospective study of English teaching practices in India and an evaluative study of current ESL classroom practices, materials and evaluation procedures will be of great help to the ESL course designer to take corrective measures in the design and implementation of the ESL programme.

2.1.0 English Teaching in India - A Study in Retrospect

With the granting of trade rights to the early British settlers, namely, the members of the East India Company, English found a place in India. There were three main groups involved. They were:

(i) The British officials of the East India Company who engaged themselves in political activities and the Indians who learnt English to seek employment with the East India Company.

(ii) The Christian Missionaries who tried to propagate their religion through the use of English and other service and charity activities.

(iii) The Social Reformers such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Sir Syed and Dwarakanth Tagore who used English as a tool of modernization and development and social reforms. Of course, the earliest attempts to spread English education in India were undertaken by the
missionaries. Christian missions were the only private agency in the field and the government did not have the courage to entrust the work of education to Christian missions whose primary aim was to secure converts to Christianity. The Christian missionaries started their work with a lot of enthusiasm but they did not make much headway. The Charter Act of 1813 spelt out the East India Company's responsibility to educate Indians. "That it shall be lawful for the Governor General to direct that out of any surplus which may remain of the rent, revenues, a sum of not less than one lakh of rupees a year shall be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives of India and for the introduction and promotion of knowledge of sciences among the inhabitants of the British Territories in India" (collection of Statutes relating to India vol I 1813 : 116). It should be noted that the language of instruction to popularise western scientific know-how was not specified though there were demands for the imparting of scientific knowledge in English. But the demands were neglected and ignored.

2.1.1 English Education in India-the Beginnings

In 1817, the Hindu College was established at Calcutta. There was a general consensus in favour of
English education in the eighteen twenties. Socially elite Indians thought that English education was a passport to upward mobility. There was such a great demand for English education that the managing committees of the Sanskrit colleges of Delhi, Agra, Banares and Calcutta provided for English classes in their colleges. Though there was a move on the part of the administration to encourage oriental learning in the Sanskrit colleges, social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy were against this view. Ram Mohan Roy registered his protest on December 11, 1823 with Lord Amherst against the spread of Sanskrit education. Ram Mohan Roy observed, "if it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge the Baconian philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of schoolmen.... in the same manner, the Sanskrit system of education would be best calculated to keep the country in darkness" (Sharp 1920:101)

2.1.2 Lord William Bentinck's Educational Policy

Lord William Bentinck, the Viceroy, gave his assent to Macaulay's minutes on 7th March 1835. Lord Bentinck observed that "the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India, and
that all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed in English education alone" (Sharp 1920:110). Naturally, opposition to Bentinck's resolution sparked off a controversy. H.H. Wilson wrote a letter to the editor of the Asiatic Journal on 5th December 1835. "A whole people dependent upon a remote and unknown country for all their ideas and for the very words in which to clothe them must degrade their character, despair their energies, and render them incapable of aspiring to any intellectual distinction" (H.H. Wilson 1836:116)

2.1.3 Lord Auckland's Educational Policy

Bentinck's educational policy was endorsed by Lord Auckland, the Viceroy who took over from Bentinck. He felt that education in European literature must be provided to the upper and middle classes in India and at the same time the knowledge of vernaculars should be developed so that the knowledge of European literature might reach the masses.

2.1.4 Replacement of Persian by English

In 1837, Persian was replaced by English in the law courts. English became the official language of the administration. People were suddenly drawn towards English. This paved the way for the historic
announcement of Lord Hardinge in 1844. He announced that the people with a knowledge of English and Western science would be given preference for employment. This trend in favour of English as a language of administration continues to this day.

2.1.5 Dr. Mouat's Proposal for an Indian University

By the middle of the nineteenth century, English became the medium of instruction at the collegiate level. However, there was no uniformity in respect of the medium of instruction at the school level. Dr. F. J. Mouat, the secretary to the Council of Education, came out with a proposal entitled "Proposed Plan of University of Calcutta" (Calcutta, 1845) on the model of the University of London in 1846. Mouat assumed an entry level which consisted of a critical acquaintance with the works of Bacon, Johnson, Milton and Shakespeare, a knowledge of ancient and Modern History and of Mathematical Science, together with considerable facility of composition and an ability to write in fluent and idiomatic language, an impromptu essay on any given subject of History or Economics. However, the court of Directors did not allow the project to take off. Mouat suggested a Presidency College, which in course of time should grow into a university. The teaching of Indian classical languages
did not find a place in Mouat's plan. Indians were compelled to learn English just as the Europeans learnt Latin and Greek.

2.1.6 Wood's Despatch

Mouat's proposal was later accepted by the Court of Directors and they sent their Educational Despatch on 19th July, 1854. This despatch is popularly known as Wood's Despatch and called "The Magna Carta of English Education in India". For the first time, the responsibility of the East India Company to provide education to all the people was made known by this document. However, no specific recommendation in respect of the curriculum was made. English and Indian languages were adopted as the media of instruction, English for the socially elite and the regional language for the less privileged people. A pass degree course and an honours degree course were planned. Maintenance of standards was taken care of by the respective Departments of Public Instruction in each of the five provinces, Bengal, Bombay, Madras, the North West Frontier Province and Punjab. A bill to set up the University of Calcutta was introduced on 22nd January 1857. Acts for the Bombay and Madras Universities were passed the same year. However, these universities remained just prescribing and examining
bodies. Hence, they could not reflect the aspirations of the people. An analysis of the English textbooks, syllabuses and question papers at the B.A. examination of the three Presidency Universities clearly indicated that these courses were highly literary. Most of the questions demanded the learner's knowledge of the text. Though serious doubts were expressed about the utility of literary training of the university students, the curriculum never took these into account.

2.1.7 Indian University Commission

Lord Curzon appointed the Indian University Commission in January 1902 and its recommendations were brought out in the form of

i) Government of India's resolution on Educational Policy, (1904) and

ii) The Indian Universities Act of 1904.

The resolution on Educational Policy traced the defects in the system of higher education. It also recorded the following findings;

a) The ultimate aim of higher education in India has become Government service;

b) The study of vernaculars was neglected;

c) The educational institutions failed to develop the critical faculty of students; the instinct for memorization was usually strong.
2.1.8 Michael Sadler's Commission

In 1917, the Government of India appointed a commission under the chairmanship of Michael Sadler. Among other points, the commission stressed the need for drawing a distinction between practical training in English and the study of English literature. The Commission recommended that improved methods of teaching English should be adopted and more highly trained teachers of English should be appointed both in the secondary schools and intermediate colleges. It further said that there should be more drastic methods to test the practical knowledge of English and recommended the abandonment of the system of examining non-literary students in the difficulties of classical texts. However, Sadler's recommendations were not implemented.

2.1.9 Introduction of Diarchy

With the introduction of diarchy the trend in favour of regionalism became more and more pronounced. With the upsurge of nationalism, the teaching and learning of English was seriously affected. Though Mahathma Gandhi was against the content of English
education, he had a different view altogether about the use of the English language. "I do not want my house to be walled on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any". By 1930, the majority of the schools switched over to the regional language medium of instruction. The change in the medium of instruction was sudden and no steps were taken for the preparation of teaching materials in the regional languages. No one was able to define clearly the roles and functions of the English language in the changed context. Adequate efforts to translate scientific, and technical and other texts were not taken.

2.1.10 English in India in the Post-Independence Period

Soon after independence, people showed a lot of interest and enthusiasm in the process of restoring the lost status of the regional languages. Naturally, the quantity and quality in the use of English showed a steep decline. Moulana Abdul Kalam Azad, the then Minister for Education, Government of India, gave a timely warning against destabilising the use of English in the colleges and the universities. He said, "just as it is not proper for you to lose yourself in the slavish love of western civilization or literature to
the extent that you might forget the grand and proud civilization of your country, similarly it would be wrong to put yourself in a cage so that no way the light to Western learning and civilization may enter it. Do not forget that you can seal your worldly possessions within the national and geographical limits but no seal can be put on learning and civilization.... In the advancement of civilization there is no greater hinderance than narrow mindedness. It is our duty to keep ourselves free from this disease in this new era of independence which has just begun" (Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Convocation Address to the Patna University. Dec.1947,cited in Mahajiteshwar Das:1977).

2.1.11 The Radhakrishnan Commission 1951

The Radhakrishnan Commission recommended the continuance of the study of English though it accepted Hindi as the federal language. The commission observed, "English however must continue to be studied. It is a language which is rich in its literature: humanistic, scientific and technical. If under sentimental urge we should give up English, we should cut ourselves off from the living stream of evergrowing knowledge" (Ministry of Education 1951). The Commission recommended the three language formula, namely, the regional language, Hindi and English.
2.1.12 The Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar Commission

The Secondary Education Commission under the Chairmanship of Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar endorsed the recommendations of the Radhakrishnan Commission about the role of the regional language, the federal language, namely, Hindi and English at the higher secondary and university levels. But this led to a peculiar problem. Those learners whose mother tongue was Hindi had to learn only two languages, namely, Hindi and English and the learners whose mother tongue was not Hindi had to learn three languages. To undo this inequality, the Central Advisory Board of Education came out with a new three language formula at its 23rd meeting in 1956 which was later approved by the conference of Chief Ministers in 1961. The revised formula required the learners to study:

a) The regional language,

b) Hindi, or where this was the mother tongue or first language, any other Indian language listed in the seventh schedule of the Indian Constitution, and

c) English or any other modern European languages.

Unfortunately, in the Hindi speaking areas this three language formula was not honoured. In the south, except Tamil Nadu the three language formula was
implemented fairly well. TamilNadu advocated the study of two languages, Tamil and English only in the educational institutions and in the administrative set-up

2.1.13 The Role of English as the Language of Communication

In 1948, the medium of instruction in all universities was English. Though it was planned to replace English by Hindi, there was a general unwillingness to bring about this change. The University Grants Commission appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Dr. H.N. Kunzru to identify the problems related to the medium of instruction at the university level. The Committee found that the universities were unwilling to change from English to the regional medium. The reasons put forth were quite obvious and understandable. The texts and other learning materials were available only in English. It was not easy to write scientific texts in the regional languages. The Indian languages did not have adequate scientific terminology and an appropriate discourse which could make sense and communicate the western scientific thoughts. The Committee also recommended measures to improve the level of proficiency in English at the university stage.
The Tarachand Committee (1961) endorsed the views of the Kunzru committee. Jawaharlal Nehru made the historic announcement on the floor of the Lok Sabha in 1959 that English would continue to be an associate official language even after 1965 and as long as the non-Hindi speaking people wanted English to continue. In 1960, the Committee headed by Professor G.C. Bannerjee appointed by the University Grants Commission examined the status of teaching English at the university level. The Committee felt that the regional languages had not developed to the extent of replacing English as a tool of knowledge or as a medium of communication. Even when the regional languages became sufficiently developed, English will remain a window to world knowledge. It has, therefore, to be ensured that the student is able to read books, journals, reports in English in his subject of study. The committee emphasised the need to use the English language effectively for the purposes of communication.

2.1.14 The Kothari Education Commission

The Education commission under the chairmanship of D.S. Kothari submitted its report in 1966. Though the commission recommended the extension of the regional languages as media of instruction from the secondary level to the university level, it emphasised in no
uncertain terms the role of English as a library language and as a window on the world. The Commission, however, brought about a dichotomy in English teaching namely, the teaching of the English language and the teaching of the English literature. No single course in English could meet the needs of all these students. It should, therefore, be a responsibility of the English units to adjust their teaching to the needs of the different categories of students and to ensure that they are all given at least that essential command over the language which will enable them to use it efficiently as a library language (Report of the Education Commission 1966:529).

2.1.15 Study Group Report 1965

A study group under the chairmanship of Professor V.K. Gokak was appointed to examine the position of English when Hindi or any other modern Indian language would replace English as the medium of instruction. The study group suggested a number of reforms in the areas of teacher training and the structure of examinations, and recommended the establishment of a central testing service. The group further recommended changes in the compulsory English course and suggested a course on the functional aspects of the language at two levels, namely, a skill-based course with emphasis
spoken English at the higher level. The group also recommended the institution of special courses in English to meet the needs of various categories of learners.

2.1.16 Study Group Report 1971

The Second Study Group, which submitted its report in 1971 extended the argument in favour of English for special purposes. The group suggested a number of measures for the successful implementation of the 1964 Education Commission Report. The group also foresaw a situation when the learners without any previous knowledge of English would seek admission to the colleges at least in some parts of the country and suggested a number of courses for such learners. But no concrete efforts have been taken towards achieving this objective. It is a fact that a number of learners do join tertiary level institutions even without a minimum level of mastery in reading and understanding simple English and follow lectures in simple English. Thus, the question of using English as a library language does not arise because they cannot comprehend even simple texts. It is now clear that the very concept of English as a library language was misconceived by the educational planners and curriculum designers. The learners needed an ability to read and
comprehend the books, journals, reports, etcetera in English, but a large number of texts got prescribed without any specific focus on the mastery level of learning or the assumed proficiency level expected of the learners on completion of a learning programme, or without taking the learners' needs into consideration. As a result, the productive skills were largely neglected which led to serious consequences on the ELT scene of Indian universities.

2.1.17 Jawaharlal Nehru's Assurance on the Use of English

In the sixties, there were violent demonstrations and protests against the continuance of English and these were spearheaded by Hindi zealots in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar etcetera. However, down south, in Tamil Nadu agitations were launched against the imposition of Hindi. The lack of understanding of the sentiments of the people of Tamil Nadu and tactless handling of the situation led to a highly volatile atmosphere. Tempers ran high and agitators resorted to violence and arson resulting in heavy damage to public property besides loss of several precious lives. The people who were opposed to the use of Hindi quoted Jawaharlal Nehru, "...for an indefinite period - I do not know how long I should have, I would have, English
as an associate additional language which can be used, not because of facilities and all that, but because, I do not wish the people of the non-Hindi areas to feel that certain doors of advance are closed to them, because they are forced to correspond with the Government, I mean - in Hindi language. They can correspond in English. So, I would have it as an alternative language as long as people require it and the decision for that, I would leave not to the Hindi knowing people but to the non-Hindi knowing people" (Report of the Study Group 1967 : 262). Nehru sincerely respected the aspirations of the people of Tamil Nadu. Since then, the political parties of Tamil Nadu have been demanding a constitutional guarantee incorporating the spirit of Nehru's assurance.

2.1.18 English Teaching Reforms

In the pre-Independence period, English was regarded as a content-based, cultural, humanistic discipline and a language which could make available to the people of India, European science and European technology. However, the emphasis continued to be on the teaching of literary texts for this civilising and chastening influence on Indians. By the turn of the century, the Grammar-Translation Method in England to teach Greek and Latin was adopted. The Direct Method
as evolved by P.C. Wren gradually replaced the Grammar Translation method and was used extensively in schools. In the 20s and 30s, Michael West and Harold Palmer came out with very useful insights, for instance, in the area of vocabulary selection. The teachers in India were however not influenced by them. The application of the principle of structural linguistics to foreign language teaching was emphasised in the Army Specialised Training Programme in the United States. Charles Fries advocated the oral approach. I.A. Richards desired the graded direct method. However, soon after independence, there was a greater awareness of the need to improve the quality of learning materials and to evolve innovative classroom methods. An all India seminar on the teaching of English in secondary schools was held at Nagpur between December 5 and December 20, 1957. It was decided at the seminar that the aims in respect of English teaching in India should be redefined. One of the aims has been "to enable pupils to learn as well as possible ... to understand, speak read and write the English language". It was resolved at the seminar to follow the Structural Approach to the teaching of English instead of the Grammar Translation Method. The prime objective was that within a period of six years of high school course, the pupils should be enabled to attain a
working knowledge of English, giving them mastery over about 250 basic structures and a vocabulary of 2500 essential words (Secondary Education Report 1957:41).

2.1.19 Establishment of English Language Teaching Institutes

The establishment of the English Language Teaching Institutes was another step towards growth in the area of English language teaching. In 1956, the English Language Teaching Institute at Allahabad was set up. In 1958, the Central Institute of English, Hyderabad was established. Between 1960 and 1970 English Language Teaching Institutes started functioning in Anand, Calcutta, Bombay, Patna, Chandigarh, Bangalore, Ajmer, Bhopal and Solan in Himachal Pradesh. The primary responsibility of these institutes is to train secondary school teachers. At the tertiary level, except H.M. Patel Institute of English, Anand, no other Institute barring the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad, takes care of the needs of the teachers in the colleges and the universities. The states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar which are totally opposed to the teaching of English as a subject and as a medium of communication have also sponsored English Language Teaching Institutes. However, Tamil Nadu, which is wedded to the two language formula, does not
have an English Language Teaching Institute so far, although a decision has been taken by the government to establish an Institute of English during 94 - 95.

The Central Institute of English was established in November, 1958 with the following objectives:

a) To improve the standards of teaching English in India, to provide for the study of English language and literature, to organise research in the teaching of the subject to train teachers and to undertake and facilitate advanced courses,

b) To hold examinations and grant academic awards and distinctions or titles to persons.

c) To prepare suitable text books at various levels and

d) To undertake and provide for the publication of journals and periodicals.

Braj Kachru (1975) undertook "A Retrospective Study of the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) and its Relation to the Indian Universities" in 1974. He illustrated that there were four phases in the inter-relationship of the CIEFL and the Indian universities. In the 'Formative Phase' between 1958 and 1963 the CIEFL took care of the training needs of school teachers. The second phase beginning in 1963 and ending in 1967 was the period of neglect. In the third phase between 1967 and
1969, the CIEFL reached out to the universities. Universities were consulted in the conduct of the summer institutes in the teaching of English. The University Grants Commission and the British Council collaborated with the CIEFL in the conduct of Summer Institutes.

The CIEFL and Osmania University jointly sponsored a seminar from January 16 to 19, 1969, to identify the objectives, design syllabus, evolve methods of teaching English at the Pre-University, B.A. and M.A. levels in order to make the courses relevant to the needs of the learners in the Indian universities. Language skills in place of literary texts were emphasised. But nothing concrete took shape till 1970. Only then, it was realised that the CIEFL had to work in close collaboration with the university departments. Between 1965 and 1970, forty-five summer institutes were conducted in 21 universities and as many as 2537 university and college teachers were trained.

In the annual Conference of the ELTIs held in 1975 at CIEFL, four Zonal Committees were appointed to draft +2 syllabus (pre-degree). Representatives of the states of the respective zones, British Council experts and the members of the staff of the CIEFL were engaged in the design of the syllabuses. In 1976, the Zonal Committees met at the CIEFL, Hyderabad and recommended a
syllabus to the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) which accepted the recommendations for implementation. The Committees recommended two types of courses, one a compulsory course meant for all learners and the other an optional meant for the learners preparing for the academic stream. The focus here was on reading and writing in general and on the development of the skills of communication, in particular.

At the tertiary level, the UGC sponsored five zonal workshops for syllabus reforms at Mysore, Kurukshetra, Lucknow and Shillong respectively. A national workshop on syllabus reforms was held at the CIEFL between March 24 and 27, 1977 during which the reports of the zonal workshops were presented. The working committee for syllabus reforms recommended major reforms for adoption by the universities. Apart from the usual courses in English language and literature, courses to meet the special needs of the tertiary level learners were recommended. They can be broadly listed as follows:

a) Courses for learners with inadequate command of language

b) Courses for learners seeking admission to professional courses in Agriculture, Engineering, Law, Medicine, etcetera.
c) Courses for persons who are about to seek employment and who require skills in English and 

d) Courses for the teachers of English at the secondary level.

Now the situation as it obtains clearly indicates a tragic lack of awareness on the part of the teachers and the learners. There has been no attempt to revamp the current ESL classroom practices though English is a language of modernization, science and technology. For instance, most of the learners fail to give any evidence of having acquired the basic skills of English which they would be naturally called upon to perform on the jobs. The employers also complain of the poor caliber of the clerical and secretarial work of their clerks and other staff mainly due to their lack of minimum proficiency in English. Professor Satish Chandra, the then UGC Chairman in his address to the delegates of the Twelfth Conference of the English Language Teaching Institutes of India, said that English was the accepted medium of instruction but it was a major source of hurdle for students with poor and inadequate knowledge of English. He also drew the attention of the English teaching community of India to the problems faced by many of those students who were compelled to give up their studies on account of their poor knowledge of English (Satish Chandra, Address to
the delegates of Twelfth ELTIs Conference, Hyderabad 27.02.1977).

2.2.0 An Appraisal of the Current ESL Practices

A quick appraisal of the current ESL practices will help us identify the areas of weaknesses and lead us towards developing better instructional materials and evaluation procedures. Any appraisal of a course should begin with an evaluation of the syllabus in use (Appendix).

2.2.1 An Appraisal of the ESL Syllabus in Use

An appraisal of the ESL syllabus in use reveals a mismatch between learner's needs and job requirements and the current ESL practices. There are glaring weaknesses in the ESL course design and its implementation. The syllabuses do not clearly specify the objectives of the ESL programme. The sequence of lessons, the skills that are to be mastered and the ESL course's linkage with other subjects, classroom instructional strategies, materials, allotment of time, evaluation procedures and a list of books recommended for reference are not stated. The syllabus merely indicates the names of text books that are to be studied.
2.2.1.1 Pre-requisites of a Syllabus

Any syllabus must specify both, in general terms a set of general educational objectives, and in specific terms, a set of specific instructional objectives. Whenever learning takes place, it manifests itself into some observable means of learning outcomes. The syllabus must indicate these observable learning outcomes. For instance, a general educational objective can be stated like this:

At the end of the course the learner will be able to follow simple spoken English delivered at a fairly reasonable speed.

One of the specific instructional objectives under the broad educational objective stated above could be:

The learner will be able to follow the instructions and directions in a laboratory or workshop session.

The learners' cognitive abilities such as knowledge, comprehension, interpretation, application, analysis, problem-solving, synthesis and evaluation, affective abilities like appreciating, valuing, interests and attitudes and motor-skills such as the right way of conducting experiments on hearing a set of directions and instructions, demonstrating, participating in a group discussion, facing an interview committee or making a presentation before an
audience should be indicated in the list of the objectives of a course of study so that the ESL teacher can develop these abilities and assess them objectively. In fact, the syllabus also should broadly indicate some aspects of non-scholastic abilities such as social skills, personal traits and characteristics. The syllabus must also specify the methods and techniques that are employed by the teacher to impart specific skills/knowledge. The use of educational aids to teaching, the teacher's resource book that accompanies the learners' texts, classroom organisational procedures, management techniques, allocation of time and a design of formative tests and summative tests and evaluation scheme should make the syllabus complete.

2.2.1.2 Co-efficient of Clarity of the Existing Syllabus

The investigator of this study used a scale (Appendix) to determine the coefficient clarity of the existing ESL syllabus at the B.A., B.Sc. and B.Com. degree level. The rating is done on a five point scale 1 to 5, moving from not clear to very clear with the following broad variables:

a) The objectives
b) The content
Strategies for classroom communication

d) Evaluation

The investigator received feedback from one hundred practising teachers teaching ESL courses at various colleges at the undergraduate level in the Madras University area. After analysing the feedback, a coefficient of clarity of the syllabus, 0.19 was obtained. Ideally, a very good syllabus should have a coefficient value of 1.

2.2.1.3 Conclusions from the Study - The Syllabus

The ESL syllabus in use at the undergraduate level had only the names of prescribed textbooks. It did not indicate the entry and terminal language proficiency levels of the learners or the language mastery to be achieved by the learners at the end of an ESL course.

2.2.1.4 The Objectives

The syllabus is not based on the objectives, either explicit or implied, of the ESL programme. Besides the question of a hidden curriculum does not arise because the ESL teacher is interested only in explicating the prescribed texts. The chief objective of the ESL teacher seems to be the completion of the syllabus and helping the learners acquire a pass certificate in the end of year/semester examinations.
without any reference to the mastery of language skills. The coefficient of clarity in this part of the syllabus is 0.

2.2.1.5 The Content

The content of the ESL programme is a set of prescribed texts. It does not specifically aim at developing cognitive abilities including thinking and reasoning skills, affective abilities and connative abilities such as an ability to present a paper before an audience, conduct a meeting, participate in a group discussion, face an interview committee, etcetera. Learning of language involves use of language by the learner. Hence, the learner should be guided through possible authentic situations through simulated activities. But the exercises in use do not contribute significantly to developing the learners' abilities in language use. There is also no scope for the development of the learners' knowledge of the language. Though the learner is supposed to develop an ability to use English for mastering his subject, the ESL course does not provide for a linkage between the ESL course and the subject. The coefficient of clarity of this part of the syllabus is 0.1. An ideal ESL learner should develop an ability to use language appropriate to a given situation and to a giver register. In other
words, the learner should develop a sensitivity and a feel for language in context.

2.2.1.6 Strategies for Classroom Communication

The ESL teacher neither systematically teaches all language skills nor trains the learner in language use. He does not help the learner in understanding his subjects better nor does he help him to write his reports, for instance, laboratory reports in the case of science students, audited reports in respect of commerce students or a project report for the learners undergoing a variety of courses. The ESL teacher does not make use of any teaching aid. There are no group discussions, role-plays, simulations, quiz/games, seminar/term-paper presentations etc. The ESL teacher does not manage his class time. There is hardly any opportunity for the learner to master any skill in the classroom. There is, besides, no uniform, or even planned, emphasis on all the skills taught in the classroom. The coefficient of clarity of the part of the syllabus is 0.2.

2.2.1.7 Evaluation

The ESL teacher does not conduct formative tests to seek feedback and provide remedial instruction. He does not have any tool to assess the learner's oral
proficiency. Only the end-of-year/semester examinations are conducted without any reference to what is being taught in the classroom. The coefficient of clarity of this part of the syllabus is 0.1.

Thus, the findings clearly necessitate a critical examination of ESL teaching/learning materials, classroom instructional strategies and evaluation practices. The coefficient of clarity of this portion of the feedback is 0.

2.2.2.0 An Evaluation of ESL Course Materials in Use

2.2.2.1 ESL Course Materials: Variables for Evaluation

The ESL syllabus analysis presents us with a rather gloomy picture of the ESL classroom practices. After an analysis of the ESL syllabus, an evaluation of the ESL materials in use needs to be undertaken. This researcher had used a rating scale to find out the adequacies/ inadequacies of the ESL course materials in use.

The following variables are taken up for consideration:

(i) General considerations
(ii) Language content
(iii) Selection and gradation
(iv) Language use/learning experiences
(v) Achievement of communicative competence and development of positive social attitude
(vi) Sustenance of interest, motivation and development of language skills
(vii) Use of supplementary materials to introduce the learners to a variety of discourse types and authentic materials
(viii) Use of other instructional media resources
(ix) Project work/field visit
(x) ESL materials - evaluation

2.2.2.2 ESL Materials - General Considerations

The feedback received from the practising ESL teachers confirms that there are no clearly stated objectives for an ESL course of study. Hence, the question of taking care of the needs of the learners in the classroom and on the job later in their lives does not arise. The materials used by the learners are obviously the prescribed texts namely, a collection of prose, essays, poems and one act plays as detailed texts and an abridged version of a novel, a collection of short stories and a collection of biographies as non-detailed texts/extensive readers for the first year of study and a collection of prose essays, a play of Shakespeare's or a modern play in lieu of Shakespeare's play as detailed texts and an abridged version of a
novel, a collection of biographies and a collection of short stories as non-detailed texts/extensive readers for the second year of study.

The materials do not take into account the entry level proficiency of the learners although the learners come from different backgrounds. There are almost seven to nine achievement levels of proficiency when these learners enter the first year degree classes. Hence, the materials prescribed may not be suitable for all learners in the classroom. The language exercises are not specially oriented towards fulfilling the specific needs of the learners. The teacher is not provided with a set of guidelines to ensure the mastery of specific language skills. The teacher indulges merely in the explication of the prescribed texts by way of covering the syllabus. The learner's attention is invariably drawn towards the content, and not to the language use. The materials do not provide for communicative interaction in the classroom nor do they prepare the learners to face a real life situation, for instance, to take part in a group discussion or face an interview committee or make a presentation before an audience.

In a second language learning situation, a judicious use of the mother tongue as a resource cannot be underestimated. At the initial stages, knowledge
already acquired through the mother tongue can be taught through English. The subjects to be learnt can be another source of good materials. But the ESL materials do not provide for the ESL linkage with the other subjects. There is no way by which the learners can relate their personal experiences. For instance, the learners of Commerce can be asked to narrate their experiences while working on a balance sheet or preparing an audited statement.

The materials in use cannot be used with the whole class because it is extremely difficult for all learners to comprehend these texts which are highly literary in nature, for instance, Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" or Eliot's "Journey of the Magi." These materials can hardly enable the lower ability group learners to face real life situations. The materials are neither simple nor graded.

2.2.2.3 ESL Materials : Language Content

The materials do not aim at developing the language skills of the learners as the ESL teacher is always busy explicating the prescribed text. English is taught to the learners just like any other subject without any emphasis on the language use or discourse types that are presented. The learners are given no
systematic training either in the receptive skills or
the productive skills.

2.2.2.4 ESL Materials: Selection and Gradation

The materials are not even designed according to
any specific model such as a structural or
functional/notional or communicative syllabus. The
choice of materials is not based on human interest and
the difficulty level. They are not graded either;
there is no provision to seek feedback and organize
remedial instruction.

2.2.2.5 Language Use / Learning Experiences

Learning experiences directed towards mastery of
language skills are not provided systematically
following the maxims of good method, namely, moving
from simple concepts to more complex ones, proceeding
from the known to the unknown, working from the
concrete to the abstract, moving from the particular to
the general and proceeding from the whole to the part.
The learner is not trained in language use. For
instance, grammar is taught as isolated discrete items,
not as discourse grammar. The rhetorical functions or
the rhetorical features of a particular type of
discourse are very rarely taken up for discussion in
the classroom. Learning exercises such as problem
solving, changing modes of narration, developing hints into a paragraph, an essay, a report or a speech are not provided. The learner is merely oriented towards securing a pass in the end-of-year/semester examinations which merely test the memory of the learner.

2.2.2.6 Achievement of Communicative Competence and Development of Language Skills

The materials now used are not aimed at developing the communicative abilities of the learners. The learners are not trained in listening comprehension exercises. The learners are not trained to develop reading abilities and comprehension of texts, with the focus being mainly rote learning and storage of information. There is no emphasis on developing critical and logical reasoning. The learners are trained to write summaries of the prescribed texts, in addition to a few exercises on precis writing, letter writing and paraphrasing which are all oriented towards securing a pass in the examination without necessarily acquiring communicative skills.

2.2.2.7 Sustenance of Interest, Motivation and Development of Positive Social Attitudes

The materials cannot motivate and sustain interest because the lower ability group learners cannot
comprehend the literary texts. Though there are varieties of literary forms provided, the method employed by the teacher to put across the message is the lecture mode of instruction. Moreover, the materials do not take into account the learner's age, or social, cultural, economical and geographical background. There is no scope for socialisation as there is no purposeful interaction between the teacher and the learners or among the learners themselves.

2.2.2.8 Use of Supplementary Materials

The supplementary materials are just added to the core materials. There are no proper guidelines about the use of supplementary readers in the classroom. As for their usefulness for the end-of-year examinations, equal weight is given to the extensive readers along with the detailed texts. The "supplementary" materials do not supplement and complement the core materials. They are only a part of the ritualistic exercise practised by the ESL teacher.

2.2.2.9 Use of Other Instructional Media Resources

Modern technology has brought the whole world inside the classroom. Satellite network and other facilities have opened up channels for international consultancy services. But even where the ESL teacher cannot exploit
these sources of materials, he can make an effective use of the blackboard and strive to exploit the vast resources available through the communication technology. But no serious and sincere attempt has so far been made to utilise communication technology for teaching purposes. The University Grants Commission's 'Countrywide Classroom' programmes are more often watched by non-students.

2.2.2.10 Project Work / Field Visit

Project work is not a component of the ESL curriculum. Moreover, only the learners of science subjects go on field visits to collect specimens. But the learners of other disciplines do not go on formal field visits. Perhaps there is something to be said for making field visits obligatory. There are two major objectives that can be fulfilled through field visits:

(i) the learners can be provided with an opportunity to meet the people outside the classroom and they can also interact with their own peers and

(ii) this useful experience can be used for preparing a neat writeup on the completion of the field visit which can be later turned into a formal project report.
2.2.2.11 ESL Materials : Evaluation

The learning materials are not designed to cater to the needs of all learners in the classroom. Individualisation of instruction is thus made impossible. The learners do not have any facility to learn on their own. There are no self-check exercises to judge the learner's progress. The teacher does not conduct formative tests to evaluate the learners' progress and provide remedial instruction in case the learners do not reach the desired level of mastery. The tests and examinations do not evaluate the learner's mastery of all language skills.

2.2.3.0 Strategies of Classroom Communication

The ESL materials in use do not serve the purpose of providing useful and positive input to the learners. The materials do not promote the learner's language learning abilities; nor do the ESL classroom practices motivate the learners towards active classroom interaction. An evaluation of classroom instructional strategies indicates that most of the teachers are not aware of the variety of techniques that are available to the teacher to promote language learning in the ESL classroom. Even the teachers who have undergone special training programmes such as the Post-Graduate Certificate in the Teaching of English and the Post-
Graduate Diploma in the Teaching of English of the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad, the in-service training programmes conducted by the Directorate of Collegiate Education, Government of Tamil Nadu, and the Summer Institutes in ELT/ESP sponsored by the University Grants Commission in English Language Teaching, do not seem to employ a variety of techniques in the classroom. Most of the teachers express their inability to employ innovative techniques for want of time as they have to teach a number of prescribed texts and 'complete the portions'. Hence, they choose the lecture mode of communication, which in any case seems the easiest means to cram a lot of information. Listening to lectures, however, involves a number of skills such as comprehending, interpreting, applying, analysing and evaluating skills. A number of learners in a typical ESL classroom cannot employ these skills while listening to lectures. Naturally, they tend to become passive listeners. But these learners are used to listening to a radio programme or watching a television programme in English. For instance, they listen to the running commentary on the radio or watch a cricket test series over the television and respond fairly well making appropriate utterances. The ESL teacher can easily exploit such a situation to motivate the
learners. Familiar experiences induce the learners towards greater level of participation in the classroom. The learners respond very well if they are introduced to familiar situations of current interest. News items on the radio or television or a report from the newspaper can be the topic of discussion for about five minutes at the beginning of every class session to introduce listening and speaking skills. The teachers will also get an opportunity to assess the learner's performance and provide remedial instruction based on the feedback.

2.2.3.1 Modes of Classroom Communication and Teacher Performance

The researcher used an observation chart to analyse the modes of classroom communication along with a rating scale to assess whether the ESL teacher is a competent performer in the ESL classroom.

2.2.3.1.1 Modes of Communication

Most of the teachers follow the authoritarian lecture mode of communication, some follow the semi-authoritarian lecture-based, learner-participatory mode of communication. A few teachers practise the co-operative learner teacher participatory mode of communication. Almost none of the teachers employs the socially interacting and informal mode of commu-
nication. Most of the teachers employ the lecturing technique without any accent on learner participation. Even these lectures are not planned and structured properly. The teacher plays the role of a preacher and sermonises from his vantage position in the class. It is very difficult to arouse the first year learners of the regional medium schools towards a meaningful teacher-learner interaction. Most of these learners cannot be aroused into thinking and reasoning because they cannot think on their own after years of spoon feeding in the schools. In the new environment, the learners of regional medium schools feel emotionally isolated. When such tendencies are allowed to continue, the learners distance themselves from the teacher and also the subject, and the learning goals remain a mirage. To change these attitudes, the teacher should stop lecturing and start interacting with the learners, maintaining a learner-friendly and learning-friendly atmosphere. The learner should be motivated towards an emotional acceptance of the teacher and the subject. At the tertiary level, the learners should not just stop with reading and understanding the text but they should go beyond these reading skills. The learners should start responding to the reading materials, for instance, in their subjects. They should think logically and assign reasons for the acceptance of a
view, for that matter its rejection. They cannot think in an unfriendly and socially estranged atmosphere. "Methods of imparting knowledge based solely on intellectual and authoritarian procedures remain ineffective because they are based on an inadequate understanding of the cognitive function and its motivation, and because they take no account of the social structure of groups and the psychological needs of young adults" (Norman K. Henderson 1969:35).

2.2.3.1.2 Teacher Competence and Performance

Generally, teachers are believed to be competent and the learners are fairly well-disposed towards their teachers. Hence, the teachers always begin with a friendly communicative climate. If this beginning is stalled after sometime, the teacher must own the responsibility for the change of attitude. The teachers do not take care of very ordinary details, for instance, their appearance, posture, movement, gestures and facial expressions. Another important factor is the voice quality. Many teachers do not maintain the appropriate levels of pitch and volume of voice. When some teachers maintain their voice quality, they do not vary and modulate but indulge in a dull and droning voice. Most of the teachers are not enthusiastic and they do not even maintain eye-contact with all the
learners. They do not seem to indicate their views on social problems. Identifying the individual learner's problems and expressing concern for him are seldom done.

2.2.4.0 ESL Evaluation Practices

It is generally believed that language tests and examinations are intended to test the general proficiency level of the learners in respect of a particular language use. If a learner is adjudged to be proficient in a particular language use, it is assumed that the learner has reached a certain level of mastery in the receiving skills (listening and reading) and responding skills (speaking and writing). Tests and examinations employ specific skills in which the learners have undergone a course of study. A 'pass' in the written tests and examinations conducted by the university and other examination boards of the colleges is taken to be the mastery level of the learners. The parents and the future employers are expected to accept the 'pass' in these written examinations to be the possible mastery level of the learners. However, the employers always complain that these learners who later turn out to be their employees do not possess even a basic level of mastery in language use. Abilities ranging from listening to a classroom lecture, to lis-
tening to eminent intellectuals in the respective fields and comprehending them for application in contexts, abilities ranging from reading simple prescribed texts to reading scientific journals, abilities ranging from asking simple questions in the classroom to seeking clarification in a seminar or a symposium and abilities ranging from writing an answer to a question to writing a technical report cannot be tested in just a three-hour written examination. Moreover, written examinations alone cannot indicate the real mastery level of the learners. Language learning is a process-oriented experience which consists of a series of stages of learning and so cannot be evaluated as an end product by means of year end / semester examinations. A learner may take long to reach a particular level of mastery to acquire a complex skill while another learner may take a fraction of that time to master the same skill and reach a fairly advanced level of mastery. Thus, there arises the need to cater to the individual differences while providing language learning experiences. The ESL teacher will check at every stage whether the learner goes along with him and in case of any difficulty experienced by the learners, he will provide remedial exercises to correct/alter the course of the learner's path.
Language tests and examinations primarily
(i) evaluate the proficiency level of the learners,
(ii) tell us whether the learners are competent to seek admission to a particular programme of study,
(iii) provide information for administrative decision—such as grouping particular learners
(iv) help us evaluate the curriculum
(v) help us organise learning and teaching materials and
(vi) serve as a guide for research

With this background information, it is desirable to make an evaluative study of the current ESL practices at the tertiary level. For instance, the Madras University conducts ESL programmes at the B.A., B.Sc., and B.Com., level. The course is offered for two years and end-of-year examinations are conducted at the end of I year and II year respectively for the learners at the B.A. and B.Sc. level. But in the case of the learners of B.Com., the course is offered only for a year though the entrance qualification for all these courses is a 'pass' in the plus two level (Intermediate or Pre-degree course level) examinations.

An analysis of the structure of the question papers reveals how rarely the objectives, if any, of the courses offered are realised. There is a common English question paper for the learners whose optional
subjects are History, Economics, Political Science, Sociology, Telugu Literature, Hindi Literature, Sanskrit Literature, Arabic Literature, Defence Studies, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, Computer Science and Bio-Chemistry. Hardly any effort is taken to help the learners in understanding their optional subjects better.

In general, study of detailed texts and non-detailed texts have been equated. There is no special weight given to the study of detailed texts. Learners are given some annotations to be answered from the study of the detailed texts.

The learners' ability to use English as a tool of communication needs to be developed and tested and not his knowledge of literary content in an English for General Purposes (EGP) Programme.

To sum up, the ESL programmes do not serve the desired purpose of making the learners proficient in employing language communication skills.

2.2.5.0 Conclusion

The survey of the current ESL classroom practices and the historical perspective to the teaching of English in India outlined so far show that the substantial issues have not been critically examined.

Commissions after commissions have examined the
mechanics of the teaching of English. If they had examined more specific and substantial issues, namely, the teaching of English for modernisation and mobility, we should have abandoned the teaching of literary texts or changed the pedagogic practices from emphasis on the mastery of literary texts towards the mastery of communication skills. There should have been a proper dialogue between Indian languages and English. An integrated approach to the teaching of the learner's mother tongue, English and the learner's subject of study should have been recommended by the commissions and efforts should have been undertaken in this direction. If the educational planners had examined the substantial issues, examination reforms would have been implemented in a very big way. We have been following faithfully the same pattern of examination with only ad hoc changes without any specific purpose. (See Appendix question paper of B.A./B.Sc. 1988 and revised question paper of 1994).

We should have encouraged translation activities. Translation of Indian works in English could have affected the teaching of Indian languages and English. Confused thinking in the planning and implementation of
The ESL programmes in free India has added new paradoxes to the already existing ESL teaching. In the absence of any proper direction the teachers of English continue to use the same old materials, practise the same classroom practices and follow the traditional examination pattern with an end of year/semester three hours examination to assess the language mastery acquired over a period of one year/semester.

In the new ambivalent atmosphere, why we need English and why we teach English should be analysed and objectives stated. Thus arises the need to have a fresh look at the ESL course planning, design and implementation at the tertiary level. But before taking up ESL programme planning and implementation, we should have a glimpse of theoretical principles built over the years and also the methods, approaches and techniques developed by applied linguists, teachers and other ESL professionals.