Chapter-V

AN ANALYSIS OF TECHNICAL ENGLISH COMMUNICATION SKILLS COURSE FOR ENGINEERING STUDENTS IN KONERU LAKSHMAIAH UNIVERSITY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Modern age is an era of changes and challenges. Every change is indeed a challenge and every challenge triggers another change. This cycle is unending and mind boggling as well, particularly for a sitting duck who does not meet the challenges head on. In fact, it has become almost inevitable to live with and meet the changes and challenges. Communication is the vital component in education by which one gains capacity to progress in life, meet these challenges and adjust oneself to the changes. Education is one field which gets immediately affected by any major change in life as it connects the individual to the progressing society. The capacity for change is, thus, a prerequisite for education. It is, therefore, necessary for everyone to acquire the skills that the change demands; at present acquiring English language skills is one such challenge. Cultivating Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing and other associated skills to develop the higher order of communicative skills like comprehension, coherence and cohesion in communication, effective presentation, developing analytical and creative skills, has become the key to success.

The present study analyses the textbooks prescribed for Engineering Students by Koneru Lakshmaiah University. Various aspects of those books are analysed to examine whether the objectives specified by them are fulfilled and communicative skills are improved through the syllabus and teaching. The statistical data and reports are presented.
5.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ENGLISH COURSE

There is a widespread assumption that Engineering students can obtain better knowledge and comprehension of their technical subjects through English. Hence it becomes necessary to analyse the Engineering syllabus called “Technical English.”

An attempt has been made here to analyse the textbooks prescribed by Koneru Lakshmaiah University. They are: Technical Communication: English Skills for Engineers by Meenakshi Raman and Sangeetha Sharma and Communication for Business – A Practical Approach by Shirley Taylor, in the First Semester, and Business Communication: Process and Product by Mary Ellen Guffey, in the second Semester, respectively. The aim is to find out the attitude of the students towards the textbooks, methods of learning, methods of teaching and testing. A review of these materials has been done to assess to what extent these materials or the methods they assume and demand are in accordance with the needs and expectations of the learners. Moreover, this thesis will analyse how far these materials minimise the conscious efforts to acquire the language.

5.3 SAMPLE STUDY

The total number of informants is 180 from the disciplines of Electronics Communication Engineering (ECE), Electrical and Electronics Engineering (EEE), Computer Science Engineering (CSE) and Civil Engineering (CE); they have been selected at random from Koneru Lakshmaiah University; a proportionate sample was also collected from ANU and JNTU (K). Out of the total number of 180 students (respondents), 163 students had the state syllabus and 17 respondents had the Central syllabus in their Tenth Standard.
5.4 METHOD OF ANALYSIS

The same questionnaire which was circulated in Acharya Nagarjuna University and Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University (Kakinada) was also given to students in Koneru Lakshmaiah University to obtain their views. The questionnaire contains some questions related to their parental background and the School Board through which they had taken their school final examinations. A survey was conducted among the students of Koneru Lakshmaiah University College of Engineering in order to assess their perceptions of the content, form, presentation and other aspects like grammar and the four skills of English language contained in their syllabus. The students’ perception on how helpful the books have been in gaining command over different language skills through the prescribed textbooks is also recorded.

5.5 SYLLABUS

The Syllabus of the course is available to the students for each discipline on payment of a prescribed fee. The general perception of the students is that the textbooks self-sufficient in terms of its coverage of the syllabus and hence it is of utmost importance. The detailed syllabus of Technical English for KLU is given in Appendix-V.

5.6 TECHNICAL ENGLISH TEXTBOOK

An Engineering educational career demands strong communication skills in English. The English textbook, instead of merely trying to instil all the literary nuances of English into the minds of the students, should also provide select aspects of English which would help them understand their other subjects as well, since their medium of learning is English.
The First year English Syllabus given by Koneru Lakshmaiah University is common to all the branches of Engineering students and is offered in two Semesters. The syllabus is graded thematically. The textbooks prescribed for I B.Tech. are *Technical Communication: English Skills for Engineers* by Meenakshi Raman and Sangeetha Sharma and *Communication for Business – A Practical Approach* by Shirley Taylor in first Semester, and *Business Communication: Process and Product* by Mary Ellen Guffey in the second Semester.

The book is an outcome of an English Language teaching project undertaken by Koneru Lakshmaiah University involving a team of English instructors. The objective of the project is to develop suitable course materials for the students of Engineering and Technology, unlike the earlier conventional course, which is primarily literature based and irrelevant to their needs.

The materials are organised under five units namely, “Phonetics, Lexis, Advanced Communicative Grammar, Modifiers, Persuasive Writing, Analysing Texts” in Semester I and four units in Semester II namely, “Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Relationship Skills, Communicating in Teams, Business Correspondence, Business Report Writing.” The units have been chosen taking into account the needs and interests of students. Each unit consists of various topics on professional writing and industry.

The course designers have included pronunciation skills, communicative and business skills to provide required practice for developing the skills of the students. They intend to sensitise the students to the inter-relationship between language learning and a knowledge of their core subjects.
5.7 A DEPARTURE FROM THE CONVENTIONAL SYLLABUS

Before going into the findings of the survey, the first-hand information about the materials was obtained sought through the discussions with the people at the helm of the affairs. It is to be noted that the textbooks prescribed mark a departure from the conventional textbooks; and the syllabus was first designed in 2010, under the guidance of the Course Coordinator Mr. M.V. Ramana Moorthy, who has been rendering all his service, in the same University, for the past many years.

5.8 ANALYSIS OF THE TEXTBOOK

A content-analysis was made to assess its capacity to motivate the learners, and its usefulness in the form of providing information to them. The corporeal aspects are studied to see its usefulness to the students to gain and retain the employment. The last but not the least is the communicative aspect. Any Engineering course for second language learner should make them proficient in their communication skills.

An analysis of the following three components in the textbook was made:

1. The Content Aspect
2. The Corporeal Aspect
3. The Communicative Aspect

5.8.1 Content Aspects

A textbook should motivate the students to get interested in the topics included in its study. The questionnaire has two direct questions on this count:

5.8.1.1 Improvement in Creating Motivation

Q. Do the Textbooks create an interest in you?
Response: 54.44% of the students said ‘yes’ to the question whether the text provides necessary motivation to the learners. 28.33% of the respondents said ‘okay.’ The remaining 17.22% felt that there is no motivation provided in the textbooks. This might be due to the new trend in the syllabus design. The majority of the teachers opine that they provide motivation; and for some teachers the concepts mentioned are unfamiliar or they are not exposed to the recent teaching methods.

Analysis: Stimulation alone makes the learner to go forward to achieve the intended objectives. Regarding the fulfilment of the objectives of the syllabus, nearly all the instructors felt that the textbooks do provide sufficient motivation to the students. It is with that intention that a unit under the title, “Analysing Selected Texts,” has been included in the syllabus.

5.8.1.2 Suitability of the Text to the Engineering Course

Q. Are the topics relevant to the Engineering Course?

Response: From the data collected, it is known that 37.78% of students responded positively. 38.33% of them optioned that the topics are relevant “to some extent.” 23.89% of them responded negatively.

Analysis: Aptness of the prescribed textbooks depends on the career chosen by the learner. When the question is asked whether the concerned textbooks are relevant to the Engineering course, one-third of the learners felt that they are relevant.

5.8.2 Corporeal Aspects

The corporal aspects consist of organisation of themes, the eye-catching cover design, etc., in the syllabus covered in “Technical English Communication Skills-I” and
“Technical English Communication Skills-II” components in their I /IV B.Tech Course.
Through these sections the Reading Skill exercises, oral exercises, language focus, listening and Writing Skills, some other tasks are given. This arrangement itself is unique, though it is unfamiliar to the students as well as to the teachers. This should motivate the teachers and the students to a greater extent.

5.8.2.1 Proper Design of Technical Terms

Q. Are the technical terms included in English Syllabus properly designed?

Response: One major question “whether the technical materials are properly designed” got very interesting responses. Only 17.22% of the group felt that the technical terms are deliberately designed and a very surprising response of 55.56% of students opined felt otherwise.

Analysis: As the syllabus is said to teach Technical English Communication, it aims at introducing the technical terms related to imparting the Writing skills. The learners were asked to say whether they could comprehend the technical terms and whether the definitions are clear.

5.8.2.2 Promotion of Technical Knowledge or Language Learning

Q. Do the technical materials in the syllabus help the Learners to increase the technical knowledge or help them to increase the rate of Language Learning?

Response: A question such as “whether the technical materials help to increase the technical knowledge or to increase the rate of learning the language” drew very interesting responses. Only 20% approved that it promoted the students’ technical knowledge and a very amazing fact to be observed is that 81.67% of the students said that
they increased their language learning especially in writing more than the technical knowledge.

**Analysis:** The chief object of any student studying an Engineering Course is to get a job immediately, soon after finishing his studies. Hence, they felt that their syllabus should make them also technically competent.

### 5.8.2.3 Development of Creativity

Q. Do the tasks prescribed in the text encourage you to improve your creativity?

**Response:** 35% of them felt that it provides creativity through various exercises; but about 24.44% found them monotonous. The students who hail from rural areas are not exposed to any such activities; they feel that the tasks are difficult to do in the classroom without the personal attention and help from the teacher.

**Analysis:** “Variety is the spice of life.” A variety of tasks have been designed in the textbook to sharpen their creative abilities. Most of the students found such tasks interesting. However 50% of ICSE students (9 students) felt that the tasks are uninspiring.

### 5.8.2.4 Importance of Eye-Catching Cover Design

Q. Is the cover design attractive?

**Response:** The response for this question is comparatively more positive than that received from the students of Acharya Nagarjuna University and Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University. 44.44% of the students responded that the cover design was not attractive. 41.67% of them opined that it was attractive “to some extent.” The remaining 13.89% said “no.”
**Analysis:** The cover of a book is of utmost important to the students. It is the initial point of contact with the readers and should draw their attention. Though the cover design seemed to be slightly better, compared to the other two Universities. The cover page of the textbook prescribed in KLU did not seem to attract the attention of the majority of the students.

**5.8.2.5 Language Usage in Other Situations**

Q. Do you find it easy to use new words (vocabulary) in your interactions, other than the classroom situations?

**Response:** The findings reveal an interesting fact that a very low percent of students are able to use the language in a proper way. The students from the State Board find it very difficult to use the language learnt in other situations. So, there are a low percentage of 14 from the CBSE students who make use of it as they had an earlier exposure to the language. On the whole, only 24.44% of students are able to use the English language effectively. Some of the students are able to comprehend the text. 58.89% of students are able to use it ‘to some extent’ successfully; while 16.67% are totally unable to use it in other situations.

**Analysis:** One cannot deny the fact that if a person achieves competence in a language he must be able to use it or apply it in life-situations. Gaining the capacity to use the learnt chunk of language for other situations completes the process of language learning. Hence a question was asked whether the learners’ language is developed through the textbook to the extent of using it properly in other situations.
5.8.3 Communicative Aspects

Satisfactory command on a language requires receptive ability as well as productive ability. Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing are related to and supplement one another. The psychology of language-learning also tells us that the four Basic Language Skills, namely, Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, reinforce each other; and even for the development of a single skill, some amount of emphasis on the other skills will be found beneficial.

The correct order of teaching the skills is given in the expression - LSRW. It is a fact that reading and writing are the skills that allow time to respond; and, exercising them constitutes partial language experience; whereas, speaking and listening are spontaneous and demand total concentration.

The syllabus of K.L. University contains content materials based on Engineering, Technical and Business English and the tasks are given along with them. The syllabus of Semester-I of I/IV B.Tech. course showcases the distinct advantages of having technical communication skills vis-à-vis the basic language skills in Lexis, Communicative Grammar, and non-conventional composition skills like process descriptions and print media releases. And Semester II provides a wide scope to learn business correspondence and business communication skills.

An interesting impression gathered from the teachers of English in K.L. University, is the attitude towards the themes in the textbooks prescribed. Though a majority of the teachers support the learner-oriented method and task-based materials, they find it difficult to adapt themselves to the new themes. They do not feel comfortable with the materials, and many of them feel that they are monotonous and the time allotted
is not sufficient. They accept the need for a change to the latest methodology; but, still they find it uninteresting.

5.8.3.1 Comprehension of the Text

Q. Are the topics easy to understand through the support material provided in your text?

Response: The following are the findings for the question whether the content materials are easy to comprehend, though they are the first year students of the Engineering course.

The paraphernalia of “Technical English Communication Skills” syllabus starts from Phonetics, Lexis, Advanced Communicative Grammar, Writing Circulars/Ads/Brochures and Analysing texts in the I Semester of the I year, and progresses slowly to different themes in their II Semester, such as Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Relationship Skills, and Business Communication etc. About 40.55% of the students are able to identify the intellectual content of the text. 52.22% of the students found the text to be straightforward in approach to the topics included, ‘to some extent’.

Analysis: Even though the topics in each and every unit are different, they are affiliated to the disciplines of Engineering and Technology. The units introduced in the syllabi were drawn various reference books, like *English Pronunciation in Use*, *The McGraw-Hill Handbook of English Grammar* and *Usage* and *Effective Writing* etc.

5.8.3.2 Pictorial Presentations

Q. Are there adequate pictures, charts, graphs to understand the concepts in the textbooks?
**Response:** Nearly 62.22% of the students said that they are adequate charts, pictures and graphs to understand the concepts ‘to some extent’. The remaining 16.67% said ‘yes,’ the others said ‘no’.

**Analysis:** This aspect of the textbooks appears to be satisfactory as a majority of the students expressed satisfaction over the adequacy of pictorial aids.

5.8.3.3 Development of Language with respect to Grammar

Q. Do you think that your language has improved with respect to Grammar through the material provided in your text?

**Response:** As much as 63.33% of students are able to understand the grammar items given along with the tasks and the students feel that they had improvement in grammar. Obviously, the students drawn from the State Board find it difficult to recognise what they have learnt; and so 8.34% of them do not respond at all. Unlike the State Board, CBSE students have a clear perception about grammar and their learning abilities.

**Analysis:** The major objective in evaluation of a learner is with regard to the development of language aspect with respect to grammar. Nearly 63.33% of them have responded that they have improvement in grammar. In the reference textbook *The McGraw-Hill Handbook of English Grammar and Usage* the exercises are evenly distributed. The students are drilled to achieve the application of grammar, like time, tenses, Dangling Modifier, Misplaced Modifier, squinted Modifier, parallel structures, shifts in mood, voice, tense and concord etc. Even though the students are satisfied with their learning of some grammar, they are not able to make use of it in their real life situations. Central Board students have responded positively and they are in a position to
utilise their grammar awareness in spoken English. Most of the students are of the opinion that it is required in campus placements.

5.8.3.4 Language Development through Tasks

Q. How do you rate these tasks?

Response: The finding shows that the tasks promoted learning in a sequential manner. Except for a few students, to all the other students, the tasks seemed to be moderate and easy. The slow learners or the students from rural areas, about 5% of them, found it ‘difficult’ to do the tasks; 83.33% found the tasks ‘moderate’ and 11.67% found them ‘easy’.

Analysis: The textbook enumerates a number of tasks like vocabulary, synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, idioms, correction of sentences, circulars, news release, leaflets, giving instructions etc. When the Engineering students are monitored to do the tasks, they must be able to perform them. The success of this lies in the active participation and involvement of the students and the interactive methodology of the teachers.

5.9 ANALYSIS OF THE SYLLABUS WITH REFERENCE TO LANGUAGE SKILLS

Good communication skills are indispensable to the success of any professional. Mastery of any language requires both the receptive and productive abilities. Though they are related to each other, efficiency in one aspect does not necessarily lead to efficiency in another. Each of the four skills - Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, requires due attention. But in reality, in the English classroom, speaking in English is totally absent and intellectual writing is very poor. Students read only to memorize words and sentences for answering questions. Reading on their own, with understanding is unheard
of in a ordinary English classrooms. Such an illogical and improper teaching and learning of English may be due to lack of understanding of the relative importance of the language skills. The following criteria may be on the continuum of a scale to measure the worth of the four language skills.

5.9.1 Listening Skill

Listening Skill in English training is imperative as it increases attention and capacity of comprehension and interpretation. Apart from this, it is a necessary prerequisite to develop the Speaking Skill. The student listens to oral speech in English, then separates the spoken information into segments, groups them into words, phrases, and sentences, and, finally, he/she understands the message. Listening prepares the students to understand different speakers of English from different nations and follow their speeches. Listening improves the intelligibility of one’s speech.

There are three approaches to listening: interactive (listening to a message and doing something as a consequence) and one-way communication or non-interactive (just listening and retaining the message, in activities such as conversations overheard, public address announcements, recorded messages, etc.) and self-talk. Responding to the commands given reflects interactive listening, which, in fact, is equally widespread in communicative situations. Listening to radio and watching TV and films, public performances, lectures, religious services, etc., generally reflect non-interactive listening. Self-talk is also an important process by which one’s own thinking and reasoning get reflected. All these three modes or approaches to listening may be included in the training on listening comprehension.
The students of Koneru Lakshmaiah University are practising Listening Skill in the Computer Assisted Language Lab (CALL), in order to understand through repetitions. In listening to the repetitions, the students imitate and memorise linguistic items such as words, idioms, and sentence patterns. This is an important beginning in the task and focus of listening exercises. It is to be noted that this kind of exercise falls under the second category which is non interactive or is one way communication.

Listening to understand is a part of using English for communication purposes. In listening to understand, the students are involved in the question-oriented response model of learning or in the task-oriented model of learning. In the question-oriented response model, the students are asked to listen to a sentence, a dialogue, a conversation, a passage, or a lecture and asked to answer questions which may be presented in the form of true/false statements, multiple choice questions, and fill in blank or short answers. In the task-oriented response model, the students are asked to listen to a passage and accomplish the task described in the passage through interaction with others or by themselves.

As the language courses offered in India do not include listening as a skill, most of the students have difficulty with Listening Skills, even when listening to their native language. Among other factors, because of the phenomenon of stress (some syllables of a word may be stressed while others may not be), most learners of English have difficulty in mastering the correct placement of the primary and other stresses in English. This could lead to misunderstanding of the meaning of a word, phrase or sentence. As a consequence, listening proficiency in English gets affected, hence the need to pay attention to Listening Skills with great care.
Table 5.1

Overall Improvement in Listening Skills through the Text Book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>State Board</th>
<th>Central Board</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of students</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No. of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>76 46.62</td>
<td>10 58.82</td>
<td>86 47.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>68 41.72</td>
<td>5 29.41</td>
<td>73 40.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>14 08.59</td>
<td>2 11.77</td>
<td>16 08.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>05 03.07</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>163 100.00</td>
<td>17 100.00</td>
<td>180 100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Survey

From the above Table 5.1, it is evident that nearly 47.78 per cent of the students were found to be ‘excellent’ in improving their Listening Skill. It is clearly evident that the tasks suggested in the reference books and the Computer Assisted Language Lab (CAL Lab) have helped the students to improve their Listening Skills to a certain extent.
5.9.2 Speaking Skill

Speaking skills are more sought after in the present day context and not only students at the professional colleges are keen on improving their Speaking Skills, but the students of other educational institutions at all levels are also trying to enhance their Speaking Skills. The syllabus prescribed for professional students suggests some exercises which are to be practised according to the guidelines of the English teacher. This kind of approach is always the one that is favoured by the faculty.

Source: Survey
The role of Speaking Skills in getting a job and its contribution to personality development is explained to the students. The target of the teachers when it comes to imparting Speaking Skills is to enhance the skills of the students who lack the required proficiency in the Speaking Skills. The teachers try to encourage them more to shed off the shyness which is natural and yet requires attention.

Table 5.2

Overall Improvement in Speaking Skills through the Text Book

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>State Board</th>
<th>Central Board</th>
<th>Overall</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of</td>
<td>No. of</td>
<td>No. of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>students</td>
<td>students</td>
<td>students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>09.20%</td>
<td>05.88%</td>
<td>08.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.11%</td>
<td>11.77%</td>
<td>13.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25.77%</td>
<td>35.29%</td>
<td>26.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50.92%</td>
<td>47.06%</td>
<td>50.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey.

The textbooks, *Technical Communication: English Skills for Engineers* and *Business Communication: Process and Product*, consist of very few Speaking Skill tasks in the form of oral practice and role-playing etc. The tasks designed for CALL are relatively simple and involve creativity on the part of a learner. As per the data, the overall improvement Speaking Skills in the students (50.55%) was found to be ‘average’. This is because of the stress on pronunciation, which is a very important component of Speaking Skills.
The first problem of the students is that they are afraid of making mistakes in oral communication and the consequent shyness hinders them to speak in English. Compared to a child, an adult learner like the first year Engineering student has already a pattern of learning before him and has also a few prejudices regarding the second language speaking. Therefore, it is really tough on the part of a teacher to convince and to motivate him to speak before others.
The other reason is the question of teacher competence. As most of the English teachers are not trained in this particular field it is doubtful if they can train him in speaking etiquette and pronunciation. Some committed teachers try hard; but their inefficiency as trainers becomes a hurdle, however they are interested. The teachers do admit that the Speaking Skill has secured the third place among the four skills. Thus this task-method at least makes both the learners and the teachers realise where they stand in acquiring the oral skill.

5.9.3 Reading Skill

Reading is “appreciating the sense of what is written: we read for meaning,” says David Crystal (1987: 209). In other words, the ultimate goal of reading is not the process of reading itself, but the unravelling of the meaning represented by the words, phrases, and sentences. Sometimes, “reading between the lines” is demanded. In the latter case, the association between the letter and the sound does not often provide any clue.

The recent edition of *New Ways in Teaching Reading* gives a variety of new ways of teaching reading, the editor of the book Richard R. Day classifies reading into three kinds: extensive reading, intensive reading, and oral reading. Extensive reading is used, to refer to the teaching of reading through reading. In this approach, there is no overt focus on teaching reading. Rather, it is assumed that the best way for students to learn to read is by reading a great deal of comprehensible material (1993).

Intensive reading is used to refer to the actual teaching of Reading Skills in an instructional setting. Students are exposed to a variety of materials and asked to perform activities such as answering comprehension questions on the passage read. They may be trained to look for critical information in the passage they read, and make inferences, etc.
Intensive reading is instruction-based, and forms the core of teaching reading in the classroom. However, reading is a continuing process, and the students of a professional course need to be introduced to the reading of authentic materials for specific purposes.

Table 5.3

Overall Improvement in Reading Skills through the Text Book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>State Board</th>
<th>Central Board</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of students</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No. of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12.88</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19.63</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>38.65</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>28.84</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey

As per the above data, it can be stated that 12.78% of the students were found to be ‘excellent’, 20% ‘very good’, and 38.89% ‘good’, and 28.33% ‘average’ in improving their Reading Skills. From this data, an inference can be made that there is an urgent need to introduce Reading Comprehension exercises, by which learners will get the ability to find out and search for an answer, to think critically, to analyse, to give titles to the paragraphs, to argue, to justify and acquire the other skills of language which are gained by reading.
Figure 5.3

Overall Improvement in Reading Skills through the Text Book

Source: Survey

5.9.4 Writing Skill

It is widely acknowledged that written language differs from the oral language, in structure and mode of functioning. The acquisition of oral speech by itself is the acquisition of sounds. The acquisition of writing is a step further and the learner must then transfer the sounds into symbols and learn to write them. In brief, the practitioner should change his medium of expression from the phonological level to the orthographic level.
Teaching writing even to native speakers of English has always been a major concern of education. More often than not, most students, both native speakers and second language learners of English, feel themselves inadequate in the face of a writing task. Modern world demands considerable efficiency in Writing Skills. However, when one can learn to speak the first or second language with little or no conscious thought, switching from the spoken to writing poses greater difficulty. As Jean Donald Bowen et al. have observed,

Writing is more an individual effort than speaking, while at the same time more rule-bound and therefore more error-prone. The speaker does not have to pronounce each word exactly according to one standard of pronunciation or one model of structure, while the writer is expected to produce according to one model of spelling, and usually a reduced range of structures, with 100 percent accuracy (1985: 252).

When they declare that,

Writing is more rule-bound than speaking. Considering the control of the orthographic system, the careful organisation, and the linguistic conservatism required, writing is the most demanding of the language skills (1985: 253).

The writing classes have the potential to help consolidate and improve the students’ speaking and Reading Skills. However, it is important for one to remember that writing is an important skill which can be taught as an end in itself, although none of the language skills is far removed from the other language skills. Focusing on writing as an independent skill helps one to identify the specific problems faced by the learners, and to identify the specific needs of the learners related to writing. Mechanics of writing are distinct from the mechanics of other skills such as speaking and reading. While reading involves watching and pronouncing, writing involves mental organisation: association of words with mental composition of thoughts and their orderly presentation.
### Table 5.4

**Overall Improvement in Writing Skills through the Text Book**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>State Board</th>
<th>Central Board</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of Students</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No. of Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>39.26</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>48.47</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>08.59</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>03.68</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Survey

This shows that the second language learners have improved more in active skills because they are provided with the right atmosphere in the classrooms. 38.89% of the students were found to be ‘excellent’ in their Writing Skills, and at about 48.89% were found to be ‘very good’ in their Writing Skills. It can be stated that approximately, a majority had improvement in the Writing Skill, they learned to write with a better sense of organisation, using the appropriate expression they learnt from the Technical and Business English units they had in their prescribed textbooks.
## 5.10 Evaluation of Learners' Second Language Learning through the Prescribed Syllabus in English

An overall analysis of the textbook has been shown in Table 5.5 and Table 5.6 below indicating whether the specified objectives have been fulfilled or not. The objectives are: comprehension of the text, language learning with respect to grammar, improvement of second language learning through tasks, and using second language in other situations and learning of all the communication skills.

Among these, some of the objectives have been fulfilled. Majority of the informants understood the text and only a few could not comprehend the text. Regarding
the objective of language learning with respect to grammar, most of the students felt that they have gained some improvement in grammar. But this is a contradictory data when compared to the grammatical errors they have committed.

The informants might have gained improvement in grammar but still they are unaware of their own errors. Among the four skills seen earlier they lack in Speaking and then Reading skills whereas 70% of them have improved their Listening and Writing. But the learners are unable to use the language in other situations.

A poor percentage of informants were found to be confident and said “yes” to such a question. Just because the informants have gained efficiency in some aspects of language learning, it does not mean that they are able to use the language in other situations.

Table 5.5
Level of Satisfaction of Learners' Second Language Learning through the Prescribed Syllabus in English in Content and Corporeal Aspects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C O N T E N T</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Highly Satisfied %</th>
<th>Satisfied %</th>
<th>Dissatisfied %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in Creating Motivation</td>
<td>54.44</td>
<td>28.33</td>
<td>17.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suitability of the Text to the Engineering Course</td>
<td>37.78</td>
<td>38.33</td>
<td>23.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C O R P O R E A L</td>
<td>Proper Design of Technical Terms</td>
<td>17.22</td>
<td>27.22</td>
<td>55.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of Creativity</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>40.56</td>
<td>24.44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of Eye-Catching Cover Design</td>
<td>13.89</td>
<td>41.67</td>
<td>44.44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Usage in Other Situations</td>
<td>24.44</td>
<td>58.89</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey
**Content Aspects**: Considering the Content Aspects, the response is quite encouraging with more than 80% being satisfied with the motivation aspect and more than 70% finding the materials suitable to the Engineering course.

**Corporeal Aspects**: Among these, the technical terms section and cover page received lukewarm response and the students do not seem to have been satisfied. To a large extent, the improvement of creativity and the use of English language in other situation was found to be ‘good’ enough. The non-English medium and rural students, particularly, are not able to benefit from their study of English to use it in other situations.

**Figure 5.5**

Level of Satisfaction of Learners' Second Language Learning through the Prescribed Syllabus in English in Content and Corporeal Aspects

![Level of Satisfaction in Content and Corporeal Aspects](chart)

**Source**: Survey
Table 5.6

Level of Satisfaction of Learners' Second Language Learning through the Prescribed Syllabus in English in Communicative Aspects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Highly Satisfied %</th>
<th>Satisfied %</th>
<th>Dissatisfied %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension of the Text</td>
<td>40.56</td>
<td>52.22</td>
<td>7.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of language learning through grammar</td>
<td>63.33</td>
<td>28.33</td>
<td>08.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of language through tasks</td>
<td>11.67</td>
<td>83.33</td>
<td>05.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening skill</td>
<td>47.78</td>
<td>40.56</td>
<td>11.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking skill</td>
<td>13.89</td>
<td>8.89</td>
<td>77.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading skill</td>
<td>12.78</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>67.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing skill</td>
<td>38.89</td>
<td>48.89</td>
<td>12.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey

Communicative Aspects: Among the four skills, the level of satisfaction on the part of the students with regard to Speaking Skills and Reading Skills was found to dissatisfactory, hence the need to pay special attention to the students in this respect.
Figure 5.6

Level of Satisfaction of Learners' Second Language Learning through the Prescribed Syllabus in English in Communicative Aspects

Source: Survey
5.11 Computer Assisted Language Lab (CAL Lab)

At present the computer has become a part and parcel of our day to day life. It plays a vital role in the process of teaching/learning. It can be used to learn a foreign language like English. Computers have made language learning easy and also made the language learning process interesting and enjoyable for both teacher and student, throughout the world. CAL Lab has reduced the burden of the teacher and made learning more individualistic. It also saves the students from the out-dated teaching methods that some teachers might adopt to teach language. It is described as one of the interactive methods that provide space and time to a learner according to his own ability to learn. CAL Lab enables the learner to look beyond the conventional mode of learning and encourages self-learning.

Koneru Lakshmaiah University introduced Communication Skills Lab with the name Computer Assisted Language Lab (CAL Lab) for undergraduate Engineering and Technology students. Even though there is no particular syllabus for Computer-Aided Language Lab, a variety of tasks in speaking and listening were designed by the Course Coordinator, Mr. M.V. Ramana Moorthy, to help the students to overcome communication apprehension and diffidence in expression. An ‘average’ of 56% of the students have expressed that their skills improved to a great extent owing to the Lab. The remaining 33% students felt that their skills have improved, to some extent.