2.1 Review of Literature Relating to Current Practices of ELT in Tamilnadu

There are many studies that have been conducted on ELT at the school as well as tertiary level in Tamilnadu. Some of the important studies are reviewed here.

Kothainayaki (1994) did her study on the classroom interaction in second language teaching. She chose students and teachers of Class VI, VII and VIII and conducted her studies both inside and outside the classroom. She examined the errors in the use of prepositions, articles, participles, etc. She suggested that grammar teaching should have been started right from Class I and grammatical drills must be included in the syllabus for developing students’ communicative competence.

Karthiyayani (1995) did her study on the reading comprehension of the students studying at the higher secondary level. She found that the reading performance of the students in English (L2) is better when the answers were explicitly stated in the passage, and the students found it difficult if the answers were scattered in the passage. Further, she observed that the family’s economic status and the students’ previous academic record played a crucial role in the performance of the students, but the gender and location played a lesser role in the performance of the reading comprehension of the students.

Nisha (1995) did her study on communicative competence. Her study examined the areas of difficulty in learning communicative competence and the areas of inappropriateness between the language syllabus, language teaching and linguistic performance of the first year degree students in English who studied in Tamil medium. She identified some of the communication tactics followed by the learners when they had encountered problems in the process of communication. Her study also reported that the socio-economic factors played less of a role, while parental education, situational and psychological factors played a key role in the development of the communicative competence of the learners.

Baskaran (1996) did his study on orthographical errors of students at the under graduate level. He found that students committed these errors due to addition, omission,
substitution and inversion of the spelling. L1 influence was also a reason for the orthographical errors. So he suggested that the spelling drill with special emphasis on confusing words and the practice of dictionary-use would reduce the orthographic errors.

**Ravi (1998)** did his study on the motivational problems in Teaching English as a second language at the high school level with particular reference to Class VI, VII and VIII. This study found that the motivational problems were comparatively less in the higher classes than in the lower classes. His study also identified that the quantum of vocabulary used in the text books also decided the quantum of motivation achieved.

**Rangasamy (1998)** did his study on the techniques of teaching English in relation to the text materials used for the higher secondary students and their performance in speaking and writing. He evaluated teaching techniques and text materials. His study found that there were phonological, grammatical and discourse based errors. Based on the findings, the study suggested that the examination should test the mastery of the students over the four skills of language including spelling test, word building, and grammar, phonology, reading and writing comprehension. Further, the study suggested that the text should include more lessons written by Indian writers. Poems must not be given importance in text materials.

**Chandran (1999)** did his study on speaking skill at Higher Secondary level of First year speaking English. His study found phonological, lexical and grammatical errors in speaking and proved that the medium of instruction played a crucial role in the communicative ability of speaking. He proved through his study that English medium students had better spoken English abilities than those from the Tamil medium. He suggested that importance must be given to communicative activities in the syllabus so that the learners would develop communicative abilities.

**Jayanthi (2002)** did her study on the classroom interaction of the graduate students. This study found that the factors like observation of world knowledge, time factor, smartness of the students, avoidance of shyness, evaluative capacity, commitment, psychological conditions, interaction with text, etc., played a significant role in classroom interaction. It also found that past failures were the reasons for the shyness of the students. So, many of the students avoid communicative activity.

**Subramanian (2002)** did his study on the linguistic skills of the graduate students in English. His study evaluated LSRW skills. But the study concentrated only on the
writing skill of the graduate students. The study found phonological, grammatical and orthographical errors in productive skills. It suggested that language games, group discussion and such activities should be encouraged in the class hours. It also suggested that introducing the audiovisual instrument for language teaching would be useful at the tertiary level.

Sobana (2003) explored the communicative competence in written English among secondary students. She evaluated the competence-based achievement of the students on the basis of the marks obtained by them on the given test items like identification of sounds and letters, identification of word meanings, application of word meanings in sentences, letter writing and composition. Further, the study revealed that the instruction and parental economic and educational background had a direct impact on the competence-based achievement and ability to use written English.

Chidambaram (2004) did his study on the learning process of English by higher secondary students with special reference to Dharmapuri district. His study evaluated all the four language skills. It found that the medium of instruction had direct impact on the achievement of second language skills.

Vivekananda (2005) did his study on the communicative competence of higher secondary students in English with special reference to Coimbatore district. He evaluated all the four language skills in English in the area of communicative competency. His study suggested that the language lab should be established in all schools.

Chandra Bose (2008) did his study on the performance of the Engineering students of Tamilnadu in English language. His study identified student ability on the basis of the error performance of the students. His study observed the overall performance of students in all the tasks of speaking skills. The study inferred that the students had low level of (22.5%) problems using non-existing words, whereas they had high level of problems in repetitions. His study also identified errors in writing skills, such as orthographical, morphological, and grammatical and syntactical. His study suggested using multimedia software, radio, and TV material for remedial measures.

V. Unnikrishnan (2011) presented the error analysis of the English Competence of the students of Diploma in Teacher Education, with special reference to Coimbatore. His study identified errors or problems in writing skills. He identified fewer problems in
listening skills. This implies the fact that the skill of listening is in a way easier than the skill of writing.

It may be noted that none of these recent studies has focused on USSE Scheme, mainly because USSE Scheme was only at the discussion level during the period of the research reported above. USSE Scheme is a very recent development in Tamilnadu and thus calls for urgent and intensive examination of its assumptions, goals, practices, etc.

2.2. Review of Literature Relating to USSE Scheme

USSE Scheme was implemented in the year 2011 in Tamilnadu. There are many news articles relating to USSE Scheme in newspapers. But there is no major study conducted on USSE Scheme in general, and the English Syllabus of USSE Scheme in particular. For the review of literature, the talk of Mr. Karunaananthan, Retired Head of the Department of History, Vivekananda College, Chennai has been taken up here. Karunaananthan articulates that USSE Scheme does not mean filling the gaps among the different boards of syllabus. But it is an effort to end education inequality existing in the society in terms of caste and economics status. He points out “there can be, there must be unity in diversity. But there can never be unity in disparity”. He also questions the government on how it is possible to implement USSE Scheme through syllabus without curriculum. He warns that USSE Scheme should not be shrunk into just syllabus. He understands the importance of English language teaching. He insists on the medium of instruction in the regional language. At the same time he demands that English communicative skills must be developed by Class X. He says that English is a compulsory subject up to undergraduate level. But the students of Government schools do not have adequate English communicative skills. He asks whether mistakes occur in planning or in implementation. He insists that USSE Scheme must reflect not only national standards, but also global ones.1

2.3. Review of Literature of NCF 2005

V. K. Sunwani presents his views on NCF 2005 in the essay “Revisiting School Education in India – National Curriculum Framework 2005” in Language in India. He points out that the relationship among the curriculum; syllabus and text books must be maintained and strengthened. He insists that teachers must play an active role in classrooms. With regard to second language learning, he provides the following information: the goals for second language curriculum are two-fold: attainment of a basic
proficiency such as is acquired in natural language learning and the development of language into an instrument for abstract thought and knowledge acquisition through literacy. Reading failure in one’s own language adversely affects second language reading also.  

As already mentioned, USSE Scheme was implemented in the year 2011. Several questions and doubts have been raised regarding its standard. The present study tries to examine whether English Syllabus of USSE Scheme has adopted and implemented national and global standards.

2.4 Research Methodology

This Section of the Chapter provides information about research questions, data collection and data analysis.

2.4.1 Research Questions

The three specific research questions used in the study are:

1. Does the English Syllabus of USSE Scheme reflect national standards?
2. Does the English Syllabus of USSE Scheme reflect K-12 Standards?
3. Does The English Syllabus of USSE Scheme reflect Global standards?

The overall design of the study has been dictated by the above questions. The process of data collection and data analysis has been directed by the above questions. The main purpose of the study being to explore if the English Syllabus USSE Scheme can be validated, the distribution of identified competencies of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing through the vertical levels of difficulty through various classes as related to identical items in the documents of standardization (CEFR, ACTFL, CLB, K-12 Californian Language Arts English Syllabus and NCERT English Syllabus) has been studied.

2.4.2 Data Collection

The data for the study have been collected from the following public domains.

1. USSE Scheme (Common Syllabus – 2009 English Classes I to X)
2. CEFR (The Common European Framework of Reference for Language Learning, Teaching and Assessment)
3. ACTFL (ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines Speaking, Writing, Listening and Reading 2012)

4. CLB (Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: Theoretical Framework)

5. K-12 (English–Language Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve)

6. NCERT (Syllabus for Classes at the Elementary Level and Syllabus for Classes at Secondary Level)

2.4.3 Data Analysis

The available data in the public domain have been correlated item-wise. In doing so, identical statements of description of skills have been correlated with each other to establish the presence of the items in all the documents of standardization of English language skills. While there can be no one to one correspondence in such statements of description, key elements of formulation have been duly taken into consideration for correlation.
List of References
