CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PRELIMINARIES

The present study is an attempt to enhance the word power of the Diploma level Engineering College students by way of using some effective techniques of vocabulary teaching. As English is becoming a global language, it has become the medium of all relevant social interaction and the ability to use English is considered an absolute essential factor for being successful in one’s career. Technical Education at Diploma level is witnessing a consistent growth pattern generating competent engineers and encouraging them to think beyond curriculum. To achieve their goals in the technological field there is a need to have enough stock of word power for fluency in English. This study makes an in-depth analysis of the existing methods, techniques and approaches of vocabulary teaching which are prescribed in their syllabus and suggests some more effective techniques of enhancing word power. This is probably the first attempt to judge the vocabulary of Diploma level Engineering students in Pune region, and help them to enhance their vocabulary through effective techniques.

The present chapter epitomizes English as Word Language, its past, present and future and impact of globalization on Technical Education as well as Engineering Education in India. It has included Rationale and Significance, aims and objectives of the study. It highlights the scope and the hypothesis of the study. It discusses methodology of the study. In addition, it explains the way in which the data is collected for the purpose of analysis. It also takes into account a review of the earlier work carried out on teaching vocabulary.

1.2 ENGLISH AS A WORLD LANGUAGE

As global communication expands throughout the world, so does the need for a global language. English is the most widely used language in the world. Although the number may vary, it is completely accepted that about 1200 millions of people around the world speak English, either as a native, second or a foreign language. English in
some form has become the native or unofficial language of a majority of the countries around the world today. It is worth to quote here Kachru (1983) who rightly says:

“A significant segment of the world population uses it as their other tongue (as a second or a foreign language). It is this side of English which has actually elevated it to the ‘status of an international language’.” (p2)

English is dominating the globe today because, when the Sun finally set on the ‘British Empire’ at the end of World War II, the United States emerged as a global superpower and cultural giant, leading the way to medical research, technological innovations and motion pictures. In the 17th & 18th centuries, English was the language of the leading colonial nation – Britain. In the 18th and 19th centuries, it was the language of the leader of the industrial revolution - also Britain. In the late 19th and 20th centuries, it was the language of the leading economic power of the US. Most people agree that it has something to do with the emergence of the United States as a world super power. The US has worked hard to reach the level of achievements. The important thing to remember is that a language becomes an international language for one chief reason, the political power of its people especially their military power.

People all over the world are trying to learn English so that they may compete globally. It is interesting that China adopted a national policy to make every student literate in English by the year 2008. Graddol (2006) articulates the view that Asia in general and India and China in particular now hold the key to the long term future of English as a global language.

The English language is now the operating standard for global communications. It is the world media language and the language of cinema, TV, Pop music and computer world. English dominates international business, politics, internet and culture more than any other language in human history. English has become an integral part of science and technology. The standard books on science and technology are available only in English. As Crystal (1997) states:

“In the 1980s 85% of Biology and Physics papers, 73% of Mathematics and Chemistry papers were written in English, and contends that these percentages have increased significantly”.(p.110)
English is the language, not of westernization, but of modernization. This is why, English is the language of the agricultural universities even though it is not the language of our agriculture. India is now seen as a major hub for software development. A substantial number of international software companies have set up branches in India. English is the main language used in computing and Indian software engineers are proficient in English. International software companies see this as a positive feature while recruiting Indian software engineers and setting up branches in India. Though internet has developed into various other languages, English still remains as the core language for most of its users. Most of the information and websites are available in English only and it becomes very difficult and problematic to translate every appropriate page into the language of the concerned country. With the growth of the Internet into education and E-commerce, English language by default, is bound to grow. Therefore, the learners of English language cannot afford to ignore the words, their relations with each other, and the way they act in different contexts. It is more challenging in the case of English as it has become a global language and almost every day new words come into being while old words gather new or additional meanings. Today English enjoys worldwide distribution and immense popularity. Sinclair (1985), asserts that

‘English is no longer the exclusive province of the native speaker’. (p.248)

1.3 ENGLISH IN INDIA: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

English in India has a long history. Even after 68 years of Independence it exists with a changed status. It is a generally accepted fact that the British introduced English and it is deeply rooted into the Indian soil. On account of the rulers intimate contact of 15 years with British, India adopted English as a part and parcel of its administrative field as well as the Indian educational system. It is a fact that British implanted English system of Education with a definite purpose. They introduced English in order to produce cheap clerks for their administrative purpose, and to produce, as Lord Macaulay called ‘a class of people, Indian in blood but English in taste, in opinions and in intellect’’. Both the stated views clearly indicate the selfish purpose of the British Government in which they could get success during the last century.
British achieved their aim not only by introducing English, but by reinforcing it as a part of Indian culture. The British tried to spread English in many ways-

a) By Supporting the Anglicist Movement -
   The Anglicists stoutly argued that as they could accrue many benefits from learning English, it should be the medium of Instruction. Even ardent patriots like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwarchandra, Vidyasagar, Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Justice M. G. Ranade and Lokmanya Tilak were vanguards of the Anglicist movement for the spread of science and western literature through the English language. Lord Macaulay supported this movement with the sincere belief that the knowledge of English would prove beneficial in many ways to the Indian people.

b) By Declaring the Clear Aim-
   Lord Bentink supported Macaulay by stating that the main object of the British government ought to be the promotion of western literature and science among the natives of India, and all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English Education alone.

The declaration made by Lord Harding proved quite helpful to establish English in Indian education. In 1844 he declared that for the services in the company, preference would be given to those who were educated in English schools. This declaration led to the growth of number of schools teaching English literature and Science. It is also a fact that such schools became most popular owing to the interest shown by some Indian educationists and social reformers.

The result was that naturally, the Indians were tempted to take education in such schools and colleges where the medium of instruction was English. The British Government raised some funds to open such schools and colleges in India. Importance was given to study western literature and science in all the stages of education.

It is a fact that British Government imparted English in all walks of life. It was made the official language in all administrative fields in India. Thus English became the
means of official language in courts and banks in India. After all India was suited to adopt English as a language of communication for it is a land of variety in language and caste. There was not a single rich Indian language useful to unify all the states of India. Therefore, English rich in all respects became popular as a means of communication.

Thus English before independence occupied a privileged place in India. It was the language of administration, a compulsory subject at schools and colleges, and a medium of instruction at college, and university level. It was made compulsory for employment.

But with the attainment of independence in 1947, the position of English in our education, as well as in our national life, came to be seriously questioned. There was a lot of controversy over the status of English in the changed context. Rao’s (1954) famous statement captures the dilemma of English in India.

“One has to convey in a language that is not one’s own, the spirit that is one’s own. One has to convey the various shades and omissions of a certain thought-movement that look maltreated in an alien language. I use the word alien, yet English is not really an alien language to us. It is the language of our intellectual make up like Sanskrit or Persian was before – but not of our emotional make-up. We are all instinctively bilingual, many of us writing our own language and in English. We cannot write like the English. We should not, we cannot write only as Indians. We have grown to look at the large world as part of us. Our method of expression therefore has to be a colourful as the Irish or the American. Time alone will justify it”. (p.78)

Language problem is one of the genuine problems, which India had to face. After independence, the movement started against the retention of English. Many educationalist and national leaders came to the conclusion that English should be replaced by one Indian language, however all of them were quite reluctant to drive away English from India owing to its worldwide importance. The following observations reveal the sincere attitude of educationists and national leaders towards the changing status of English in India.
(i) Rabindranath Tagore states in Bhatia K. and Bhatia B. B.(1977)
“Education is all-around development of the individual in harmony with the
Universal, the supreme person, who has in himself the various levels or planes
of consciousness and experience corresponding to man’s self, mind and
soul”.(p.5)

(ii) Mahatma Gandhi has admitted the significance of the English language in
Bhatia K.K. (1975)
“English is a language of international commerce; it is the language of
diplomacy and it contains many a rich treasure; it gives us an introduction to
western thought and culture”.(p.6)

(iii) Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has pointed out the important implications of
English in India is rightly quoted in Bhatia K.K. (1975)
“English is our major window on the modern world. It is through this language
that we have distilled essence of modern language in all fields of human
activity.” (p.7)

From the above observations, it is quite clear that the status of English developed
compared to the past i.e. before independence, but all of them accepted and strongly
recommended to continue the study of English as a second or third language.

After Independence, it was decided that Hindi would be the official language. In
1965, the Indian government in the face of bloodshed in Madras and a few other
places had to assure the people that English would continue to be used for official
purposes. This decision was taken because Hindi was not accepted as the national
language as expected. So today English is the associate language along with Hindi.
English as an official language is more acceptable than Hindi to many South Indians,
who are prominently speakers of Dravidian languages.

At present the importance of English has continued to spread and has increased in
depth and range. English is used as an important language in the legal system,
regional administration, in the armed forces, the national business at home and abroad
and also in mass media. English is regarded as a National and International link
language in a complex multilingual society like India. It is the language of science and technology. All standard books on science and technology are available in English but they are not available in Indian languages and translation would never keep pace with the fast advancements in science and technology.

A majority of Indian writers use English as a language of expression. English is internalized by the Indians. Therefore, the Indians have a respectable literature of their own, known as Indo-English literature. Indian writers like Vikram Seth, Anita Desai, R.K. Narayan, Nirad Chaudhari, Khushwant Singh, Arundhati Roy, Shobha De have given clear evidence of their mastery of the language.

The English language has a very special status in India. It is the language most hated and loved at the same time. It is hated because of its colonial associations, and because of the difficulties that the acquisition of language skills poses. It is loved because of the various doors it opens for those who acquire it with various degrees of success.

English for many Indians has become a language of every day communication with assorted flavors added to it. Therefore, it has become the people’s own language. Das (1998) expresses the same view in the lines,

```
“…… The language, I Speak
Becomes mine, distortions, its queerness.
All mine, mine alone.
It is half English, half Indian, Funny, Perhaps’ but it is honest.”(p.39)
```

The globalization of the English language has been observed in a variety of perspectives. English is considered to be an essential medium for international economy, diplomacy, science and the media. Today, English is equated with the advance of education, trade, commerce and information technology and it seems to dominate almost all walks of human life. Quirk (1985) has rightly said,

```
“English is the language on which the sun does not set ,whose users never sleep”.(p.1)
```
1.4 IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON TECHNICAL EDUCATION

There is no doubt that the trend towards a globalized world is shaping the engineering profession as engineering activities are increasingly being carried out across time zones and national borders. Globalization means proving interdependence and interconnectedness of modern world. Held (2004) states:

“It is the process of corporate structuring that focuses a company’s core competency on single worldwide market, creating growth and profit opportunities”. (p.284)

Knowledge is the driving force in the rapidly globalized economy and society. It is well known that the growth of the global economy has increased opportunities for those countries which have a good level of education. In today’s world, there is a very close relation between the success in education and the increase in economy. India has made a remarkable progress in technical education in the last two decades. Technical education determines the development and socio economic conditions of a nation and as a result there is a greater need for high quality technical education to produce technically skilled manpower in India.

Competitive pressures and advancing technology due to globalization have forced companies to improve and update product design and to optimize their manufacturing process. Employers rely on engineers to increase productivity and to make investment in plants and equipment to enable increase in output of goods and services. The emergence of this new work order brought about by globalization and industrialization demands not only specialization in the particular field but a combination of skills and responsibilities among the employees.

It is very important to give necessary education to the engineers that will certainly determine the human force profile:

To be in harmony with technological developments and changes.
Always to renew oneself
    To have lifelong learning
    To have good relation with others
To join the group work
To take responsibilities and risks
To have not only job qualification but also the knowledge of social subjects

When engineering students pass out from colleges and become real engineers, they find that English appears even more crucial than it used to be in their studies. The nature of their job demands that being an engineer needs to cooperate and communicate with different groups of people. But communication stops when learners lack necessary words. Industrial survey revealed that English is gaining momentum and students can grab their dream job by having fluency and command over English language. Fluency and command can only be achieved when engineers have enough stock of vocabulary. Students of the Engineering level are in a better position to enlarge their vocabulary because at this level students know the sentence pattern and common words reasonably well. So to survive in the global competition technical students should have effective communication skills. It is equally true that the more words in a language we know, the more competent users of the language we are likely to be.

1.5 ENGINEERING EDUCATION IN INDIA

India has made a remarkable progress in engineering education in the last two decades. Due to rapid industrialization and economic growth, engineering and technical education in India has been developing faster than anywhere in the world. Recent Indian scientific, technological developments particularly in space, nuclear technology, computer field and information science have earned India world-wide recognition as an emerging global power.

Since technical education determines the development and socio economic conditions of a nation, there is a greater need for high quality technical education to produce technically skilled manpower in India.

Technical education is imparted at three different levels in India.
i) Industrial training institutes (ITI), which conduct trade courses for skilled workers.

ii) Polytechnics, which run diploma courses to produce middle level (supervisory level) technicians.

iii) Engineering colleges, which conduct under graduate programmes.

Technical education falls under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) as the nodal authority that covers courses and programmes in Engineering, Technology, Management, Architecture, Town Planning, Pharmacy and Applied Arts and Crafts. The MHRD caters to the programmes at diploma undergraduate, post graduate and research levels.

1.6 PRESENT STATUS OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The technical education system in the country can be broadly classified into three categories: Central Government Funded Institutions, State Government Funded Institutions and Self-Financed Institutions. From the year 2006-2007 onwards, technical education consists of 1617 engineering colleges and approximately 1292 polytechnics with an intake of 2.36 lakh to 2.65 lakh students. There are today 15 IITs and 8 IIMs which are institutions of national importance, 20 National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and more than 3500 engineering colleges, 15 institutions for diploma in Pharmacy, 63 Schools for Hotel Management and 4 institutes for Architecture in 2006. The Statutory Body for Technical Education is AICTE. All these institutes are engaged in proper planning and coordinated development of Technical Education System (TES) in the country. For post graduate courses, there are 1147 educational institutions for Master of Business Administration (MBA), Post Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) and 953 for Master of Computer Application (MCA).

All these institutes and boards are making significant contribution in their specialized fields to the growth of technical educational sector. The number of private engineering colleges and Institutes is increasing rapidly. The government expenditure in technical education has increased manifold. Some of the industrially developed
states such as Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh have experienced phenomenal growth both in number of students and engineering and technical institutes over the last two decades. Many central programmes/schemes contribute significantly to technical education. These include.

- Programme for Apprenticeship Training (Scholarship and Stipends)
- Community Polytechnics (CP)
- Technician Education Project–III assisted by the World Bank for quality improvement programme (TEQIP)
- Polytechnics for disabled persons
- National programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL)
- National programme on Earthquake Engineering Education
- INDEST MALLBENT
- Consortium and Technology Development Missions.

**Diploma level Engineering Institutes (Polytechnics)**

This study focuses on Diploma level Engineering colleges as the researcher worked for some time as a practicing teacher in one such college. Diploma level engineering colleges in the country offer three year generalized diploma courses in conventional subjects such as civil, electrical and mechanical engineering. The courses are now diversified to include electronics, computer science, medical lab technology, hospital engineering and others. Women’s polytechnics offer courses in garment technology, beauty culture, textile design, and library science and others.

There are 1292 polytechnics under the aegis of Ministry of Human Resource Development with a capacity of over 2.95 lakh students offering three year diploma courses in various branches of engineering with an entry qualification of 10th pass or 10+2. Presently, some states have a Joint Entrance Test (JET) for admission to diploma programmes. The majority of students seeking admission to the diploma courses come from comparatively poor socio-economic backgrounds. The diploma holders who graduated from the polytechnics three to four decades ago, occupy senior positions in the industrial sector and contribute significantly to the industrialization. But, today, the pure lecture-homework quiz format can no longer train the engineers
and technologies of tomorrow, who have to take challenges of the future. The aim of technical education must therefore to prepare the students for a professionally productive life.

Since technical education is essentially an investment and forms a crucial input for national development, it should no longer be treated as just a part of general education but it should be organized, managed and administered independently. UN Secretary of State Hillary Clinton commented that:

“Technical education in India is the best in the world. We need to work together in the field of educational opportunities.” (p.1)

1.7 RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Rationale means the ground of reasons which makes the study viable as a work of research. The present study is chosen for the following reasons. The first reason is that vocabulary enrichment is an area of importance for the engineering college students as their stock of words is restricted to their specific area of work.

The second reason is that words are the building blocks of language and this study enables students to enhance their word power.

The third reason is that active vocabulary of engineering students consists of few hundred words and its expansion is necessary.

The significance of the present study is that there are many studies related to error analysis in the areas of grammar such as articles, adjectives, adverbs and conjunctions. There are not many studies related to the area of vocabulary. Moreover, the area of vocabulary enrichment has not been frequently touched upon. The present study deals with the techniques and methods for vocabulary expansion. The novelty of the use of techniques for vocabulary and the vast illustrative material brings out the academic and pedagogical significance of the present research study on vocabulary. This study also verifies whether some of the techniques suggested by ELT experts could be used for enriching vocabulary of Engineering college students.
1.8 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1) To find out problems of Engineering college students with respect to vocabulary
2) To expand the active vocabulary of Engineering college students in order to help them to express themselves more clearly and appropriately
3) To provide some effective strategies for enhancing the word power of engineering college students
4) To state the pedagogical implications of this study for the teachers working in engineering college

1.9 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

A random sample of ‘240’ students of first year diploma level engineering colleges has been used as the basis of observations in the present study. This group size would be considered as symptomatic of what may happen with a larger group size. The students are from six diploma level engineering colleges in Pune city. The colleges selected for the study are:

1. Padmashree Dr. D. Y. Patil Polytechnique, Akurdi
2. JSPM’S Rajarshi Shahu College of Engineering, Tathawade
3. Genba Sopanraw Moze College of Engineering, Balewadi
4. Y. B. Patil Polytechnique, Akurdi
5. MIT’s- Sri. Savitribai Phule Polytechnic, Kothrud
6. M.M.Polytechnique, Kalewadi

All the students are approximately 17-20 years of age. The students are selected randomly in this study in order to find the effectiveness of training conducted on all the types of students. The teachers need to take into account various sociological aspects of all learners such as age, educational background, field of interest, social class, economical background and sociolinguistic variables while dealing with vocabulary enrichment. There are vocabulary differences among the speakers because they get different linguistic and conceptual situations. The students belonging to a socially higher and economically more affluent section may have wide variety of
words but to culturally deprived students may not have adequate vocabulary for effective communication. In this study, from the selected students, approximately 52% students come from vernacular schools and the remaining 48% come from English schools. Even the students who come from the vernacular background have 8-10 years of experience of learning English and so they are familiar with the basic grammatical rules and common words.

1.10 HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The researcher considered the following hypotheses while conducting the research:

1. Engineering students are aware of technical words but their communication skill is weak due to lack of effective vocabulary.

2. There is a lack of systematic teaching to enhance vocabulary of Engineering college students. The use of innovative techniques and methods can strengthen students’ word power.

1.11 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

As a practising teacher in an engineering college, the researcher has observed that students of first year of engineering colleges are usually not in a position to communicate confidently as they do not have adequate word power.

The method that would be used in this research is an eclectic method as it combines in itself the positive points of other methods. Yardi (1977) describes this method as a ‘compromise method’. It is not homogenous method since it adopts useful ideas and selects content that can help the students to learn the new words. Different vocabulary techniques like antonyms and synonyms, prefixes and suffixes, collocations, words often confused, guessing words in context and semantic fields can be used to teach new words. This study will focus on all these aspects that are considered vital in mastering vocabulary.
A group of 240 students from six engineering colleges would be selected for carrying out this study. The researcher would conduct a Diagnostic Test in order to understand student’s problems with respect to words. A statistical representation of their scores would be provided. The mistakes made by the students will be identified and scrutinized carefully. After analyzing the errors, the feedback will be given to the students regarding their performance of the Diagnostic Test in the class. It will help them realize the problematic areas where they need more orientation. Some strategies would be developed to enhance vocabulary through the Questionnaire to be used as a surveying tool. An attempt will be made to teach vocabulary adopting different strategies for about 15 days. After 15 days Achievement test will be conducted in order to find out whether the students have benefitted from the special training they received for a fortnight. The conclusion would be derived from comparative analysis of Diagnostic Test and Achievement Test.

1.12 DATA FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

The responses by 240 students in the form of Questionnaire, Diagnostic Test and Achievement Test from six, Diploma Level Engineering Colleges will be the data for present research, after its close scrutiny and critical analysis. The students are familiar with various types of questions. The time given to the students will be sixty minutes and each test will be for forty marks. These tests comprise of four questions and each question has sections: A and B. They are as follows.

Q.1 (A) Match the words in list (a) with their synonyms in list (b).
Q.1 (B) Match the words in list (a) with their antonyms on list (b).
Q.2 (A) Form a ward with each of the Prefixes given below.
Q.2 (B) Form a word with each of the Suffixes given below.
Q.3 (A) Choose the correct Collocation.
Q.3 (B) Fill in the blanks by selecting the appropriate word from the brackets.
Q.4 (A) Tick the right meaning of the underlined words in the following context.
Q.4 (B) Replace the word underlined with a suitable similar word in English from the words given below the paragraph

Thus, the aim of questionnaire is to examine the students’ use of vocabulary in different contexts. After the training given by the researcher, the Achievement Test is given to the students. The performance of the Achievement test is compared and evaluated as far as use of vocabulary is concerned.

1.13 REVIEW OF THE RELEVANT LITERATURE

This section aims at reviewing Word List, comments made by scholars in books, thesis and articles on the teaching of vocabulary.

1.13.1 History of Vocabulary Teaching and its Development in the Modern Times

The history of vocabulary teaching and the developments that have taken place in modern time have been traced in this section. In the past, it was thought that vocabulary could simply be learned effortlessly and received only incidental attention in many textbooks and language programs. However, mastering vocabulary is one of the most challenging tasks that any learner faces when learning a foreign language.

A lot of work on vocabulary has been done by researchers like Richards (1976), Nation (1978), Wallace (1982), Carter (1987), Allen (1993), Coady (1991), McCarthy (1998), and Lewis (2000) and many others. They have worked on different aspects of vocabulary. Each and every work is different and is significant.

Thorndike (1921):

Thorndike published his first Teachers Word book. During the initial days, with the use of Grammar Translation and the Direct Method, Vocabulary teaching was nonexistent. It was at the beginning or 20th century that certain psychologists surmised from anecdotal evidence the problems learners faced in learning English as a foreign language. Word Book was designed for American children and he made it easier for
them to acquire a wide reading vocabulary. Thorndike was the first to introduce the idea of vocabulary selection and control and made it interesting and important distinction between the range of a word and frequency of word.

**Thorndike and Large (1926):**

In 1926 Thorndike produced The Teacher’s Word Book of 20,000 words and later in 1944 in association with Large, he produced and revised the Teacher’s Word Book of 30,000 words.

**Horn (1926):**

Horn collected 25,000 words as basic writing vocabulary from personal and business letters and through word counts. Teaching spelling help children to learn words and spelling errors.

**Richards and Ogden (1930):**

Richards and Ogden carried forward the idea to build a permanent part of students stock of words. This idea created awareness among others that there is a need to pay special attention to the teaching of graded vocabulary subsequently. Richards was a psychologist and critic whereas Ogden was a linguist and a language philosopher. A list of 850 words which was called basic English was produced with the argument that this would facilitate learning English easily and promote international communication. Ogden and Richards recreate classics using Basic English and this was not a very successful process. Though Basic English was not put to extensive use in language teaching, it enjoyed a place in the history as an attempt to extend the facility to learn English by larger mass of people.

**Faucets and Makki (1932):**

Faucets and Makki on the basis of Thorndike’s list and Horn’s list prepared another vocabulary list. They grouped the vocabulary into four categories- 1) Indispensable words 2) Essential Words 3) Useful words for two fold mastery 4) Special words for reading mastery only.
Michel West and GSL (1953):

Michel West came to India as a school inspector and worked in Dacca. He believed that reading texts could be written using simplified vocabulary. In order to achieve this goal West resorted to the frequency counts with a corpus of five million words. He was able to identify the 2000 most frequently used words and listed them in an alphabetical manner and compiled them in the form of a book known as General Service List of English Words (Popularly called GSL). 

Wilkins (1974):

Wilkins summarized his view about the role of vocabulary in languages instruction in his work, Second Language Learning and Teaching (1974) as follows. 

“… The abilities to refer to concrete and conceptual entities are as fundamental to language as is capacity provided by the grammar to relate such entities to one another, knowledge of a language demands mastery of its vocabulary as much as its grammar…. Just as a grammatical meaning of a linguistic form can be established with only reference to the grammatical system of which it is a part, so lexical meaning is the product of a word’s place in the lexical system.” (p.19)

He suggests that the only way to master the lexical system is the same as that is recommended to master the syntactic system. The learner must experience considerable exposure to the language. Vocabulary development occurs naturally in L1 through contextualized, naturally sequenced language, it will develop with natural communicative exposure in L2.

Rosenfield (1988):

The new learnt vocabulary can be effortlessly recalled when they are linked with emotions. These emotions are considered as positive (happy), negative (sad) events in life.
Kristen and Terrell (1993):

Stephen Kristen (University of Southern California) as an expert in the field of linguistics, specialized in theories of language acquisition and development. Much of his recent research has involved the study of non-English and bilingual language acquisition.

In 1977, Tracy Terrell a teacher of Spanish in California, outlines a proposal for a ‘new’ philosophy of language teaching which he called Natural Approach. This was an attempt to develop a language teaching proposal that incorporated the “naturalist” principles, researchers had identified in studies of second language acquisition.

Kristen and Terrell points out that just as particular affective acquisition activity for example may entail the use of certain grammatical structures; the activity is not designed to “teach” that structure. The same is true of vocabulary: activities are not necessarily “Vocabulary Builders” students attention is not on vocabulary learning but on communication. In this way we can encourage true vocabulary acquisition.

For students beyond the beginning levels, Kristen suggests that reading is the most efficient means to acquire new vocabulary Kristen (1993) rightly points out:

“When (students) read for pleasure ….they acquire, involuntarily and without conscious effort nearly all of the so-called “language skills” many people are so concerned about”. (p. 141)

Lewise (1993):

Another aspect brought out by M Lewise in his Lexis Approaches is to focus on lexical chunks or formulaic expressions. English used by most of the native speakers is characterized by the use of such expressions and they form a major part of vocabulary learning. The lexical approach pays attention not only to single words but more importantly to collocations and institutionalized utterances and sentence frames.

At Engineering College most of the time the focus is on teaching meaning and occasionally a teacher pays attention to mentioning the grammar of the word. Little importance is given to the pronunciation and use. This must be avoided. At present focus of teaching vocabulary largely rests on helping the learners to learn root words
through the contexts and to know their literal meaning. To facilitate such learning some of the well known exercises available in books are matching exercises, filling blanks, substituting words, finding the odd man out, listening / sorting, synonyms and antonyms, jumbled spellings, crosswords, boggle and others. In the recent times some attempts have been made to design tasks popularly known as word attack tasks. These help the learner look at the use of the word in a context and understand its meaning and later verify it with the help of a dictionary or a teacher. Such predictions and tasks have led to the use of computers which can administer such tasks through these lock-step techniques.

The learners at this level are learners of English for special purposes and need to draw vocabulary from fields such as science, mathematics and other technical subjects. Choosing the right words for them is not an easy task and therefore it is necessary to adopt different strategies. This area largely relates to corpus studies and use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools.

**Firth J. R. (1934):**

Corpus studies have become popular today. Though corpus studies date back to 18th century when the first English Dictionary was produced, a systematic building of the corpus and its analysis has became easy with invention of computers. J. R. Firth was perhaps the First British linguist to have thought of corpus as a valuable source to study language and its structure.

Firthian ideas were developed further by scholars like Halliday and notably Sinclair who is a well known lexicographer. He believed in creating holistic contexts to understand the meaning of a word rather than explain it in isolation. He incorporated this idea in the production of the Collins Co-build 13 Dictionary.

Besides using corpus, today language teaching focuses much more on developing ESP courses. ESP courses it is realized are heavily vocabulary based, and vocabulary abstracts from technical books give us lists of words which can be categorized as technical, semi-technical and non-technical words.
**Coxhead (2000):**

Today, lexicographers and scholars working in the area of corpus studies have compiled the Word List. The best known such list is produced by Coxhead in the year 2000. This list has 570 head words and these are spread across several semantic fields covering most of the academic disciplines. Lexicographers have produced academic Dictionaries and these are useful sources of learning Vocabulary. Besides this, the other genre of learner dictionaries is available today in their soft forms or in downloaded forms. These dictionaries help the learner to know the pronunciation of the words, its meaning, frequency of their occurrence in speech/writing, associated forms and exercises to practice and master the word.

This discussion reveals that Word List is important because a person who knows all the list and their related families would understand better colloquial speech and common written texts. But Word List have some limitations. First lexicographers have selected words with only high frequency and wide range. Second the list consist only a headwords, which means that the word “be” is high on list, but assumes that the person is fluent in all the words for examples am, is, are, was, were, being and had been.

In the next section we look at some important research work in the field of teaching vocabulary.

**Nation (1994):**

The idea behind Nations book is that a systematic, principled approach to vocabulary development results in better learning. The text presents the ESL/EFL teacher to research findings and pedagogical concerns in the area of vocabulary.

There are two main ideas running through the book. The first is information about the statistical nature of vocabulary that provides valuable guidelines for teaching and learning of vocabulary. The most important distinction here is between the small number of high-frequency words, which deserve lot of attention, and the very large number of low frequency words, which require the mastery over strategies like guessing from context. The second idea is that an analysis of the tasks carried out by the learner in acquiring vocabulary provides information about how learning can be made more efficient and effective.
This book is a model handbook for the teachers and learners of English as a second language or foreign language.


This is a practical guide for teachers on how to select, organize and teach vocabulary to all levels of students. It discusses the linguistic and psychological theories relevant to vocabulary learning.

The book has four parts. Part A, “Words: Their Meaning and forms”, concentrates on Language awareness activities, Words and their meaning, Words and their forms. Part B, “Principles in Learning and Teaching Vocabulary”, discusses Decision about Content, how the learner discovers meaning and memory and written storage. Next in Part C, the author discusses “the classroom activities”. In this part the author focuses on using visual aids, using authentic reading texts, teacher designed contexts and the use of the dictionary, speaking activities and games, questionnaires and problem solving. Part D provides checklist and illustrative extracts from course books. Working with Words is an ideal resource for practicing teachers and teacher in training.

MacCarthy and Schmit (1997):

The book has three parts. The first part is about description of vocabulary. Second is about several ways of acquiring vocabulary and third is about teaching methods of vocabulary. This volume examines the area of second language vocabulary studies from broad perspectives: description, acquisition and pedagogical context. All the chapters are grouped together to achieve a balance between description of what vocabulary is and how it behaves, how the mind learns new vocabulary and then uses when it is learned. Some of the specific topics addressed are word frequency and vocabulary size, multi-word units, variation between spoken and written language. The influence of the first language is noticed on second language vocabulary acquisition, vocabulary strategies. The book discusses the co-relation between vocabulary and the syllabus. It deals with trends in teaching and testing vocabulary.
Ur (2012):

Vocabulary Activities is an invaluable resource of new and experienced teachers alike. It includes ideas for introducing, practicing, expanding and exploring vocabulary, as well as selection of fun word games.

The book provides a varied set of vocabulary activities, most of which can be used with whatever vocabulary items the teacher is teaching. Most of the activities are ‘generic’ rather than limited to a particular set of items. So where there are sample texts or lists of items in a Box, these usually function as examples and illustrations. The activities are varied in the kinds of classes or student populations they address.

This book contains teacher friendly vocabulary activities, wide-ranging and accompanying CD-ROM contains print-ready materials which can be put to immediate use in the classroom.

Kachroo (1962):

Kachroo (1962) administrated a test for the students studying in rural and urban schools of Kashmir. It is one of the major research studies in the field of vocabulary. The main objective of the test was to establish the validity of the course book prescribed for the students and to measure the degree of success the course book achieved in the presentation of vocabulary.

From this survey it was clear that learning of the word was closely related to its frequency of occurrence. It was observed that 90% of the words that only occurred once or twice in the course book were not known to most of the students, whereas the words that occurred over 7 times were known to most of the students.

Sarvani (2011):

This study experimented to develop Academic Vocabulary of Regional Medium Engineering Students through Extensive Reading, which offers a portal to the Vocabulary development. The treatment of Extensive Reading to the Experimental group, offered a gateway to the Academic Vocabulary development in Regional Medium Engineering students which can be observed in their significant gain.
The first claim the study makes is that if proper exposure to comprehensible Language input is offered to the learners through Extensive Reading, Learners acquire Vocabulary with ease. The second claim is that the text selection for the reading sessions has a direct influence on the Vocabulary Acquisition.

A culturally, socially and historically familiar text to the Learner amplifies the chances of Vocabulary Acquisition than a culturally, socially and historically unfamiliar text.

The third claim made by the study is that the more number of repetitions of a word in the text augments the probability of Recognition and Acquisition of a word.

**Kudo (1999):**

The main aim of this research was to describe vocabulary strategies and to categorize them. This study investigated the development of awareness, among Japanese ESL learners. Open –ended questionnaire was distributed to collect data. Kudo has applied Schmitt,(1997) taxonomy to categorize the strategies.

Descriptive strategies showed that many strategies were infrequently used. All the strategy means were low, even lower than those in the pilot study.

The end result of Kudo research was as follows: Social category scored 6.38, memory 14.40, the cognitive 18.17 and meta cognitive 13.62. The strategy (I use bilingual dictionary) which belongs to cognitive category, scored the highest mean among all 3.06. The researcher concludes his study by referring to the most frequently used strategy i.e. rote learning which is widely used in Asia. The strategies that are less commonly used were those that involved deeper cognitive processing such as the keyword technique and semantic mapping

**Gu and Johnson (1996):**

The purpose of this research was to investigate beliefs on VLSs. Gu and Johnson (1996) used vocabulary learning questionnaire VLQ to elicit 850 Chinese students’ beliefs about vocabulary strategies. VLQ included 17 statements representing three dimensions of beliefs:

a) Vocabulary should be memorized (8 items)
b) Vocabulary should be picked up naturally (4 items)

c) Vocabulary should be studied and used (5 items)

The adult participants believed that they generally did not employ much memorization and reported using more meaning-oriented strategies than rote learning strategies. In general, the learners believed that vocabulary should carefully be studied and productively used; they also agreed that words can be acquired in context.

**Richards (1976):**

This article discusses the role of vocabulary in the syllabus in the light of the assumptions and findings of theoretical and applied linguistics. In this he deals with the theoretical concerns of linguists and others who study language. First of all, he discusses the disciplines which have as their goal and then he explains about the nature of the language, and the need to carry out pragmatic functions in the real world in order to understand a language.

A second level of application is in the evaluation or interpretations of results obtained. It provides background information that helps us determine the status of vocabulary teaching within syllabus.

There are eight assumptions which the author describes. They are:

1: The native speaker of a language continues to expand his vocabulary in adulthood.

2: Knowing a word means knowing the degree of probability of encountering that word in speech or print.

3: Knowing a word implies knowing the limitations imposed on the use of the word according to variations to function and situation.

4: Knowing a word means knowing the syntactic behavior associated with that word.

5: Knowing a word entails knowledge of the underlying form of a word and derivations that can be made from it.

6. Knowing a word entails knowledge of the network of associations between that word and other words in language.

7. Knowing a word means knowing the semantic value of a word.
8. Knowing a word means knowing many of the different meanings associated with the word.

**Folse (2008):**

This article describes six vocabulary activities for English language classroom. The purpose of the present article is to present some important aspects of vocabulary learning and introduces teachers to six practical vocabulary activities.

He describes five types of words and vocabulary learning:

Many people think of words as single units, such as cat, dozen or reluctant. However, these single words are merely one part of the vocabulary load that our students face. In fact, a word can be of five types, namely 1) a single word, 2) a set phrase, 3) a variable phrase, 4) a phrasal verb, or 5) idiom.

**Six vocabulary activities for the ESL/EFL classroom:**

Activity 1 : keeping a running list of words

Activity 2 : vocabulary cards

Activity 3 : ranking vocabulary items

Activity 4 : vocabulary ladder puzzle

Activity 5 : vocabulary sentence auction

Activity 6 : scrambled vocabulary envelopes

These are some of the activities which the author suggests that teachers have to use in developing the vocabulary of learners. Such activities will help learners to focus attention on the vocabulary.

**Sarwade (2013):**

In this article, an attempt has been made to review present research in vocabulary-its nature, different aspects and the process of its acquisition. The article discusses various issues involved in the teaching of vocabulary.
The study has cited some meanings of the word ‘vocabulary’, its nature and has discussed issues involved in teaching vocabulary. They are as follows:

1. The selection of appropriate methodology for teaching vocabulary is to decide upon an effective method for the purpose.
2. To finalize the specific aspect of vocabulary to teach in the classroom.
3. The techniques of teaching vocabulary also need to be changed according to the level of the student.
4. Should vocabulary be taught implicitly or explicitly?
5. Which words to be selected to teach explicitly?

The issues involved in vocabulary teaching referred to in the present article were the findings of the recent research and the techniques such as identify synonyms and antonyms, use of lexical sets, conversion of words using prefixes and suffixes, componential analysis etc. discussed with examples could be seen as the alternatives for effective teaching and learning of vocabulary.

1.14 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter reveals the fact that English is a language of opportunities today, a passport for success and development. It points out that vocabulary is one of the important aspects of any language. It establishes the fact that engineering college students have a fairly good knowledge of technical words but they are not communicatively competent as they are not able to use words in everyday context.

The literature review demonstrates the fact that some scholars have provided significant insights in the domain of vocabulary. Thus, it clearly reveals that though a lot has been said and done, it is felt that a lot remains to be done with respect to teaching and learning vocabulary.