Chapter V

Conclusion and Recommendations
5.1 Preliminaries

Constructivism is the learning theory which believes that every learner creates his meanings and understandings based on his own experiences. The theory emphasised on pair work, group work and collaborative learning techniques in the class that helped learners to develop language skills. Students shared ideas in the group and performed activities orally. Various activities like Thinking skill, Vocabulary skill, Grammar skill, Communicative competence and Writing abilities are introduced in the coursebooks. The communicative activities aim to develop the communicative competence of learners and prepare them better users of English. This approach is the best option for the traditional classroom.

It is seen that both the Central Government of India and the State Government of Maharashtra have introduced Constructivism in schools to develop the communicative competence of the students. It is also observed that a classroom of diverse learners with diverse language backgrounds presents a great challenge for a classroom teacher. English language learners present a particular challenge to teachers as they represent a wide range of academic abilities, English language abilities, and academic background. Constructivism is a way of learning and thinking. It is how students make sense of the material and how they can be taught most effectively. Constructivism as an educational theory holds that teachers should take into account what students know and then build on this knowledge and allow students to put their knowledge into practice. This study has explored how the theory of constructivism may benefit the English Language Learners in an inclusive classroom. It has also pointed out the difference between a constructivist classroom and the traditional classroom. It has discussed and commented on the role of teachers in the constructivist classroom and the strategies of constructivist assessment like oral discussion, hands-on activities, mind mapping and pre-testing.

The data of the study has been collected from the nine talukas of Aurangabad district. The questionnaires were filled by 720 students from 36 Secondary schools, 47 Headmasters, 200 English teachers from 124 schools, 12 Master trainers and 6 Mentors of British Council from Aurangabad district. The study has been concerned with convenient sample method for collecting data.

In Maharashtra, English has been introduced from the 1st standard in all the Non-English medium schools from June 2000. At primary level, it is taught with fun
learning method, but at Secondary level, the major thrust of the learning is on the constructivist theory and to relieve learners from rote memorisation and traditional learning. It is expected to use technology in the learning process to clear the concepts to the students.

The researcher has attempted to check the oral and written competence of learners through questionnaire B1 and B2. These activities were taken from the textual activities of IXth and Xth standard of Marathi medium coursebooks. Group work techniques of constructivism have been used to conduct these activities in the selected schools. Questionnaire B1 and B2 were filled by 144 groups (Five students formed a group) of 720 students.

Here are the major findings of the study, suggestions and recommendations of teachers, Headmasters, Master Trainers and Mentors to develop communicative competence at the secondary level.

5.2 Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the interest of English teachers and students in the contents or topics of coursebooks. The findings are:
   - 58.02% teachers don’t get the response for communicative activities like role play, dialogues, conversation and debates. In fact these are challenging activities. Teachers expected communicative activities not to be emphasised in the classrooms.
   - 87.03% teacher respondents like the content of activities which are helpful to students.
   - 99.38% teachers are interested in accepting New English coursebooks and New approach in present situation. They think the Constructivist approach is useful to learners to communicate in English.
   - 54.32% respondents believe that the contents in the New coursebooks have the ability to bring a sea change in the students. They become more active and co-operative.
   - 44.44% teacher respondents wanted writing skill activities to be included in the content of coursebooks, as they believed that students learn to write by practising of writing.
   - 51.25% student respondents expected the moral story to be added in the coursebook, as they are interesting and create enjoyment.
• 98.75% of them think that grammar activities and communicative skill activities should be included in the contents of the coursebooks, as it is needed to speak good English.
• 92.22% students enjoy learning English in the classrooms through textual activities.

Teachers and students have accepted New coursebooks which are based on the constructivism, a theory of learning.

2. To develop communicative competence with the help of textual activities.

Communicative skill activities are given in the texts to develop competence by forming groups of five to six students in the class. It is expected that teachers should use learning techniques so that learners could share their ideas in a group. Communicative activities should be presented orally in the classrooms. The coursebook aimed to make the students better users of English. They should be able to express in English for their daily needs.

3. To find out weakness of students in acquiring skills.

The researcher has found following weaknesses of learners in acquiring communicative skills:

• They are unable to express their views in English
• Their vocabulary is poor and face structure problems
• Learners have problems with pronunciation, intonation and coherence.
• They take long pauses while presenting oral activities.
• No communication takes place in the classrooms.
• They are unable to share their ideas in a group.
• They think grammar is necessary to speak good English and spend their time on memorising grammar rules only.
• Rural area students are unable to perform activities orally.
• They lack in basic knowledge of English.
• Libraries do not provide them reading materials.
• Students are not allowed to read text aloud and are not taught pronunciation and intonation.
• In large classes, they are not given the opportunity to speak or perform activities.
• They do not remember proper words while communicating in English.
These weaknesses do not allow learners to develop communicative competence in the classrooms.

4. To identify the problems of teachers in using appropriate methods in teaching communicating competence.

The researcher has identified following difficulties in using proper techniques to develop communicative competence.

- In large classes, teachers are not able to form groups for activities. Group-work is one of the techniques for the Constructivist approach.
- Majority of teachers do not know what constructivist approach is and have no idea of implementing it.
- More than 50% teachers agree that examination system has changed their objectives of teaching English.
- Students do not participate in the classroom activities.
- The prime aim of the learners is to pass the final examination, so the majority of students do not participate in textual activities.
- Teachers in rural schools agreed that their students are passive learners in the class.
- Students depend on their teachers or Bazaar guides to solve all the activities.
- Most of the learners could not complete their homework themselves.
- Students do not understand concepts in English, so teachers have to use their L1 to explain.
- They have to use traditional teaching methods.
- Teachers are not given freedom to implement the New approach in their own ways.
- Thirty minute time is not enough to conduct textual activities.
- Qualified and competent teachers are not available in the majority of schools.
- Most of the teachers have a negative attitude towards constructivist approach.
- Authorities demand good results which make teachers to prepare the students for examinations. So they do not use appropriate techniques and
methods to implement the new approach and develop communicative competence through the textual activities.

5. **To recommend relevant content for teaching English at secondary level, based on the teachers and students opinion.**

Following contents are recommended for teaching English at high school level:

- Some co-curricular activities should be conducted for the overall development of learners.
- Emphasis should be on the Basic English of students.
- The texts of coursebooks should be reduced, and activities should be increased.
- Prepare the syllabus as per the needs of learners and demands of the society.
- Assign more project work to make pupils creative.
- Basic skills like reading and writing should be stressed.
- Develop word power (vocabulary) and sentence structures of learners.
- The syllabus should be based on activities.
- The coursebook should be familiar to students. It should be based on the social and economic background of learners.
- Spoken English should be emphasised rather than written form.
- Learners should be given scope to express themselves.
- Group discussion and role play activities should be emphasised.
- New and innovative language games should be added in the coursebooks.
- The emphasis of the coursebooks should be on language skills.
- A major focus of the curriculum should be on communication skill activities.

5.3 **Validity of Hypothesis**

Following Statistical techniques (SPSS) are used for the validation of hypothesis and data analysis.

**Chi-squared test**- It is a statistical hypothesis test which compares two variables in a contingency table to see if they are related. It is also used to find out if distributions of categorical variables differ from each other.
**Z-test** – It is another statistical test which is used to know if two different values of samples are different. It is applied when the sample size is large (more than 30 students), as a large number of samples are considered to be normally distributed.

By the facts gathered through the questionnaire from students, teachers, Headmasters, Master trainers and Mentors, it can be inferred that the hypothesis –

1. Students equally know speech acts.
2. They participate in the conversation with teachers.
3. Teachers use their traditional methods to teach new coursebooks.
4. Students are unable to express their views and ideas in English, as they lack communicative competence.
5. Students fail to use proper coherence, intonation and pauses.

….have proved to be correct.

Following hypothesis has turned out to be Null (H₀). So, Alternative hypothesis (H₁) has resulted as follows:

**Hypothesis No.2:** There is no significant difference in the preference of respondents (teachers and students) regarding the purpose of learning English.

**Null Hypothesis (H₀):** There is no significant difference in the preference of respondents about the target language.

**Alternative Hypothesis (H₁):** There is a significant difference in the choice of respondents about the purpose of learning English.

Therefore it may be concluded that the formulated hypothesis is Null.

**5.4 Major Findings Regarding Students**

The researcher observed the ground level reality of learning process. Following conclusions are collected through the observations and responses of teachers, Headmasters, Master Trainers and Mentors.

➢ Students are shy, and they do not dare to express their views because of mistake phobia.
➢ All the textual activities are not useful for learners.
➢ In the rural area, students are not regular in the schools.
➢ Lack of motivation to use English in the classrooms.
➢ Learners are not prepared up to primary level.
➢ A lot is taught, but little is learnt and understood in the classrooms.
➢ Group work and pair work are not formed to conduct communicative activities.
➢ Most of the schools promote rote learning for the development of language skills.
➢ Overemphasis on grammar, as it is considered very significant to develop communicative competence.
➢ A major focus of the teaching is on the examination system in which written tests are important at the secondary level.
➢ Learners, who joined private coaching classes, learn English grammar rather than skills.
➢ The evaluation process from 5th to 8th level is not satisfactory. It does not help students to be prepared for 9th and 10th (secondary level) class.
➢ Students are asked to solve all the activities at home.
➢ Learners are unable to use proper tense and structures, and they cannot present activity orally.
➢ They are not allowed to read the text aloud, so teachers are not able to check their pronunciation, intonation, and pauses.
➢ Students are not able to learn English by using their experiences.
➢ They are unable to share their ideas with their friends in English.
➢ Bazaar notes are the only sourcebook for them to solve activities and prepare for the examination.
➢ They are not taught to use punctuation marks, pronunciation and pauses.
➢ Lack of confidence and will power.
➢ Excessive fear of making mistakes while presenting activities.
➢ Inability to formulate their experiences into sentences and thoughts.
➢ Appropriate learning techniques and approaches are not used.
➢ Students are not familiar with most of the topics from the coursebooks.
➢ All the learners do not get an opportunity to interact in English with teachers in the class.
➢ They do not understand stressed words.
➢ They hesitate to speak in English.
➢ Dictionary is necessary to improve the vocabulary skills, but learners from rural area schools are unable to buy it.
➢ They do not understand if only English is used in the class.
➢ Students think in Marathi and translate it into English.
➢ They are unable to participate in the classroom activities.
➢ Majority of students sit passively in the class.
➢ Unable to construct their meanings.
➢ They share their ideas in Marathi while solving English activities.
➢ In large classes, 10-15 students form a group.
➢ Oral work is always neglected in a majority of schools whereas it is the only medium to develop speech habits of learners.
➢ Learners use simple speech acts only in the classroom.
➢ Most of the students use mobiles to communicate with friends. They use simple English language to send text messages.
➢ Grammar activities are difficult to learn.
➢ Unable to understand and solve ‘Writing Skill’ activities.
➢ The numbers of passing students are increased because of the oral examination, objective questions and simple activities in the Activity sheet (Question Paper).
➢ Clever students always dominate the other students in the group.
➢ Fear of English.
➢ It is the age factor which prevents learners to present oral activity in the class.
➢ Lack of communication practice and family background.
➢ Only selected activities (helpful in examinations) are emphasised in the classrooms.
➢ Some learners are unable to read even simple sentences from the texts.
➢ They are taught with different teaching methods which are convenient to teachers.
➢ Tests and examinations conducted by Government of Maharashtra and even by Institutions create stress in students, and they find memorisation as the best option to pass such tests.

5.5 Major Findings Regarding Teachers

According to English teachers, learners lack communicative competence due to tense problems, structure and vocabulary problems. It is not possible for teachers to conduct communicative skill activities in the large classes, so they find it difficult to develop communicative competence in the learners. They need more time, right
planning and proper techniques to evaluate every child and to make them speak. Some of the observations and findings are listed below:

- The examination has changed the objectives of the teaching-learning process, as the learners are examination oriented rather than skill oriented.
- The prime aim of students is to pass the board examination at the secondary level.
- Headmasters, School authorities and parents expected good results and good performance of the learners.
- Teachers and Headmasters are punished (yearly increments are not given) for low results of schools.
- The results of the schools are considered as the success of the schools.
- Majority of teachers are not ready to accept New Constructivist approach, as they think their traditional method works well for students.
- Teachers are unable to conduct Group work activities in the small classrooms.
- Many teachers believe that teaching English means explaining the text in the mother tongue.
- Some of the teachers lack communicative competence. They are not able to communicate in English.
- Communicative skill activities take more time to perform in the class.
- All the students do not get the opportunity to speak English.
- In a group activity, only one or two students perform actively. Remaining students from the group depend on active students and sit passively without solving activities.
- Teachers use traditional teaching method like Grammar-Translation method to teach new learning theory.
- Some school teachers encouraged children to attend private coaching classes.
- Teachers attend training as a formality or only because it is made compulsory for them.
- Computers and projectors are not used as teaching aids.
- If more than 85% students pass the SSC examination, they feel that they are the most successful teachers and don't need to invest time for personal development.
- There is no reason to add a rapid reading section in the coursebooks.
Only selected students (8 to 10 out of 70 to 80) responded to teachers in the class.

Each activity has to be described in Marathi; else students are not able to solve.

Some teachers are unable to get the online material, sourcebooks and references.

ICT labs are not used to make conceptual understandings of the learners.

Students expected their teachers to solve all the activities on the blackboard.

Some teachers think that grammar is not necessary to speak good English.

There is no proper change in students, though they learn English from the 1st standard.

Learners do not understand when teachers use only English in the classrooms.

Mother tongue has to be utilised for the conceptual understandings.

Learners depend on rote learning (memorisation), so they present only memorised lines.

Lesson plans are difficult to implement due to time management.

More than 50% students are not able to read the textbooks.

Science teachers have to teach English in some schools. They could not implement Constructivist approach correctly.

Majority of teachers are concerned about classroom control.

Some teachers resist Constructivist approach, as they strictly committed to their old traditional methods and methodologies.

Frequently changing policies of the Government of Maharashtra (regarding the evaluation of learners) confused teachers and they implement such policies as a mere formality.

They fail to assign creative activities to students and unable to deal with the slow learners during the class.

5.6 Suggestions and Recommendations

Some suggestions and recommendations are made by teachers, Headmasters, Master trainers and Mentors to implement Constructivist approach successfully in the classrooms, with which the researcher, as a teacher agrees:

❖ Lexical approach, functional approach, communicative method, collaborative learning, constructivist approach and activity based teaching methods should
be followed for the effective implementation of New curriculum.

❖ Follow bilingual and eclectic teaching methods in the rural classroom for the conceptual understandings of slow learners.
❖ Teachers should play the role of facilitators, Guide, planner and creator in the class.
❖ Constructivist learning techniques should be used properly.
❖ Teacher-student interaction is necessary.
❖ Teaching methods should be changed according to the needs of the learners.
❖ Teachers should be on an active track and be in touch with the recent developments in the teaching learning process. They should update time to time.
❖ Avoid only teaching. Plan activities so that learners learn on their own.
❖ Let the students think, let them speak and let them do and learn themselves.
❖ Reflect on your work and use technology. Keep improving CPD (Continuing Professional Development) for the effective teaching-learning process in the class.
❖ Teachers should ensure learners to participate in the group activities and share their ideas.
❖ English teachers should adopt learner-centred approaches and methods.
❖ Teacher-centred methods, use of mother tongue and Translation methods should be avoided.
❖ Evaluation of teachers should be based on the Professional Teaching Standards.
❖ Teachers must know the aims and objectives of the curriculum.
❖ The qualities of teachers need to be uplifted.
❖ Teachers should participate actively in the training programmes. Authorities must be strict regarding the training.
❖ Monthly meetings of the parents should be arranged to improve the learning process of learners.
❖ Maximum use of electronic devices is made for conceptual understandings.
❖ Extra classes should be arranged to improve the Basic English of weak learners.
❖ Don't use a word to word translation in the classroom.
❖ Students should be given the opportunity to learners to speak and express their ideas.
❖ Teachers should think about average students in the class.
❖ Teachers have to move from fluency to accuracy.
❖ Group-work, Pair-work and collaborative learning should be arranged for conceptual and better understandings.
❖ Much effort is needed to improve the English of learners.
❖ English teachers should not work within the time limit. They must give extra time for preparation and extra classes.
❖ Duration of training should be more than five days so that teachers would better understand new terms and concepts in the curriculum. Various skills cannot be highlighted within a short span of time.
❖ If Master trainers are able, training programmes of constructivist approach become interesting and fruitful.
❖ Learners should be given the opportunity to present Communicative skill activities in the class.
❖ The Institution should provide infrastructure for constructive English language classes.
❖ Don’t kill the abilities of students and don’t discourage them.
❖ Speak only in English with students.
❖ Ask students to come in pairs and present communicative activities in the class orally. Teacher should observe and help them to correct their pronunciation and intonation.
❖ Give listening practice to improve the pronunciation, intonation and pauses.
❖ Every school needs language labs and students’ club to improve their communicative competence.
❖ Teachers should ensure that all the participants in the group discuss their ideas in English and perform their oral activities in a simple English language.
❖ English clubs should be formed in every classroom to conduct some day-to-day activities of English in the class as well as on school premises. These English clubs would be helpful to improve the oral English of weak learners.
❖ Learners should be given some familiar topics to speak within five minutes at least once in a week.
❖ English seminars, workshops, and exhibition of activity should be arranged to boost the confidence of the learners.
❖ Develop the interest of students with the help of language games and necessary activities.
❖ Dictionary usage skills must be designed to enrich the vocabulary of learners.
❖ Creativity and critical thinking should be given importance.
❖ Follow problem solving and application oriented learning.
❖ Learning should take place with the help of students’ previous knowledge.
❖ The classroom should be arranged as per the requirement of the activities.
❖ Limit of every class should not be more than 40 students.
❖ Good quality education can be given by concentrating on constructivist activities and English conversation.
❖ The rural area teachers should make their students to speak English fluently by conducting vocabulary activities and by improving their sentence structures.
❖ Group discussion method is beneficial for activity work. It is also beneficial for slow learners.
❖ Grammar rules should not be overemphasised. Simple sentence structures, vocabulary, Pronunciations, Coherence, Intonation, Pauses and Punctuation marks should be taught through simple language activities and games.
❖ All oral work should be based on the topics of the day to day experiences of the students.
❖ The constructivist approach is a learning theory, so instead of teaching methods, learning techniques should be used appropriately.

5.7 Conclusion

Briefly, it can be concluded that constructivist approach is the need of the rapidly changing world. NCF-2005 has introduced this approach to reduce the academic load and stress of students and make learning joyful. It is a learning theory, and teachers must learn new techniques and approaches to implement language skills in the classrooms. Most of the communicative activities in the coursebooks aim at producing good users of English. It would prepare them to compete with the World
outside.

Group work and pair work techniques are effective to develop communicative competence at the secondary level. Suggestions and ideas given by Headmasters, Master trainers and Mentors are constructive to implement constructivist approach successfully. Majority of teachers and students welcomed New coursebooks based on Constructivism and various activities. This approach has also helped schools to increase their results. The group work technique of the approach encouraged learners to develop communicative competence by sharing ideas with each other. However, in the rural area, it seems difficult to implement this theory due to unresponsive learners, lack of Basic English and lack of motivation. They depend on teachers to learn each concept, as these learners cannot use internet or modern technology. In urban schools, teachers are unable to use Constructivist techniques due to large classes, time management and their negative attitude.

Though most of the English teachers use their traditional teaching methods, students perform better in the examinations due to objective questions and activities. So they do not want to change their present teaching methods which they think are as effective. Even Teachers’ Training Programme does not help them to change their attitude. Teachers are confused on using constructivist approach techniques, as they are not properly instructed in training programmes. In the classrooms, learners still use rote learning methods (memorisation) to present oral activities.

To overcome such problems, Government must plan to appoint competent teachers, and preference should be given to develop skills rather than to grades and marks. The number of students should be strictly below 40. It should provide proper facilities for language labs and E-class which help learners to improve their pronunciations, intonation and appropriate pauses between the words.

The constructivist approach is helpful to make students creative, active and independent learners. Teachers and students show their interest in constructivism, but they are confused to implement it due to lack of proper guidance and classroom techniques.

Effective communication can be conducted through interactional activities in pair and group work. If teachers intend students to use target language, they must truly understand all that being communicatively competent entails. In the constructivist classrooms, learners should be engaged in pairs and group activities. There should be proper cooperation between students; fluency based activities must
be conducted to develop their confidence. Communicative competence can be developed by classroom activities like role-playing, interviews, language games and surveys. Teachers should use the techniques like group projects, group presentations, dramatisations, role play and group discussion.

If these ideas and suggestions are followed properly, the constructivist approach can be implemented successfully in the classrooms. It may be effective not only in improving test scores, but also overall participation and retention of material. Students will be more on task and active during class hour and would be better able to connect their learning to previous knowledge by participating more in group work. This increased participation in the classroom will result in a more permanent retention of the vocabulary. Additionally, students will be more able to concentrate on the curriculum and produce new knowledge. Students will have freedom to acquire their knowledge. It is important that we intentionally think about how to effectively teach the students. Constructivism represents one of the big ideas in education. Its implications for how teachers teach and learn to teach are enormous. In our efforts in reforming education for all students are to succeed, we must focus on students. To date, a focus on student-centred learning may well be the most important contribution of constructivism.

A wide variety of approaches to education that are based on constructivism may be taken up for further research by the budding research scholars, which include: constructionism as developed by Seymour Papert and his colleagues, Reciprocal Learning, Procedural Facilitation for writing, Critical Exploration, Cognitively Guided Instruction, Inquiry-based learning, Problem-based learning, Cooperative learning, Cognitive Flexibility, The Silent Way, etc. Most of these methods/approaches rely on some form of guided discovery where the teacher avoids most direct instruction and attempts to lead the students through questions and activities to discover, discuss, appreciate and verbalize the new knowledge.