

CHAPTER-II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Teaching of English as Second Language

In speaking on the value of L₂ instruction Craig Chaudron says, “Second language instruction has been gaining in importance, as more people throughout the world find the need to acquire one or more second languages. There is a diversification in the specific purposes of language instruction, an increase in language schools and programs, and an expansion in training programs for second language teachers, and program developers. For these reasons alone, second language classroom research has an important role to play.” (192)

Discussing the process of L₁ acquisition and L₂ learning, William T. Littlewood says that in the classroom, the learner is provided with an external syllabus which may contradict with his/her internal syllabus, as the learning sequence may differ from the teaching sequence. Explaining the distinction between teaching and learning, Littlewood says that the former is carried out by teacher, while the latter by the learner; but in most of the existing literature on classroom methods and techniques, the focus is always on teaching; learning is considered as a reflection of teacher’s actions. Some factors that influence the teaching learning process are:

1. In almost every sphere of education, there has been a growing tendency to become more “learner-centred”. We have come to realize that each person is ultimately responsible for his own learning and needs to engage his own personality in the educational process.

2. In language teaching, our methods and techniques have often failed to produce effective learning, however sound they may have appeared in theory. To discover why, we must study the learner.
3. Related to the previous point, we have become increasingly aware that individual learners are different from each other. They are not simply soft clay, waiting to be shaped by the teacher, but have their own personalities, motivations and learning styles. All of these characteristics affect how learners act in the classroom.
4. The active role which learners perform in developing their language has been emphasized by studies of first language acquisition. These have led to similar work in foreign and second language learning which, again, has shown the learner to be an active participant in the development process.

(Littlewood 1-2)

According to Shaun O'Dwyer, the teaching of ESL or EFL today focuses on a more democratic, student-centred approach, in which the teacher facilitates students with communicative educational activities. Such an approach gives emphasis on the importance of learner autonomy and responsibility for the learning process, and attributes greater value to the learner's experience and knowledge in the classroom.

H. G. Widdowson remarks- "Teaching stimulates the educational process only by indirect effect, which, it seems to me, must be mediated by learning. . . . Trainer and trainee are converse terms, as their morphology implies. There is no such reflexivity in education; teaching and learning are not converse activities in the same sense. Learners are not teachers." (87). According to Philip Curran et al., the four broad classroom cultures can be defined as ultra-didactic (formal classroom), didactic

(teacher-centred classroom), learner-centred (task-based learning), and ultra-informal (haphazard approach). (32-35)

In *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*, H. D. Brown maintains that in almost every sphere of education, there has been a tendency to become “learner-centred”. He feels that time has come to prepare the methods and materials accordingly.

In *Applied Linguistics and Language Learning*, W. A. Bennett remarks that for developing the language skills in a learner, the teaching strategy must match the learning strategy as closely as possible. The teaching strategy should include a statement of activities in which the learner must engage if his learning is to be successful.

According to K. K. Bhatia, learning a language is a process of “unfolding knowledge” and the teacher comes in as a facilitator of this process. He acts as an adviser, manages the classroom activities and supplies the language that students require, and at the same time, he is a “co-communicator” engaging himself in the communicative activities along with the students. (112)

Agnihotri and Khanna point out- “The present generation is convinced that English is needed for mobility and social and economic advancement. English is the language of opportunities because it takes one outside one’s own community to places where more opportunities are available for professional and economic growth.”(50)

In the Ph D research work “A Critical Study of English Language Teaching in Sudan”, Elnour Abdel Rahman Yeddi studied various issues related to ELT in Sudan. The main objectives of the study were- (i) to study the academic and professional qualification of the teachers of English at the school level, (ii) to study the aims of teaching English language at the school level, (iii) to investigate the methods used in

teaching of English language at school level, (iv) to study the availability of provisions necessary for effective teaching, and (v) to investigate into the performance of students in English. The major findings of the study were- (i) all the teachers of English at the basic level were holders of only secondary school certificate, (ii) all the teachers of English at the secondary level were holders of only bachelor's degree, (iii) at the basic level the percentage of trained teacher was only 32.4%, while the percentage of training among the secondary level teachers was only 20.3%, (iv) 47.6% of the basic school teachers considered reading and writing skills as major objectives of ELT against 44.8% who checked listening and speaking skills. 79.7% of secondary school teachers considered reading and writing skills as major aims of ELT against only 20.3% of the same level teachers who checked speaking skill only, (v) 61.5% of the basic school teachers claimed that they use teaching aids whereas only 27.8% of the secondary school teachers claimed the same, (vi) 61.6% of the basic level teachers and 66.7% of the secondary level teachers complained of shortage of textbooks. 22.2% of the secondary schools organized activities in English such as reading magazines and newspapers, whereas only 24.2% of the basic schools checked on role playing in English as an activity organized by their schools, (vii) the courses emphasized on the communicative competence, whereas only 27.6% of the basic school level teachers and 16.6% of the secondary level teachers emphasized on listening and speaking as major aims of ELT, (viii) only 33.8% of the basic level teachers and 33.3% of the secondary level teachers used simple English to explain English lessons, whereas the majority of teachers of English in both the levels switched over to Arabic language to do the same, (ix) students' achievement in English was not up to mark, (x) the analysis of major errors of students in English

showed that students did not learn the rudiments of the English grammar and they could not write simple correct sentences.

S. N. Sridhar and Kamal K. Sridhar in their “Indigenized Englishes as Second Languages: Toward a Functional Theory of Second Language Acquisition in Multilingual Contexts” have remarked that “the ordinary (non-westernized) learner of English in India is not exposed to the use of English to maintain and transact informal, everyday, affective interpersonal relationships (his/her mother tongue is used for these); instead, he or she gets exposed to a subset of registers, styles, speech event types- mainly academic, bureaucratic and literary.” (46). While talking about indigenous models of teaching English Shivendra K. Verma in his “Teaching English as a Second Language in India : A Socio-Functional View” says, “The main focus must shift from teaching English in India unidirectional, teacher-centred, knowledge-oriented activity to learning as an international activity, involving sub-activities like problem solving, group-work, drawing inferences, making generalizations, participating in a variety of other activities, with the help of L₁, L₂, L₃.” (100)

In “English in Mother Tongue Medium Education” M. V. Nadkarni suggests, “There should be provision for an optional course in English with emphasis on the active communication skills at least two years at the undergraduate stage” (140).

In the opinion of Krishnaswami and Krishnaswami- “English teaching in India is the world’s largest democratic enterprise in the world. The pressure of population, pluralism, the colonial legacy, political compulsions, illiteracy, lack of infrastructure, vested interests and the problem of training teachers make English teaching in contemporary India a highly complex activity.” (14)

J. C. Aggarwal remarks that the learner should be provided with the opportunity to encounter the text directly, so that they can develop their critical and

creative abilities. The teacher may assume the role of a manager, if he organizes classroom activities in such a way so as to foster independence in learning. Once a teacher sees himself as a “manager of learning” rather than an “impartor of information” he is likely to be less worried about his inability to cater to the linguistic needs of learners. (69)

In the study entitled- “Studies on Classroom Processes and School Effectiveness at Primary Stage”, Pradhan and Mistry made an attempt to assess the extent of teaching-learning process in schools and the nature of student-teacher interactions which were responsible for the good or poor results. It aimed to study the adequacy of infrastructural facilities, methods of teaching and nature of student-teacher interactions in good and poor result schools. Their study reveal the following findings- (i) Factors contributed to good results included- (a) mastery (of teachers) in the subjects, (b) pre-teaching activities, (c) child-centred teaching, and (d) healthy student-teacher, student-student and teacher-teacher interaction. (ii) The good result school was located in an area inhabited by educated community. Besides the teachers’ ability, willingness, and devotion to help children, availability of appropriate infrastructure, facilities in the school and dynamic leadership qualities of the head of the institution were major contributory factors to good results. (iii) The poor result schools were found lacking in infrastructure facilities and certain other aspects that contributed the other schools to become good result schools.

In her study entitled- “Attitude towards English of Hindi Medium Undergraduates”, Urbashi Barat attempted to study the attitude of the Hindi medium undergraduates towards learning English language. The main objectives of the study were to examine and compare the attitudes of male and female undergraduate college going Hindi medium students towards English. The major findings were- (i) There

existed highly significant differences between the male and female students (ii) The male students (Hindi medium) were more interested in English, less intimidated by their English teachers, and less embarrassed by any inability to speak the language. They did not find English as a difficult subject (iii) Fewer female students (Hindi medium) regarded English as being important in higher education.

In their work- “Studies of Teachers’ Classroom Personalities”, Anderson and Brewer describes two types of teachers- dominative and integrative. A dominative teacher refers to that teacher who thinks that he knows best issues, orders and decisions, expects obedience and conformity; dislikes discussions and criticism, and tends to blame or threatens. An integrative teacher on the other hand, requests rather than orders, consults, encourages co-operation, delegates responsibility, welcomes pupils’ ideas, creativity, and initiative. Pupils of integrative teacher contribute more to the lesson; they are more friendly and co-operative, less inattentive and aggressive, and resistant to instruction than the pupils of dominative teachers. Anderson and Brewer claim that the students’ response largely determined by the teacher’s style of functioning as it is the teacher, who is the principal creator of the classroom climate.

In Flanders’ view- “The behaviour of the teacher more than that of any other individual sets the climate of the class. The rule is that . . . domination invites further domination, and integration stimulates further integration. . . . When a teacher has high proportion of integrative contacts, pupils show more spontaneity and initiative and voluntary social contributions, and acts of problem-solving . . . when a teacher has high proportion of dominative contacts, the pupils are more easily distracted from the school work and show more compliance to, as well as rejection of teacher domination.” (204-205)

According to Lewin et al., those pupils who are exposed to highly authoritarian atmosphere develop an aggressive and dominative behaviour with each other. On the other hand, pupils who are exposed to democratic atmosphere are spontaneous and friendlier in their relationships. (27)

According to Gordon, the teacher must be proficient in the interpersonal skills for establishing the classroom climate which will be conducive to students to think rationally, independently as well as cooperatively, and to motivate them to develop their personal, social, and intellectual competencies. (72)

In the paper- “The Influence of Interpersonal Skill Training on the Social Climate of Elementary School Classrooms”, Brown and MacDougall tried to alter the social climate of classrooms by improving pupil-teacher relations, peer relations, and pupils’ self-concepts through an in-service training programme. And they found that feedback and positive assessments of their classroom behaviour helped the teachers to build up positive self-concepts in their pupils.

In the study entitled- “English Language Teaching at Pre-University Levels: A Comparative Study with Reference to Materials, Methods and Modes of Evaluation”, T. V. S. Padmaja attempted (i) to compare the English language teaching learning situation in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, (ii) to investigate the role played by the instructional material in language learning and their success, (iii) to compare the effectiveness of different teaching methods, and (iv) to investigate the degree to which the tests relate to the course content and programme objectives. The major findings of the study were- (i) there was need to provide reorientation programme to the teachers so that they got acquainted with the new teaching techniques and approaches, (ii) due weightage was given to English while considering for admission to undergraduate professional courses, (iii) adequate financial resources were to be

provided to improve the classroom facilities so as to make it easy to manage the large classes with mixed abilities, (iv) phonetic aspect was almost ignored in both states, (v) lecturing method was followed by most of the teachers and there was a need to replace this method by eclectic method wherein various techniques from the available methods were drawn in order to realize the specific objective of learning English.

In his paper entitled, “Teaching English as a Second Language in India: Focus on Objectives”, Shivendra K. Verma says, “The teaching of English as a second language, in particular, has often been less successful than it might have been, as a result of the restricted variety of linguistic contexts with which students are provided. Learners should ideally be exposed to a variety of contextualized language materials. They must see and hear language in action.” (225)

2.2. Methods of Teaching English as Second Language

Language teaching emerged as an autonomous profession during the first half of the 20th century and since then it has come across different stages of development in search of suitable method for teaching L₂. Various methods had been developed, but then replaced by methods based on more appealing theories. Methods such as- Translation Method, Direct Method, Bilingual Method, Situational Approach, Audiolingualism, Communicative Language Teaching, were adopted internationally during their own times. Jack C. Richards and Theodore Rodgers point out, “Language teaching of the twentieth century was characterized by frequent change and innovation and by the development of sometimes competing ideologies. Much of the impetus for change in the approach to language teaching came about from changes in teaching methods.”(Richards and Rodgers 1). Each method is based on the belief that the teaching practices it supports will be better than the methods that preceded it. The earlier methods were based on the structural approach, while CLT -which was

developed during the late 1960s, is based on communicative approach to language. This method believes that a L₂ can be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate. Therefore, apart from the text-based materials, task-based and authentic (from life) materials are used in the CLT.

W. T. Littlewood mentions that the only adequate test in a language is the ability to use the language, in speech and in writing, very much as an adequate test of car driving is the ability to drive it on the road and not the ability to state how to drive a car. He points out various types of errors made by the learner of L₂ and their causes. According to him, some errors are direct result of misunderstanding caused by faulty teaching or materials. If the method and materials are not proper, then the learner will be misled.

Mathew Thomas mentions that for effective teaching, knowledge of the learner's psychology and managing the stress in both teacher and student are very crucial. He points out some effective personal and teaching characteristics such as mastery of the subject matter, application of the principles of teaching, presentation of the knowledge, relationship with the students, classroom mannerism and communication skills, ability to control the class which he considers to be essential for effective teaching. (36-37)

In last few decades, India has witnessed a dramatic shift in the views regarding the teaching and learning of English. Many research works have been done in this field of study and all present ELT researchers share a concern for the future learners of English in India, not just in terms of linguistic and communicative proficiency but also in terms of educational growth and development of critical faculties in a multilingual and multicultural society.

Q. Z. Alam says- “English is now a service subject and a library language. There is a greater concern now for the learner’s need: it is a case of shift of emphasis from the subject to the learner.” (23). He also suggests that the teaching of a foreign language should not be a “chalk and talk” profession. Using proper methods for teaching in fact a clear challenge to the teacher, but if someone seriously wishes to improve the standards of language teaching, efforts must be made in right earnest to spread their use.

On the necessity of a right method, M. R. Panchal, in his “Teaching English in India” says that if the method is right, the goal will be automatically achieved. Advocating in favour of communicative approach to language teaching, Panchal remarks that if the facts are correct, with the right method it will definitely lead to the right conclusions. He also mentions that the introduction of different technologies in methods has made language teaching an expensive business and divided the institutions into haves and have-nots.

M. Jesa says that the learner should get chance to encounter the text directly, so that they can develop their critical and creative abilities. T. C. Baruah mentions that the teaching methods should focus on communicative skills rather than on poetic excellence. The teaching of English must be embedded in local needs and indigenous context.

B. S. Jadhav says “As a Classroom Consists of a heterogeneous group of learners the material may or may not be suitable for every learner. In such cases, the method should ensure effective use of the materials.” (64)

In his research work- “A Critical Investigation into the Methods of Teaching English in the Secondary Schools of Aurangabad District” Mohd. Abdul Khaliq studied the methods of teaching English in secondary schools of Aurangabad District

with the following objectives: (i) to investigate teaching methods adopted by teachers of English, (ii) to see whether the methods adopted for teaching prose and poetry are suitable, (iii) to investigate into methods of teaching grammar, (iv) to survey the methods of teaching composition, and (v) to suggest measures to adopt suitable teaching strategies. The major findings of his study were- (i) Three fourths of teachers were trained against one fourth who was trained with different subjects. Yet they were not effective. (ii) The aspects other than prose were neglected by a majority of teachers. More than 75% teachers did not prefer to teach other aspects like poetry, grammar and composition. Further, they did not know how to teach them. (iii) Only the translation methods were employed by a large number of teachers. About 70% teachers employed translation method while 12% teachers adopted “Direct Method” and 18% teachers used “structural approach”. (iv) While teaching English, more than 80% teachers used L₁ to explain anything related to teaching of English. (v) Adequate and appropriate teaching aids were not available/used in schools.

In the study entitled- “A study of the Efficacy of Concept Attainment Model to Teach English Grammar”, Y. V. Shrivastava attempted to study the effective method of teaching English grammar by comparing Concept Attainment Model to traditional method. The main objectives of the study were- i) to find out the efficiency of the Concept Attainment Model to teach English grammar to class VII students, and (ii) to investigate the sex influence on learning and effectiveness of the Concept Attainment Model to teach English grammar. Major findings of the study were- (i)The achievement of boys and girls in experimental group was more than that of control group. (ii) The non-significant effect of the sex variable showed that the achievement of boys and girls did not differ significantly. (iii) The non-significant

interaction between the sex and the method showed that the difference in achievement did not depend upon sex.

In the research work “Preparation and Tryout of a Course in English for the Trainees of Primary Training Colleges in Gujarat” J. Umra Damayanti made an attempt to report on the tryout of task based course to teach English at the Primary Training College (PTC) level. The main objectives of the study were- (i) to improve the trainees’ competence in English, and (ii) to improve their professional skills in teaching English. The study revealed the following major findings– (i) About 70% of the trainees were interested in learning English because many of the primary schools in the state offered English in standards V to VII. (ii) The teachers in the primary schools were aware of their limited language competence which made it difficult for them to teach English. (iii) The teachers in the secondary schools were dissatisfied with the teaching of primary schools teachers. (iv) There was a need for a course in English and ELT in the PTCs. (v) The task based course prepared as part of this study were suitable for trainees of both urban and rural areas, including tribal regions. (vi) The course was helpful in developing a significant amount of interaction. (vii) The tasks used in the course can never be used by the trainees in their own primary classes with some adaptation.

In her Ph D thesis entitles- “The Creativity of High School Pupils in Learning the English Language”, P. Usha Rani studied the creativity of high school pupils in learning the English language. The main objectives of her study were- (i) to find out if there is any significant relation between pupils with different levels of creativity, viz., high, average, and low, and their achievement in English, (ii) to find out if sex differences exist in creativity and its relation to the learning of English, (iii) to study whether there is any significant difference between creativity and achievement in

English among urban and rural children, (iv) to find out the relation between creativity and achievement in the different areas of the English language such as- (a) prose (b) poetry (c) structure (d) vocabulary and (e) composition, (v) to study the relationship between the components of fluency like word fluency, expressional fluency, ideational fluency, and associational fluency, and their relationship to achievement in the English language, (vi) to study different components of flexibility such as spontaneous flexibility and adaptive flexibility and their relation to learning English language, (vii) to study the originality in creativity and its relationship with the achievement of children in English, (viii) to study the trait of elaboration and its relation to the achievement in the English language, (x) to study the ability for redefinition and its relation to the achievement in the English language, (xi) to study the relation between verbal and non-verbal creativity. The major findings of the study were- (i) There was no significant relation between levels of creativity and achievement in English (ii) There was significant difference between the mean scores of boys and girls (iii) There was significant difference between the urban and rural pupils in the comprehensive test of creativity and none of the tests of literary creativity, and in the achievement test in English (iv) Children were significantly creative in learning various aspects of the English language such as prose, poetry, structure, vocabulary and composition (v) There was significant relationship between learning English and the trait of creativity of fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration sensitivity to problems and redefinition (vi) There existed significant relation between verbal and nonverbal creativity (vii) There was a tremendously high and significant relationship between the test of literary creativity and comprehensive test of creativity (viii) There was a significant relationship between the test of literary

creativity and the achievement test of English (ix) Significant relationship was also seen between comprehensive test of creativity and the achievement test in English.

2.3. Materials of Teaching English as Second Language

Materials are regarded as indispensable part of language teaching curriculum. Allwright says that effective learning will be taking place only when there is an interaction between learners, teachers, and the materials at their disposal. According to V. Saraswathi, “Good materials are expected to suggest the methodology which is incorporated into materials” (121). Tickoo says, “As a craftsperson, a teacher is judged by how well she shapes the materials in her care” (324).

In *Developing Materials for Language Teaching*, Tomlinson has criticized course-book for paying less importance on learner’s personal engagement with the materials- “Course-book materials are focusing more and more narrowly on the encoding and decoding of language rather than opening up rich opportunities for experience, engagement and effect” (441).

Jane Crawford asserts that pre-planned teaching materials can support the teaching learning process, “provided they act as guides and negotiating points, rather than strait jackets” (88).

In Fullen’s view an approved textbook may serve the purpose of a curriculum in the classroom but it is unable to incorporate significant features of the policy or goal that it is supposed to address. There are wide spread criticism on the role of published materials in language teaching programme. According to some experts, published materials are not adequate for presenting realistic language models. Such materials fail to address discourse competence as said by Kaplan and Knutson.

It is seen that very little research has been done on the role of textbooks in language learning programme and hence there appears mixed opinions regarding this

issue. According to Stodolsky, “Teachers are very autonomous in their textbook use and . . . it is likely that only a minority of teachers really follow the text in the page by page manner suggested in the literature” (176).

Donoghue has conducted a survey among seventy six teachers for eliciting their views on pedagogical role of textbook. His study reveals that majority of his respondents find textbooks as “an essential source of information and support”.

According to Brink and John “There has been a gradual shift in the preparation of teaching materials from a pre-occupation with textbook learning toward an increasing emphasis upon identifying the life-needs of children, youth, and the selection, organization and grade placement of learning experiences and activities to meet these needs” (209).

N. Krishnaswamy and T. Sriraman remark, “Ideally only skills and abilities should be specified without the prescription of any texts. Unfortunately, teachers, students, and examiners are now so used to the idea of prescribed texts that they would not know what to do in class or how to set an examination paper, if textbooks were to be removed.” (52)

In “Selecting Reading Materials: Some Key Considerations”, R.S. Gupta says, “Our schools and colleges organize their ELT programmes around a few pre-selected texts which are prescribed by the boards of education and syllabus designers. This means, in effect, that the teachers of English teach these ‘texts’ only, and examiners test the learners in relation to these texts only. The textbooks generally include an arbitrary assortment of emotive, narrative and expository pieces” (362)

Anjiliveli’s research work- “Learner Needs and English Syllabus at Part II Undergraduate Level of Madurai Kamaraj University” finds out that the poor

proficiency in English is caused by the gap between learner needs and learning materials in English.

Valsamma's dissertation entitled- "An Investigation into the Structure of Reading Ability of Indian Students in English", studies the development of reading ability in children with reference to reading ability in English and the findings of her study are given below: (i) Between 14 to 15 years, reading ability is a unitary trait. (ii) Around 16 to 17 years of age, it gets branched into two traits consisting of vocabulary and verbal comprehension.

In various studies conducted by different Indian researchers for investigating the nature of learner-centred material for effective teaching of English reveal the following findings:

Damayanti J. Umra highlights the use of need-based courses for teachers to increase their language proficiency and promote effective English language learning.

Deshmukh's study entitled- "Development of a Need-Based Course in English Language for Some Polytechnic Departments of SNDT Women's University" reveals that the existing materials are not relevant to the needs of the English language learners studying in polytechnics. Deshmukh's study discusses the benefits of new course materials for fostering language skills in two stages: in the first stage, the materials aim at teaching language skills related to academic and in the second stage; the skills are developed to help content learning.

Khan discussed the use of newspaper as materials for teaching English in "Newspapers as ELT Materials" and remarks that newspapers can be effective means of teaching English as it exposes students to current usage of language. Rejaram has discussed the use of bilingual dictionary and pedagogical dictionary as supplementary material for effective language teaching.

In *Needs of the Indian Undergraduate Learners*, S. C. Sood says, "If there is a need for rewriting our materials, keeping in mind the needs of the learners, it is also necessary that we employ an effective methodology for exploiting these materials in the classrooms so as to maximize the skills our learners need" (176).

By saying that the teaching of English as L₂ in India has failed to achieve desired goal, Shivendra K. Verma says- "Their proficiency in English is restricted since their experience of English has been confined to only a very small set of social domains, a very few role relationships and a limited number of speech functions. They have been exposed to classroom English or textbook English. What we must keep in mind as language teachers is that exposure to a rich variety of linguistic and socio-cultural material with its focus on what to say, when, and how is paramount importance in second language learning." (102). He has also added, "It is sad that in the field of English language teaching we have been consumers, not producers. We have been exporting our talents and importing 'ready to use packages based on selling's and experiences entirely deferent from ours.'" (103)

According to B. S. Jadhav, "The vast majority of the teachers have to use textbooks that are prescribed for them and only a handful of teachers, who are the elected members of the board of universities are fortunate enough to choose the textbooks they wish to use. Hence, the English teachers might feel that the prescribed textbook does not cater to their unique needs. While teaching, they might feel the need to alter, adapt, and supplement the textbooks in order to meet the overgrowing demand on English communication." (53-54)

Kaul, Gupta, Bala, and Barbhuiya, in their study entitled- "Readability Assessment of Primary Level Textbooks" have made an attempt to find out to the extent to which the textbooks at primary level are readable in terms of vocabulary,

conceptual difficulty and syntax, and cater to the diverse linguistic needs, and levels of children in different geographical context in a state. Their study reveals that language textbooks were easier in Maharashtra, Assam, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu and relatively difficult for Haryana and Karnataka.

Regarding materials used by student of undergraduate level Arup Sarma in his- “Problems in the Teaching Learning Situation of English in the Undergraduate Colleges of Assam: A Study” has said, “Presently, teaching learning situation of English in Assam is primarily dominated by a flourishing market of the easily available bazar notes which is endangering the student community. Avoiding their prescribed texts a large number of students study the subject mainly by cramming answers to the likely questions that can be readily found in modal questions and answers on English prose, poetry, essays, grammar and composition only for hardly passing the examinations.” (95). In his view the General English course of undergraduate level should be replaced by Functional English course for helping students to make themselves fit for global competition.

2.4. Syllabus for Teaching English as Second Language

According to Candlin, syllabi are resulted from the accounts and records of what really takes place in the classroom level as teachers and learners make use of a given curriculum to their own situation.

Gordon remarks that “the syllabus” replaces the concept of “method” and the syllabus is now seen as an instrument by which the teacher, with the help of the syllabus designers can achieve a degree of “fit” between the needs and aims of the teacher (as social being and as individual) and activities which will take place in the classroom. (14)

In Widdowson's view "The syllabus is simply a framework within which activities can be carried out: a teaching device to facilitate learning. It only becomes a threat to pedagogy when it is regarded as absolute rules for determining what is to be learned rather than points of reference from which bearings can be taken." (26)

"Any syllabus will express- however indirectly certain assumption about language, about the psychological process of learning and about the pedagogic and social processes within a classroom." (Breen 49)

Since language is highly complex and cannot be taught all at the same time, successful teaching requires that there should be a selection of material depending on the prior definition of objectives, proficiency level, and duration of course. This selection takes place at the syllabus planning stage.

While discussing some issues relating to the language syllabus design, David Nunan has given importance on the analysis of the learner's needs in learning the target language. "Information will need to be collected, not only on why learners want to learn the target languages, but also about such things as societal expectations and constraints and the resources available for implementing the syllabus." (14). Nunan has spoken about two different types of needs analysis such as "learner analysis" and "task analysis". The learner analysis will help the syllabus designer in the selection of the content of the syllabus by finding out for what purpose the learner is learning the target language. The task analysis will help the syllabus designer in finding out the skills required by the learner to carry out real world communication tasks. He goes on to say that if there exists a proper coordination between the assumption about the learner's purpose in taking up a language course and the belief of the syllabus designer about the nature of language and learning, then, it can have a tremendous influence on the shape of the syllabus on which the course is based.

John Munby has developed a model of language syllabus design which makes use of sophisticated application of needs analysis to language syllabus design. It contains nine elements which are as follows:

1. *Participant*: Under this component is specified information relating to the learner's identity and language skills. It will include the information on personal background as well as the proficiency level of the learner on the target language and other languages.
2. *Purposive domain*: It aims at finding out the purposes for which the target language is required.
3. *Setting*: Here, the syllabus designer will study the learning environment of the target language.
4. *Interaction*: Under this parameter, the syllabus designer must consider the people with whom the learner will be interacting.
5. *Instrumentality*: This category refers to the medium such as whether the language is spoken or written, receptive or productive, or the mode (monologue or dialogue to be heard or read).
6. *Dialect*: Under this category the variety and/or dialect is specified.
7. *Target level*: Here is stated the degree of mastery which the learner will require to attain over the target language.
8. *Communicative event*: It refers to the mastery over productive and receptive skills which will be necessary for the learner.
9. *Communicative key*: Under this parameter, the syllabus designer needs to specify the interpersonal attitudes and tones the learner will be required to master. Attitudes and tones the learner will be required to master.

(qtd. in Nunan 19-20)

In her research paper- “English Language Teaching in India: Problems and Strategies”, Smita Jha finds out that that lack of coordination between primary and secondary education on one hand and higher education on the other is one of the major problems of ELT in India. According to her “these three levels of education form separate categories, bodies or entities, and are independent of one another, leaving hardly any scope for a proper screening of our students to be done in view of their age, aptitude and motivation, factors, among others governing the process of language learning or acquisition. All this is deplorable, and has on adverse or deleterious effect on language teaching including English language teaching in our country.” (17)

Usha Nagpal in her article- “Teaching Language through Language” says “most universities held on diligently to English literature not only in their honours courses but also in the General English courses. The question, whether in the compulsory English paper literature was to be taught qua literature or as a tool for language required unasked and unstated.” (88-89)

In his editorial writing- “Learning and teaching English in a Globalized World”, Dr. Anil Sarwal has come up with the view that in spite of implementing different methods of teaching English, “English continues to be taught at all levels in a teacher centric manner, by and large using the so-called ‘lecture method’. The content of teaching is generally English literature rather than the much needed language skills.” (2). Raja Ram Mehrotra remarks “The roads that lead to Shakespeare and Shaw do not lead to the learning of functional English” (105).

In his Ph D Research work entitled- “The Teacher’s Role in the Classroom Teaching of English in Assamese Medium High Schools: A Study Based on the Schools of Lakhimpur district of Assam”, Dr. Khirapada Dutta attempted to analyse

the teacher's role in classroom teaching of English in Assamese medium high schools. Dr. Dutta tried to find out- (i) the goals of teaching English as perceived by the English teachers, (ii) the classroom management of the English teachers, (iii) the adopted methods of teaching English and their effectiveness, (iv) the efficiency of the English teachers, (v) the teachers' views on the English syllabus and the evaluation system. His study reveals that majority of the respondents "feel that the English syllabus is out-dated, not need-based, uninteresting to motivate the learners, too literary, less practical and above all, it cannot help in language learning. A few of the teachers also feel that the syllabus has not given proper emphasis on grammar and composition. Giving suggestions for the improvement of the existing syllabus, the teachers say that the literature portion should be reduced, so that the teacher can get sufficient time to practise real English. Some of them suggest that more emphasis should be given on grammar and spoken English. Most of the English teachers still have a belief that the grammar portion is the most important portion of the syllabus and the only way to learn a language is to master the rules of its grammar. This type of believe is incarnated in structural approach to language teaching, which is based on the belief that a language can be mastered by mastering the rules of its grammar. On the other hand, the modern language teaching philosophy, which is based on the communicative approach to language, believes that a language can be learned best in the process of struggling to communicate. Therefore, it can be said that though most of the teachers consider developing the communicative competence in the learner to be the main goal of teaching English as second language, the approach they adopt is not the communicative approach, but the structural approach to language. Accordingly, they prefer a syllabus which gives more importance on grammar".

Very little research has been done in Assam regarding the teaching-learning situation of English at undergraduate level. In “ Problems in the Teaching Learning Situation of English in the Undergraduate Colleges of Assam: A Study”, Arup Sarma has written- “The syllabi even for the UG level are so designed that there is hardly any scope to develop linguistic competence in learners in an essential order. Due to the loopholes in syllabus designing, our classroom teaching in English only enhances our students’ listening activity superficially as maximum time is spent in lecturing method. The unskilled students qualifying various levels with only the writing medium to the UG level create a more apathetic situation for English teaching.” (95). According to him, English syllabi, prescribed by different Indian universities still reveal some characteristics of Macaulayan syllabi.

Momisona Das has found that the syllabus for teaching English at the undergraduate level in Assam is not up-to-date. It fails to fulfil its main objectives. She concludes by saying, “A change in the approach to teaching English at the undergraduate level in Assam has become imperative” (43).

By investigating the UG compulsory English course of the Arts stream of the colleges under Assam University, Rajat Bhattacharya has found “the syllabus in question perpetuates the old style of syllabus making whose object is mainly content teaching. It is substantially made up of British literary texts, that is to say prose poetry and drama. . . . The rest of the syllabus comprises composition of conventional unseen-types like essay and letter.” (26-27). In his opinion, this type of syllabus will not be able to serve the interests of the students or the society. He gives stress on uplifting the teaching learning situation of English in Assam for making it meaningful for general students.

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