

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This chapter deals mainly with the title of the study, rationale and objectives of the study, the questions based on the objectives and the scheme of chapterisation. The investigator has explained the meaning and importance of language. Teaching and learning of a foreign language have been defined as the study is about an aspect of teaching English as a second language. Moreover, the position of the English language in India and in the world has been discussed.

1.2 Importance of Language

Language is very important and crucial for human beings. We know that without language life is not possible in modern times because it is language that distinguishes man from animals. So language is very important for the human beings. Language is a major medium of communication through which human beings can express complex thoughts, remember past events and future activities. Language is a great tool which makes human culture possible distinguishes man from the rest of the animals in the world. It has multiplicity of functions. It enables us to influence people's behavior.

Language is a species-specific activity. That is, any normal human being is endowed with the ability to speak. The language one normally acquires is the mother tongue, i.e. the language one hears in the family after birth. This is picked up without conscious effort. As the child grows, s/he might come across other languages. Either out of necessity or because of interest, people learn these other additional languages. Learning this additional languages, requires more efforts, even formal training. For Indians, English is one such language.

The importance of English is to be seen as a means of international communication that is recognized all over the world. By the rapid spread of industries development, science and technology and international trade it has become a Global language spoken in many countries of the world. It provides a common platform for

communication. The English language has helped the world to become a single family. Today, almost every country learns English.

1.3 Importance of English in Higher Education

In the present times, in higher education English is the key to open the treasure of knowledge. Especially, if students have to learn science, commerce and other technical courses most of the resources available mainly in English. In fact, if a student has to undertake detailed study in most fields barring other language specific studies, s/he is required to know English well, because a larger number of sources of knowledge are available in the English language.

The primary aim of English language teaching is simple. It is very helpful to get higher education and deeper understanding in any field. Due to its imperial past many sources are available to get knowledge in the English language. Even to share our learning with people across the globe, a good command of the English is helpful. In a multilingual country like India it is also a link language. Thus; English has become a very useful tool of higher education in the present time.

India has a history of the language of the over 300 years. This is a major advantage over other Asian countries like Japan and China who have started learning English recently. However, even today only a small number of Indians feel comfortable with the use of English. Although institutions offering courses through English medium are on the rise, the masses still feel uncomfortable in the use of English. The problems of learning and teaching English are more serious because of lack of exposure, inadequate resources, and lack of awareness etc. The present investigation is on these lines.

1.4 Rationale of the Study

Any true search for knowledge begins with self. Even in our day to day life, a large number of questions arise in our minds. The same logic has led to the selection of this topic for the research on hand. The researcher belongs to the same social and linguistics background as the subjects of the investigation. Having gone through higher studies at institutions outside Ahwa, he has realized that the status of English and nature of language teaching are not satisfactory in Ahwa. There is also an understanding that adequate proficiency in the use of English is needed to remain in

the main stream of development today. Hence, with a view to understanding the situation and develop an insight in to the causes of the problems and arrive at some remedial measures this study was undertaken.

1.5 Research Statement

The following is the research undertaken by this researcher.

A STUDY OF THE ACADEMIC PROBLEMS OF CLASS IX STUDENTS IN LEARNING ENGLISH IN AHWA CITY

1.6 Operationalization of Terms

It would be helpful to understand the study topic properly if the words and terms used in the title are explained appropriately. Here the meanings of the following terms are provided.

The word '**academic**' means relating teaching and learning in schools and colleges, etc

The word '**problem**' means, according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, the thing that is difficult to deal with or understand

In the present study the phrase '**academic problems**' relates 'the problems of the students relating the learning of English'.

Students of standard 9: In Gujarat, school education comprises of primary Section (Std. 1 to 8) Secondary Section (Std. 9 and 10) and Higher Secondary section (Std. 11 &12). In the present study standard 9 of the secondary section is taken.

1.7 Research Objectives

Any systematic study begins by deciding the objectives that the study aims at the present study was undertaken with the following objectives in view.

1. To study the facilities available in the schools under scrutiny.
2. To study the academic and professional qualifications of teachers of English at these school.

3. To study the methods used by the teachers to teach English in these schools.
4. To study the teaching learning materials used at these schools.
5. To study co-curricular activities which supplement learning English originated at the schools under study.
6. To study the number of students in the class in these schools and the impact there of on English language teaching and learning
7. To study the school climate with respect to exposure of English for student.
8. To study the family background of the students.
9. To study the teaching aids used by the teachers.
10. To study the level of motivation among students towards education, in general, and English, in particular.

1.8 Research Questions

The researcher will try to address the following questions during the study.

1. What are the facilities available for English language teaching and learning in secondary schools in Ahwa City ?
2. Are the teachers of English in the schools under study fully qualified?
3. Are they trained in the new methods of ELT?
4. Are the teachers themselves proficient in the use of English?
5. What materials do teachers use to teach English?
6. How many teachers are able to use technology to teach English?
7. Which co-curricular activities are organized in the schools that enrich English language learning?
8. Have teachers attended in service training programmers recently?
9. Do the teachers use English in classrooms?
10. How often do they use Gujarati?
11. Do the students like to study English? What for? How much?

12. Do the teachers use English language outside the class while at the school?
13. Do the students get opportunities to listen to English spoken by visitors?
14. What is the performance of the students at the S.S.C level in the English subject during the previous two years?
15. Have the students learnt English during the upper primary classes?

1.9 Delimitations of the Study

The area of the study is limited to the town of Ahwa City only. The study is limited only to three schools of Ahwa City

1.10 Scheme of Chapterisation

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter sets the importance of language in general, English language in particular and the status of English at global, India, Gujarat and local levels. Investigator has included common factors affecting in learning English and the basic information of the study.

Chapter 2 Conceptual Framework and Review of the Related Literature

This chapter contains a review of related literature of the present study and places the present study in a context.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

The 3rd chapter focuses on research design, planning and procedure. It shows the methods of data collection, sample, tools used in the present study. The procedure of the present study is given in detail.

Chapter 4 Data Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter deals with the analyses and interpretation of the students' opinions, teachers' opinions and parents' opinions.

Chapter 5 Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion

This chapter presents the findings of this study and offers a set of suggestions and recommendations for further research study related to the difficulties in learning English language.

1.11 Conclusion

Having set the scenario of the place of English in the present world and the status of affairs in scholars, the investigator is now ready to present the study in detail in the following chapters.