

SOWMYA K.N. “ SCOPE, CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF BLENDED METHOD IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING FOR ENGINEERING STUDENTS.” THESIS. DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH ST. THOMAS’ COLLEGE, THRISSUR, UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT, 2019.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Blended Learning (BL) brings together face to face and online activities and it comprises of interactive experiences within and outside classroom. Prior to the onset of technology, teaching happened to be comparatively formal and the concept of learning was exclusively fixed in the classroom. With the advent of technology, the education system advanced and prevailed the constraints of ancient method. The learning process crossed the time and space barrier and became possible anytime and everywhere around the globe. In recent time, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a feature of every mode of knowledge gain and BL is one such technique which explores the possibilities of ICT.

The term 'blend' is self explanatory or reflective and denotes integration or adding one component to another. Numerous potential elements and methods can be adopted to form a blend. Instructor can combine guided individual study, self paced learning, project based learning and computer based instruction with each other. The blend of face to face and online materials will vary depending on the context, needs of the students and preference of the teacher. Steps in constructing a new blend are setting the course objective, selecting media and tool, formulating techniques and strategies, organising activities and finally evaluating the learning process and outcome.

The present study comprises of blended method for English language teaching of engineering students. The current status of language teaching methods was provided by regular intervention with articles and through the interaction with teaching faculties. Newspaper articles presented a glimpse of the link between

engineering students and need to enhance their linguistic skill. Working experience in an Engineering college to teach Humanities and Communication Skills paper provided a genuine description regarding English competency of engineering students. Real experience of their challenges motivated to invent a new method to enhance communication proficiency and thus selected the area of research.

Engineering is a technology based stream and it is a pertinent area to explore the possibilities of technology. Traditional teaching method offers limited opportunity for linguistic development as classroom time is inadequate to arrange and practice activities and this necessitated to formulate a novel approach. BL extends teaching and learning beyond the classroom walls. It integrates online tools and classroom presentations, which in the past consisted of notebooks, paper assignments.

Bestowing multiple ways to demonstrate knowledge is the remarkable advantage of blended method.

Background of the study

It is high priority to trace the previous setting before implementing the research. Introduction of technology has influenced numerous phases of life and the persuasion is explicitly evident in the present world. Advancement of technology has offered immeasurable access to information and it made learning process easier and comfortable. The present study is a retrospective narration of English language teaching for engineering students using blended method and attempts to validate the effectiveness of the adopted strategy. After completing higher secondary education, learners dream of securing admission for a professional degree programme for comparatively high job opportunity and attractive salary pull them towards a specialised degree. Medical stream demands high rank in the entrance exam and the

next priority is obviously engineering. The mushrooming of engineering colleges during the previous decade is an unyielding confirmation for the trend. Every year different streams may be on demand and students run behind that particular course for admission. After four years, drift may be to something else and in the later stage it brings dismay to the learners. More to the point several parents will not think whether the child has genuine interest or is capable to learn the prescribed syllabus.

Engineering position carries much prestige in the society and it tends scholars to hire management seat or to seek admission in other states. Irrespective of these aspects, there are students who are inclined for engineering profession and have clear understanding about the fastidious stream. Engineering students occupy a large space among learner community and it is pertinent to focus on their communication skills.

English Language Teaching (ELT) being a dynamic arena of academic discourse has emerged with innovative trends and several categories like globalisation, localisation and inter disciplinary collaboration have influenced the transformation. Last twenty years marked paradigmatic shift regarding the role of ELT. In a globalised scenario, the concept of bilingualism has been deteriorated and people move to multilingual culture and the idea of English as a second language is outdated. The terminology in connection with ELT has altered over the period and attained new significance (Yilin). For instance, Teaching English to Second Language Learners (TESL) to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), Western English (WE) to English as an International Language (EIL) and the term TENOR has been replaced by TESR (Teaching English for Social Responsibilities) and CLT (Communicative Language Teaching). Earlier period the core linguistic activity in ELT was focused on mimicking the native English speakers. Over the ages language teaching became a social and cultural movement to foster a sense of social

responsibility for language learners. For a competent language teacher, productive language teaching will be effective once the learners are linguistically competent enough to be social critics.

Student's population in an engineering college is diverse while considering their communicative competency. During personal interaction, the researcher interacted with students of different linguistic levels; those having remarkable language fluency and other learners with clear subject knowledge but lack proficiency to express their views in English. Engineering curriculum comprises a single paper related to communication skills as the syllabus is exclusively science based and the scope of improving linguistic fluency is limited. The students may concentrate on theory, lab, experiments and mostly they are reluctant to focus on communication skills classes. Even those who have language fluency may lose confidence to converse in English if they are not interacting in English frequently. Teaching experience and interface with other faculties made this aspect evident. Core subjects demand much time for preparation and this result in neglecting Communication paper. Proper training and continuous practice regarding communication skills are ignored in many institutions. Limited infrastructure and not having facilities like language laboratory also hinders efficient training.

One of the prime attractions of engineering colleges is the campus placements organised for job aspirants and it would be high time to improve their interactive skill. They may realise the significance of having proficiency in communication while preparing for campus recruitments or other professional interviews. It is important for the learners to take genuine initiative to enhance linguistic skills to express knowledge clearly and effectively. Candidates may go for training programmes or personality development classes to acquire instant tips to enhance communication competency.

Being aware of the relevance of interview skills and placement status, most of the engineering colleges have commenced placement cells to train student candidates. By exploring these opportunities, learners can improve communication skills and aptitude to perform in interviews while doing the course itself instead of brooding it on the last moment. Arranging orientation programmes by faculties or placement co-ordinators about the relevance of presentation skills will help to encompass awareness for learners.

English in India

Education field has undergone major transformations over the years and it is essential to have a glance at the past. English education in India is the aftermath of British colonialism especially, the stepping in of East India Company established on 31 December 1600. The Company arrived for trading later on by involving in politics acted as an agent of British imperialism till the mid 20th century. The Charter Act of 1813 stressed the importance of education in India and the revival and improvement of literature. Literature for them primarily meant English literature. English education had flourished intensely by Christian missionaries. They started educational activities by 1542 itself upon the arrival of St. Francis Xavier. Later the movement spread throughout the country and created a lasting influence on education in India. This paved way for a new direction by the introduction of instruction at regular and fixed hours, a broad curriculum and a clear classroom system. Lord Macaulay, in his Minutes of 2 February 1835 supported the Western education in India through the medium of English. Later, Lord Auckland's Minutes of 1839, Wood's Despatch of 1854 and Hunter Commission of 1832 suggested changes to make English education in India a permanent feature.

Altered political situation in post colonial India had raised difference in opinion about continuing English education in India. Gandhiji was against educating Indians in English as it deprived the national respect. At the same time leaders like Maulana Azad, C. Rajagopalachari and Nehru realised that abolition of English would be a great setback to progress. Nehru considered English as a major window to the world and its closure would risk our future. The Official Language Committee Report of 1955 stated English as one of the foremost languages in the world and medium of international communication. The commission argued that though Hindi is the national language English could be used as second language for specific purposes. One of the major reasons which made possible for the retention of English was the fact that, different states in India had different languages and English linked them together. English continues to occupy a unique position in India as all advanced knowledge and excellent literary works of the world are available in English or in English translations and any Indian regional language cannot claim that position.

English is one of the six official languages of the UNO and the link language of the Commonwealth countries (Richards 29). It is the language of trade, commerce and international politics. Books, periodicals and journals of international standards are available mainly in English language. English proficiency helps to advance and attain professional growth in the modern world. It is the international language and helps to link people from different parts of the world. In India all states have different languages and English serves as a medium for interstate communication. English has helped to create a better understanding among people and brought interdependence with each other. All these factors throw light on the significance of learning English. Realising the impact of English many universities and institutions have reallocated to English as their medium of instruction.

In India, English is taught in schools and colleges considering the fact that acquiring proficiency over English helps to get job and to carry on education in international level. Teaching standard is not remarkable in certain institutions as they do not follow regulations for enhancement. Lack of clarity about aims, shortage of efficient teachers, examination system centred on writing skill and outdated teaching methods Major drawbacks regarding English education. A number of teachers consider the sole purpose of teaching is training students for the examination and make them qualify the test. Lack of trained teachers having proficiency in English is hindrance for exposure to language. Inadequate system to check language competency and mere focus on written skill is the evil of current examination system. Classroom teaching is done mostly in Translation Method or Bilingual Method in which English and regional language or mother tongue is used side by side. The number of teaching hours devoted to English is also less.

Inadequacy of English teaching method can be overcome by formulating clear aims and objectives. The major aim should be transforming the learner capable to use the four communication skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing in meaningful context. It is easy to master receptive skills than the productive ones; listening and reading are considered as passive or receptive skills while speaking and writing are active or productive skills. Rather than merely rote memorising the answers, teachers may arrange an atmosphere to practice these communication skills. Frequent practice helps to learn language quickly. Regular practice of English will enable learners to achieve proficiency in the language. English has changed its status from a language of the Western world to a language of the modern era. The younger generation have realised that English proficiency will offer them more career opportunities. Every year, the number of graduates passing out is high in India but

most of them are not employable in Western standards and the major problem is the lack of fluency in English. Realising this issue many universities are revising their syllabus to meet the global needs, rather than teaching about the language, the recent movements are focusing on the language and its use to communicate.

History of English Language Teaching in India

Tracing the background of English education scenario in India is relevant in this study. English Language Teaching (ELT) had its beginning from 15th century onwards. As part of political changes English became a prominent language in Europe and later in the whole world. In England, English became a major language through Henry IV and it was declared as the official language by Henry V in the 15th century. In the beginning English was taught using Latin methods. Later educationists had experimented with various methods to teach English. Fluency in English helped people to improve their career and business prospects and it was the major reason for learning the language. British colonialism and Christian missionaries played vital role to attain reputation for English language. The wide spread acceptance and popularity of language extended the reach of culture and literature of England to the major parts of the world.

Origin of Grammar Translation Method in Germany during 1780s marked a new phase in the history of ELT. Earlier English was taught as an additional language in European secondary schools and it was called Teaching English as Foreign Language (TEFL). In British colonies English teaching was known as Teaching English as Second Language (TESL). British educated colony citizens, to make the colonised people work under their government taught their language. However after independence also English continued as official language in most of the colonies

including India. This wide popularity was a reason for scientific study of language and to experiment with modern teaching methods. In the 20th century, linguists all over the world came up with innovative approaches in language teaching.

The acronym ELT became popular with the publication of British council journal *English Language Teaching* in 1946. Establishments like Association of Recognised English Language School (ARELS) helped non native speakers to share their views, experience and knowledge about language teaching and learning. Conferences and classes organised by these associations resulted to be beneficial for teachers. People learnt English for different purposes and this necessitated the birth of English for Special Purpose (ESP) in 1970s. Based on ESP several branches evolved; English for Academic Purpose (EAP), English for Occupation Purpose (EOP), English for Science and Technology (EST). After Grammar Translation method, Direct method and Audiolingualism were the other popular methods. In Communicative Language Teaching, textbooks and evaluation procedure are based on the premise that communication is the primary need of language learning and acquiring fluency is to interact effectively and classroom activities are aimed at communication and real life experience. These developments brought out large number of textbooks for meeting the requirements of different types of learners. Over the years, ELT became more flexible and the focus was on language skills like listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Origin of English language teaching is closely associated with the socio-political atmosphere of the country. “English education in India was started by East India Company, as they ruled parts of our country before India was under British Empire. English education was given only to children of East India Company employees and Anglo Indians until the 19th century” (Aslam 203). It was Charles

Grant, father of modern education in India, suggested teaching English literature and scientific knowledge to Indians. Later, Charles Babington Macaulay, president of Public Instruction Committee had the responsibility of spreading English literature and English education system in India. Macaulay in his Minutes of Education (1835) suggested for the allocation of budget for the education in India. He said by giving English education to Indians, they can cultivate a community who are Indians in colour but English in taste, opinion and intellect and these people will act as mediators between British and the natives they govern. The then governor general William Bentick accepted this proposal and this altered Indian education system and English Language Teaching in India.

Charles Wood's Educational Despatch of 1854 is considered as the Magna Carta of Indian education. This was the prominent education policy by East India Company. The recommendations included all levels of education and insisted that English should be the medium of instruction. Sanskrit and Arabic were the prominent languages in India during that time. The Christian missionaries founded schools and colleges and the curriculum included pieces from Bible and works like Paradise Lost and Pilgrim's Progress. English classics which excelled in writing style and fine examples of classical grammar were prescribed as textbooks to teach English. In India, the traditional approach of teaching was using 'kavya' (literature) and 'vyakarana' (grammar) which had similarity with Grammar Translation method (Bhat). In India, there was no tremendous change in the education system after independence and the pre independent system continued after 1947 also.

The growing influence of English language and the inability to find an alternative language acceptable to all Indians was the reason behind continuing English as the medium of instruction in India. University Grants Commission (UGC)

under the chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan had the opinion that, learning English would enable Indians to update themselves with the events and developments around the world. The UGC report of 1951 says that development of science and technology would know to Indians only with the knowledge of English. The 'Three Language Formula' (vernacular language+ national language+ third language) adopted by all the Chief Ministers of India insisted that the third language should be English or any other European language. Until now, English is not replaced by any other European language as the third language and the prior position of English got fixed in Indian education system.

Post independent India witnessed several discussions about language teaching. In *Techniques of Teaching English in the New Millennium* A.L. Kohli and L. M. Sharma points out that, Kothari Commission of 1966 also agreed Three Language Formula. Commission recommended special units for teaching language skills than merely focusing on English literature. There was a shift from Grammar Translation method to Direct method. A number of English Language Teaching Institutes (ELTIs) and Regional Institutes of English (RIE) were established in different parts of India for guidance and as models to English language teachers. During 1950s and 1960s authorities sought the help of professionals from London in preparing structural syllabus. In 1954 an ELTI was established at Allahabad with the assistance of British Council. Central Institute of English and Foreign Language (CIEFL) was started in Hyderabad in 1958. CIEFL is now known as English and Foreign Language University (EFLU). Promoting English, along with Hindi and other local languages was the policy of central and state governments and people largely opted for English. As a result several English medium schools were started in private sector. In the

secondary and tertiary level also English became the most common medium of instruction.

Background of English Language Teaching Methods

Revolution regarding teaching methods occurred through the decades. The current method for research has been opted after a thorough analysis of prior practised teaching styles. Latin was the popular language of classical period and the conventional texts were written in Latin. To understand these popular texts, 16th century intellectuals started learning Latin and they believed that conventional language develops academic abilities. Latin was considered as the language of scholars and aristocrats; it was the dominant language of education, commerce, religion and officials in the Western world. In European countries Latin was taught using Grammar Translation Method. This technique followed a deductive approach; the style of learning was that learners were given rules at the initial stage and then practice and memorise these set of laws. The sequence of presenting communication skills was speaking, listening, reading and writing. Among this, reading and writing were given more importance than listening and speaking. Grammar translation method did not focus on oral communication and it was the major demerit of this method.

In the later centuries Latin lost its prominence and English became well accepted language. The classical literature shifted its focus from Greek and Latin to English. As a result of political changes, French, Italian and English gained importance. The trend of learning a foreign language was from ancient period onwards. Population of multilingual culture is increasing gradually. Bilingualism or multilingualism is a common feature in the present scenario. The aim of learning a

foreign language is to learn its literature or to advance in mental discipline or intellectual development as a result of foreign language study. Over the years the interest to learn Latin got shifted to English. The main defect in English language teaching was following the same method which was used to teach Latin. Like Latin English was taught using Grammar Translation method and this technique dominated European and foreign language teaching from the 1840s to the 1940s.

In the United States Grammar Translation method is known as Prussian method. As per this system first language is maintained as a reference system in the acquisition of second language. The sentence is the basic unit of teaching and language practice and accuracy is emphasised. Words are taught through bilingual word lists, dictionary study and memorisation. In grammar translation method instructor makes use of mother tongue to teach and this affected in two ways. The learners can easily understand the concept having explained in mother tongue. It becomes difficult to teach through first language if the learners have different mother tongues. In the beginning of language learning, students are asked to memorise grammar rules and gives an additional stress to memorisation. In a typical grammar translation text, the grammar rules are presented and illustrated with their equivalents, and translation exercises are given to reinforce. Memorising endless grammar rules or vocabulary items and attempting to produce perfect translations became a tedious task for learners and this created distaste for Grammar Translation method.

In the late 19th century there was rejection of Grammar Translation method and Reform Movement laid foundation to develop new language teaching methods. Increased opportunities for communication created demand in oral proficiency. The mother tongue of the learner is denoted as L1 and the foreign language as L2. While learning L2, there will be hindrance of L1, and memorising the rules of L2 alone will

not turn out effective in using the foreign language. In Germany, France, England and other parts of Europe specialists started developing methods to teach language effectively. Linguists like C. Marcel, T. Prendergast and F. Gouin discussed the need to use some innovative methods in language teaching. Marcel focused on the connection between learning mother tongue and a foreign language. He emphasised the importance of reading and believed reading must be taught before other skills. Marcel suggested child language learning as a model for language teaching. Prendergast made the observation that children use contextual and situational cues to interpret utterances and he proposed the first “structural syllabus” and advocated that learners should be taught the basic structural patterns of language. According to Gouin, teaching new items in a context that makes meaning clear is important. His method used situations and themes as ways of organising and presenting oral language. As there was no organisational structure in language teaching, their attempts couldn't be successful.

Towards the end of 19th century linguistics (the scientific study of language) evolved as a branch of science and linguists such as Henry Sweet, Wilhelm Viëtor and Paul Passy led Reformist ideas. The world wide popularity of English raised the need to find out new methods to teach language. From the traditional grammar translation method English language teaching started moving to more naturalistic approach. Linguistics as a discipline got revitalised and phonetics- the scientific analysis and description of the sound systems - was established. Speech rather than the written word became the primary form of language. The International Phonetic Association founded in 1886 formulated International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) to transcribe the sounds of any language accurately. Association advocated an inductive approach to grammar teaching and new meanings were taught through establishing

associations within the target language rather than with the native language. It promoted the use of conversation texts and dialogues to introduce idioms and phrases. Henry Sweet in his book *The Practical Study of Languages* (1899) set forth certain principles for the development of teaching methods. These included; careful selection of study materials, imposing limits on what is to be taught, arranging contents in terms of four communication skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing and lastly grading materials from simple to complex.

The members of the Reform movement gave importance to naturalistic principles of language learning as seen in the first language acquisition and this led to the development of Direct method. This method was introduced in the United States by Savuer and Maximilian Berlitz. They believed that a foreign language could be taught without translation or the use of learner's mother tongue. Direct method had some differing ideas when compared to grammar translation method. For instance, in the new method grammar is taught inductively. The system of memorising rules and then practising are erased in direct method. According to the German scholar F. Franke a language is best taught by using it actively in the classroom. Target language is the medium of communication and accuracy in grammar and pronunciation are emphasised. The teacher replaced the textbook in the early stages of learning. New vocabulary was taught using known words, mime, demonstration, and pictures. The principles of natural language learning laid foundation for direct method. Oral communication skill is developed through carefully organised sessions like question-and-answer exchange between teacher and students.

Teaching through target language forced the learner to imbibe the new language. Differing to grammar translation method, direct method gives importance to oral skills and this resulted in good progress in the language acquisition. Direct

method was successful where the instructor was the native speaker of the foreign language. But this method distorted the similarities between naturalistic first language learning and classroom foreign language learning. Obsession with accuracy and pronunciation was the demerit of direct method. This handicapped language and learning became a hindrance in the natural process of learning. Direct method was largely dependent on the teacher's skill rather than on the textbook and required a native speaker as instructor or those who had proficiency like the native. Critics pointed out that strict adherence to direct method was counterproductive as sometimes a brief explanation in native language would be more effective to comprehend than the target language. By 1920s use of direct method had consequently declined.

The United States took part in World War II and they needed people who had proficiency in other languages than English. Thus came the necessity to invent new methods and they adopted Audio Lingual Method (ALM). Linguists developed a method that was suitable to the conditions of schools and colleges in the US and it was the result of increased attention given to foreign language teaching. A combination of structural linguistic theory, contrastive analysis, aural-oral procedures and behaviourist psychology led to the formation of ALM. The fundamental theory of Audiolingualism is structural linguistics. Interest in phonetics, phonology, morphology and syntax was developed as new sound types and patterns were introduced. Since many languages do not have written form, structural linguists proclaimed that language is primarily speech and not writing. Audiolingualism makes use of drills to improve vocabulary and structural patterns are taught using drills and successful responses are reinforced in this method.

Audiolingualism was influenced by Behaviourism which was based on certain concepts like foreign language learning is a process of mechanical habit formation

and language is basically a verbal behaviour. Language skills are learned effectively if the points in the target language are presented to the learner orally before seeing in written form. The approach to the teaching of grammar was essentially inductive rather than deductive. Audiolingualistic texts contain key items of phonology, morphology and syntax of the language arranged according to the order of their presentation. Instructional materials like tape recorders and audio visual equipments assisted the teacher to develop mastery over the language in the learner. During the late 1960s, theoretical aspects of this method were attacked by linguists like Noam Chomsky. He rejected the Structuralist approach and Behaviourist theory of learning. Major defects of this method are; students find it difficult to reproduce the skills acquired outside the classroom into real communication and the process of regular drilling was not interesting and unsatisfying.

The decline of Audiolingualism in 1970s and 1980s paved way to a period of innovation, experiment and adaptation and several methods like Total Physical Response, Silent Way and Counselling Learning came into practice. Other methods like Whole Language, Multiple Intelligences, Neurolinguistic Programming, Competency based teaching which were in practice in the general education field were brought to second language teaching (Richards 98). On the other hand the concern for grammatical accuracy did not disappear and continued to exist in all these methods. Audiolingualism viewed language learning as any other learning and stressed the mechanistic aspects of language. Similarities are there between Situational Language Teaching (SLT) and Audiolingualism; both the methods viewed the nature of language and of language learning in a similar way though these two methods developed from two different traditions. The dissimilarity is that, strong allegiance to linguistics and behavioural psychology was the characteristic of

Audiolingualism alone and SLT does not have connection to these two.

Communicative Language Teaching, Task Based Teaching and Natural Approach also came to practice in second language teaching.

Alternatives to grammar based approaches and methods led to different directions. The Communicative movement altered the focus from grammar as the core component of language to communication and to make the classroom authentic for communication. This method gave emphasis on individualised instruction and adopted more humanistic approach towards language learning and the primary focus was on communication, in contrast to linguistic competence. Total Physical Response (TPR) was another method which was built around the coordination of speech, action and teaching language through physical (motor) activity. TPR was developed by James Asher and it had adopted ideas from developmental psychology, learning theory, humanistic pedagogy and language teaching procedures by Harold and Palmer in 1925. Asher viewed successful second language learning by adult as a parallel process to child's first language acquisition (Richards and Rodgers 118). He considers, for young children the process of speech primarily consists of commands and they will respond to it physically before they begin to produce verbal utterances. Similar to this, adults should recapitulate the process of children's native language learning.

In Total Physical Response, learners have the role of both listener and performer. They have to listen attentively and respond physically to the commands given by the teacher. Learners have to make new combinations of previously learnt items and they could evaluate their own progress. They are encouraged to speak when they acquire sufficient basis in the language. Asher observed the teacher's role as to provide opportunities for learning and while giving feedback to learners they should

follow the example of parents giving feedback to their young children. The teacher plays an active and direct role in TPR. The general objective of the method is to develop oral proficiency at the beginning level. Unlike other methods which had structural based or grammar based view, TPR gives initial attention to meaning rather than the form of items. Grammar was thus taught inductively. Asher, the main proponent of this method stressed that; it should be used in association with other methods and techniques for best result. TPR enjoyed recognition during 1970s and 1980s because of its emphasis on the role of comprehension in the second language.

Silent Way was another prevalent method for language teaching. It was developed by Caleb Gattegno based on the concept that the teacher should remain silent as much as possible in the classroom and the student should be encouraged to generate language items. Gattegno was an educational designer of reading and mathematics. This experience influenced him and he preferred the use of colour charts and coloured rods in the classroom. He believed that, learning is facilitated at the best when the learner discovers or creates rather than remembers and repeated what is to be learned. Learning can be made easy by mediating physical objects. The Silent way adopted a structural syllabus of grammatical items and related vocabulary. The teaching materials consist of coloured rods, colour coded pronunciation and vocabulary wall charts, a pointer and reading or writing exercises. All these are used to establish relationship between sound and meaning in the target language. The teacher uses gestures and manipulatives to elicit responses from the students. Silent Way viewed learning as a problem solving, creative, discovering activity in which the learner is the major actor. This will enhance intellectual potency and memory. This method had relation to the premises of problem solving approaches to learning and followed structural approach to the organisation of language to be taught. Gattegno

viewed vocabulary as a central criterion of language learning and the choice of vocabulary as crucial. He stated that the process of second language learning is different from that of first language learning; one cannot learn another language by the same way as he learnt first language. Thus the natural or direct approaches to second language learning are misguided. Despite the philosophical aspects, this method could not succeed as a language teaching technique.

The most common purpose of language is to communicate. Community Language Learning (CLL) is a method devised by Charles A. Curran and his associates. His application of psychological counselling techniques to learning is known as Counselling Learning. CLL makes use of Counselling theory to teach languages. Based on the counselling metaphor, this method redefined the role of teacher as counsellor and the learner as client. CLL techniques also belong to humanistic techniques which engage the whole person, including the emotions and feelings as well as linguistic knowledge and behavioural skills. The learner is viewed as a child; in the first or birth stage a feeling of security is established, in the second stage abilities of learner is improved and achieves a measure of independence. By the next stage, learner starts speaking independently and asserts own identity. In the fourth stage, learner is ready to take criticism and by the last stage, the learner works on improving style and knowledge of linguistic appropriateness. In CLL learners become members of a community and their fellow learners and teacher are the members of the community. Learning is not considered as an individual accomplishment, but as something which is accomplished collaboratively.

Translation, group work, transcription, reflection and observation, listening, analysis and free conversation are the important tasks involved in this method. Inside the classroom the learners will sit in a circle and the teacher will be the observer and they

will exercise the above mentioned tasks. CLL places a high responsibility on teachers; they have to be highly proficient and sensitive in L1 and L2. Moreover they have to be sympathetic and familiar with the role of counsellors in psychological learning. Depending on topics, the teacher must shape and motivate the class. Though this method supported the humanistic sides, the critics questioned the appropriateness of counselling metaphor in the context of language learning.

Suggestopedia, Whole Language, Multiple Intelligence are other methods in the history of English language teaching. Suggestopedia by Georgi Lozanov focuses on decoration, furniture, arrangement of the classroom and authoritative behaviour of the teacher. The objective of this method is to deliver advanced conversational proficiency quickly. The course lasts for 30 days, consisting of ten units of study. Whole Language instruction advocated the use of real world materials rather than commercial texts. Whole Language movement is not a teaching method but an approach to learning that considered language as a whole entity. Multiple Intelligence is based on the concept that human intelligence has multiple dimensions and it was developed by Howard Gardner. He pointed out that traditional IQ tests measured only logic and language, yet the brain had some other equally important intelligences. Competency Based Language Teaching is an educational movement that focuses on outputs rather than inputs. It has similarity with performance based instruction, mastery learning and individualised instruction.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) marked the beginning of a major shift within language teaching in the twentieth century. The origin of this method was founded in the British language tradition of the 1960s. The central idea of CLT was, language learning is learning to communicate. The method was centred on the communicative functions and any device which helped the learner to interact was

accepted. The whole aim was to enable the learner to communicate fluently. The teacher motivated any way that motivated the learner to work with the language. Students were expected to interact with other people either in pair or in group. It was the teacher's responsibility to organise the classroom as a setting for communication and communicative activities. Fluency and acceptable language was the primary goal and accuracy was not judged in abstract but in context. CLT appeared when language teaching in many parts of the world was ready for a paradigm move. This method influenced those who preferred more humanistic approach to teaching. Today, CLT continues to exist and the wide range of course books and other resources based on this principles are the proof for its success. In addition this method had influenced many other approaches and methods that subscribe a similar philosophy of language teaching.

Every method has its own merits and limitations. Experimenting different methods made evident, how far each method would be beneficial in language teaching and learning and found that any method is not decisive. Linguists of the late twentieth century recommended Eclectic method which is a fusion of different methods and approaches. The term was first used to refer a coherent and pluralistic approach in language teaching. Eclecticism involved the use of various language learning activities of different characteristics. Based on the needs and effectiveness, the teacher can make use of different methods and this would help to overcome the limitations of using a single method. Multiple tasks, high interaction, lively learning and fast results were some of the salient features of eclecticism. It blended the principles of speaking, reading, listening and writing into a whole. This method fused participatory approach, communicative approach and situational approach. Eclectic method proved to be effective when the students are heterogeneous and of multiple intelligence levels.

Eclecticism broke the constraints of sticking onto a single procedure or approach, and the aim was to make the learner competent in language by exploiting multiple methods.

Language learning is different from other types of learning and a single method will not be sufficient to achieve all the goals of language learning. Different methods may supplement each other while acquiring communication skills. ELT experts opted eclecticism after experimenting different methods as they could not find a single method satisfactory or acceptable to teach language all over the world. During instruction, teachers have to adopt different methods and procedures based on the circumstance of teaching. Different skills and language items can be taught using diverse methods and it will help the teacher to be more flexible and the learners will get exposure to various language learning strategies. To implement eclecticism effectively the teacher has to be well versed in all the methods. While teaching practice itself, teacher trainees can be given awareness about the recent trends in language teaching. Teachers play an active role in classroom and they have to prepare finely for the smooth impart of lesson.

The term eclecticism has different manifestations. The famous theoretician Brumfit advocates that language learning programme should maintain a balance of activities which focus on both accuracy and fluency. Such a balance could be achieved by presenting and practising different methods and techniques. Another linguist Crombie points out that syllabus designers accept that eclecticism offers better opportunities for teaching an eclectic approach in syllabus design indicates combining different approaches and integrating them to produce a whole prospectus. There can be elements from Structural approach, Situational approach or Communicative approach. Tarone and Yule observe eclecticism as a movement of

choosing some procedures from one technology, some techniques from another and some practices from yet another (Kumar and Chintha 26). This method requires efforts and ability from the side of the teacher to select materials and procedures based on a set of principles.

Eclecticism had its beginning with the works of British applied linguists of 1920s and 1930s. They suggested that language teachers should adopt new ideas and accept developments in the field. Using different teaching aids and following many activities will provide better understanding of the content. Teachers can be more flexible in eclecticism. The risk in this method is that, teacher has to be careful while mixing different methods; otherwise it will create negative effect. They have to pay utmost care while choosing a method. The major premise of eclecticism is not the method but how the learner understands the content. An eclectic approach is based on the structural, functional and notional approaches to acquire proficiency and fluency in language. This method focuses on improving or improvising the existing methods rather than creating a new method. The quest is on the existing examples of the age old experts in the corresponding field and the mission is to exploit the best aspects of each method.

Tracing the background of different methods provided an apparent understanding and thus decided to mix two teaching styles for English language teaching of engineering students. Blended method is a type of eclectic method which extracts the potentials of classroom teaching and online teaching. The major objective of the research is to make the engineering students competent in English language and communication skills. Analysing the prospects of direct teaching and technology based learning helped to assert that blending these two methods will be the apt combination for the study.

Technology and Teaching

The advent of technology has influenced various streams and the persuasion is evident in language teaching also. Along with blackboard and textbooks, at the present time teachers depend on multimedia to demonstrate teaching contents. Many institutions have arranged internet facilities for teachers and students. Every method in language teaching is supported by technology; in the traditional grammar translation method it was blackboard which is a perfect tool for one way transmission. Later blackboard was supplemented by Over Head Projector (OHP) and that helped to create more visual impact. In Audiolingual method, audio tapes are the perfect medium of transmission. In the 1970s and 1980s university language classes arranged sessions in audio labs, where students were supposed to perform repeated drills. Accuracy in pronunciation was emphasised in language lab. Apart from all these advantages, it had certain demerits also. The language laboratories were expensive and the repeated drilling was not much exciting. Moreover, these sessions focused only on language form and ignored communicative aspects of language.

Emancipating technology in education demands strenuous effort by teachers. Prof. R. Govinda, Vice Chancellor, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, Government of India made a comment regarding the position of technology in teaching, “Higher Educational Professionals are least literate when it comes to use technology, as they do not understand the relevance of using technology” (Chitrasen 26). This trend is changing nowadays and even the training sessions for teachers are carrying out with the inclusion of ICT tools. In such sessions teachers have to do presentation and are forced to learn technology assisted teaching methods. Initially it appears to be difficult to teach by means of ICT tools but gradually teachers will get acquainted with it as the outcome will be tremendous.

Conducting training sessions with the assistance of technology may provide more exposure and practice for teachers and they can implement it while teaching.

In the 1990s, there was a shift towards Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) which emphasised the communicative aspects of language. Internet provides more opportunities to interact and the use of internet helps to extend classroom time and offers immense opportunity to communicate. Online and offline activities are made possible through computer assisted instruction. In a networked computer lab, students can interact and practice different types of exercises. All these activities can be saved and each learner is allowed to follow their own pace. Direct interaction is possible when the learner and instructor are online at a time. This real time session is known as synchronous. Outside the classroom, discussions can be carried out by asynchronous tools in which one has to depend on offline tools. E-mails and social forums help to conduct offline activities. Computer assisted instruction assures equal opportunity to all the participants than face to face discussion classroom. The introvert students in classroom can also interact without stage fear in these online platforms. Computer assisted instruction offers more planning time for direct interaction. Language teachers prefer computer assisted teaching for these reasons.

Technology assisted learning environment is a recent trend in education. Computer, mobile, audio visual aid, blog, social networking sites are widely used in the present education system. In language teaching also these elements are included to experiment at multiple levels of learning process. Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has developed as a prominent style globally. Mobiles, which are considered as miniature computers offer additional facilities like texting, gaming and recording audio and video can be exploited in language learning and teaching. Like CALL, Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is a recent development. All

these equipments offer social interactivity, connectivity, immediacy and portability when compared to traditional teaching tools and these are the reasons for the wide acceptance. Language lab is another upcoming feature in educational institutions. It offers more exposure and quality while learning all the four communication skills. Computer can facilitate varieties of learning tasks and have enormous potential as a teaching tool. From a single source learners can avail different types of materials.

Teachers or language trainers no longer consider grammar practice as the major goal of language training. The movement for communicative teaching with computers have clearly expanded the borders. The language learning software has incorporated graphics, video, audio recording and playing texts into learning programmes. More sophisticated error checking applications provide feedback for students to correct mistakes or to continue to next level. Those who need extra help can use small programmes focused on the corresponding items (Seileek, Farhan and Odeh). This offers additional time and assistance outside the classroom. Students feel things are more real and understandable when it is presented as pictures or video. Through simulation and other techniques computer can present abstract items in a concrete and clear way. Thus learners will not be bored and become more active in learning.

Students in a classroom may have varied learning interests and different levels of language proficiency and their learning style and learning speed also will diverge greatly. Computers help to make available the needs of all students by providing different types of materials simultaneously. In computer assisted learning students become the centre of learning and teachers become the facilitator. Unlike traditional classrooms, computer offers more opportunity for students to interact with teachers. Instructors can concentrate on those areas which are difficult in online teaching like

giving real life situation for interaction and training on presentation skills. Such instruction will promote learning with comprehension. Both learners and teachers can make use of the possibilities of internet. They can easily interact with other instructors around the world to share different teaching strategies and can download teaching materials.

Computer mediated communication offers more opportunity for learners to interact in the target language. In distance education, internet has made prominent changes by offering immense possibilities. Learners from all over the world could interact through e-mails and web based conferences. Knowledge sharing was made possible within seconds at fingertip. World Wide Web (www) has an array of resources and majority is in English (Abuseleek 202). To avail this knowledge, one has to gain proficiency in English. Accessing these information and opportunity to interact with people around the world also created a new enthusiasm for learning English. Language teaching and learning can exploit the possibility of internet and computer assisted communication. Technology will assist to reshape the process of language education. In spite of the merits, technology cannot be considered as a substitute for direct interaction and it cannot be a replacement for direct teaching but definitely will complement it. This assumption lead to mix technology based online teaching with direct classroom teaching in blended method.

Technology mediated teaching and learning is in every streams of education. Along with subject knowledge, technical knowledge has to be improved to excel in current learning pattern. The learner cannot claim that learning has been ended when comes to the stream of technology. It has to be upgraded and modified from time to time and the user has to get acquainted with recent changes. Not only for the learner, the instructor also has to update the current innovations and trends to provide more

awareness to learners. The instructor can use technology mediated aids to enhance direct teaching, based on the situation and needs of learners. In English language teaching for engineering students teaching part was mostly done in classroom and activities were conducted through online and this helped to overcome time constraint of teaching hours.

Online Language Learning

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has influenced every aspects of our life. In the education field also this trend is evident as internet offers learning materials 24 hours a day across the globe and the education system is committed to improve through technology. Application of Information Technology (IT) helps to bridge the gap between rural- urban division. It helps distance education learners to access study materials easily through internet. Institutions like IGNOU and Manipal University have extended their learning programmes in online to increase enrolment locally and globally. Nowadays the younger generation spend more time on computer, mobile, social networking sites and other online services and are very much comfortable with the digital media. The trend of using multimedia can be brought to language learning process also effectively. English is the major language in internet and most of the contents are published in English.

A wide range of online tools like video conferencing, forums, e-mail and social networking sites are there to explore. There should be consideration of when, why, where and how ICT tools will help to achieve learning objectives. Apart from online courses multimedia can be infused with normal teaching and learning schedule also. Anyone with internet access can learn and earn credits in online education. In the late 1970s and 1980s in the US and Europe higher education institutions began

delivering instructional content to distance learners over satellite and TV. Internet became the most common method of delivering notes from 1990s onwards. Online learning method can be divided into two types; synchronous and asynchronous. It becomes synchronous when the teacher and student have direct and simultaneous contact. In asynchronous the instructor and learner does not meet in time or space. Video conferencing is synchronous whereas sending e-mail is asynchronous. Students can depend on both these types to ask questions, have discussions and submit assignments.

Asynchronous learning offers enormous possibilities by releasing education from the constraints of time as well as space. It makes possible education anywhere and at anytime. Online learning has created a major impact in the field of education. One of the major advantages is that it makes available more subjects for more students. There is a difference between synchronous and asynchronous learning; asynchronous learning is self paced but synchronous learning is instructor based. In the former method learner can decide the learning speed and in the latter method instructor takes the decision. Online learning community fulfils the need of its members through computer mediated communication. The members share ideas or knowledge in the form of audio, video or other internet supported media via synchronous or asynchronous way.

E- Learning is the use of electronic media in education. It includes multimedia learning, Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL), Computer Based Instruction (CBI), Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI), Internet Based Training (IBT), Web Based Training (WBT), Virtual Education, Mobile Learning and Digital Educational collaboration. One of the key advantages of e-learning is that it improved open access to education including full degree programs. The system is based on self learning and

there is provision of tools to enable students to solve problems independently. Moreover learners will acquire subject knowledge and technical skills simultaneously. Comparing to traditional education system, e-learning ensures equality for all students, despite disability, geographical location, social status or any other personal prejudices.

Blended Learning (BL) is a type of online learning and it combines face to face classroom learning with computer mediated activities to form an integrated instructional approach. The aim is to join the best aspects of both online and face to face learning. Students will be benefitted of two different teaching and learning experiences in BL. The components of BL may vary based on the content, needs of the learners and preferences of the instructor. Online tools are used to communicate, collaborate and extend classroom time. In the traditional education system teaching and learning were formal and fixed inside the classroom. Technology has developed immensely and pupils are familiar with gadgets and internet. This made easier to bring technology to the teaching process. BL is considered as a powerful tool for educational transformation and it has enhanced face to face learning by mixing with relevant ICT tools.

Education networking is the use of social networking sites for education purpose. The term educational networking overcomes the negative connotation associated with social networking. Generally instructors use social networking sites for personal interaction or to get connected with others rather than for teaching purpose. Those who are depending on these sites mostly use it to get videos or notes. The major constraint for using these sites is the concern about cheating or privacy. With the development of BL instructors and learners have started exploring the possibilities of social networking sites in teaching and learning process. Faculties

mainly use You Tube, Edu Tube.org and Teacher Tube.com to download videos on the relevant topic. Privacy and authenticity are major issues in social networking sites then also the number of users of social networking sites is increasing every day. This tendency can be utilised for learning purpose, especially for language learning. The contents offered in the sites are in English and communication skills in English will help to be an active user in social media.

Major objectives behind learning are to achieve a job or to accomplish knowledge. Online learning offers great opportunity for learners. It is important to explore all the possible mediums of communication and choosing the best one which suits well. Online learning has turned out to be more in practice and many universities have started sharing their courses in online. It offers an easy and comfortable method to acquire knowledge in almost all the fields. Online courses are real boon to people who cannot afford money or time to take real time courses. After getting job those who want to continue education also can opt for online courses as there is freedom to select study time. Thus they will be able to manage studies along with their career. In a real time classroom there may be bright and dull students and their learning speed will also differ. In online learning one can follow their own pace. “Students have the chance to study in their own time and especially for free. It represents a great way to study many fields and to boost the level of self-motivation” (Armstrong 13). Online schedules are more flexible; the learner does not have to spend a whole day for learning. When one gets familiar with the system can rearrange the schedules as per convenience.

Employing computer and internet for education helps to learn various technological skills necessary in the modern world. The development of technology has made it an indispensable part in every aspects of life. With the help of internet

students can get connected to native speakers of English and can learn language in real situations. Chat rooms and discussion forums create highly interactive atmosphere for learners. Collaboration and socialisation have a strong focus on interaction and degree of anonymity makes confident to communicate without fear or embarrassment. Mistakes are easy to correct in online interaction as there is opportunity for regular monitoring the learner. Teachers are supposed to adopt professional tactics while selecting training material. Along with this students have to be given instructions about procedure and the proper use of learning materials. By taking these measures online learning can be exercised as a complement to classroom teaching.

Online learning is a 'mobile' method as learning can undertake with the possibilities of laptops, tablets and mobile phones. All these gadgets provide mobility and learning is feasible even while travelling or during any other idle time. Online learning can be done wherever and whenever you have access to such a device. Compared to classroom studies it is cheaper as learner does not have to spend money on travelling or for trainer's time. In online classes the learner can spend additional time on study items which is not clear and can skim irrelevant areas. Online learning is fast growing and different apps or forums are available to reinforce learning and to improve interactivity. Companies can arrange training programmes in online to confirm that the same content is delivered to all the members irrespective of different locale. Moreover online mode helps to save organising time and reduces expenditure. Online programmes ensure methodology and materials at low cost.

Online education is more about learner's convenience and can be considered as learner centred approach. Instructor has the role of a mentor who envisages the learning programme. Though technology supports several aspects, it is difficult to

understand concept without prior training. In order to achieve efficient output certain strategies have to be followed; prior planning to enable well equipped ICT integrated classrooms and well trained teachers should be the initial priority. Planning of activities and exercises has to be completed before implementation. Arranging an orientation or training programme about ICT for teachers who are still practising chalk and talk method will motivate them to upgrade to latest techniques. Execution of contents with accurate planning and having regular follow up will make the session more successful. While upgrading any method there should be rigorous follow up programme and maintaining the continuity relentlessly helps to achieve the set objectives.

The trend of online education is growing rapidly and the advantages of online methods are plenty. Asserting the saying “every coin has two sides” online learning has disadvantages also. A classroom not only provides knowledge, it helps to build good social relation. Students learn to co-operate, adjust, mingle and share with others. As humans are social being, these qualities are essential to cooperate and survive in a society. In internet though one can interact with others still the atmosphere of a society is missing. Though internet provides thousands of information regarding a topic, a number of students find it difficult to select the right material as per the need. Students are familiar with general classroom situation and initially they may find it difficult to cope with the new ICT based atmosphere and a sudden shift can make the students feel uncomfortable. Unmotivated or students with poor study habits may fall behind as online education is mainly learner centred. Slow internet connection and unavailability of gadgets also hamper online learning. While considering the merits, the above mentioned difficulties are not greater and that is the reason for the widespread popularity of online education.

Online teaching cannot be considered as a substitute to classroom learning or one cannot proclaim it as the prime strategy for teaching. Including ICT will offer additional effectiveness to classroom learning environment and arouse novel atmosphere. Traditional classroom adopted teacher centred approach which embodied its own merits and demerits. Along with sharing knowledge, teachers can inculcate good values among students while evocative interaction. While introducing a topic teacher can adopt various innovative methods which will kindle interest among learners. Teachers can clarify and complement textual materials. “Classroom environments promote and stimulate a dynamic atmosphere known as collaborative learning. Collaborative learning translates into a type of learning in which the pairing or grouping of students is required to complete a task or to come to a specific outcome.” (Sheahan 23). Collaborative learning enhances critical thinking of students and enhances cooperation. Live discussions in classroom encourage students to think actively and to formulate opinions and suggestions instantly. Students in a classroom will be having different thinking pattern, this will help to understand another perspectives of the topic or issue.

Live classroom atmosphere helps to build good rapport with peer learners and teacher and students will appreciate the value of social relationship. Creating such kind of communal attitude is an essential aspect of education. Classroom environment helps to figure out how to resolve conflicts, work in a team and mingle with people coming from different backgrounds. All these virtues are essential to be successful in workplace. Moreover presentation skill will get improved by regular classroom activities. Traditional set up helps to develop organisational skills like students have to follow the school timings and obey rules of the institution. This kind of regulations will shape their character for future. A company or firm need moulded employees

who nurture productive relations. Along with professional life, in personal life also, different types of communication skills are inevitable. Classroom atmosphere offers a 'human-touch' which is often missing in technology based training. For those who do not have access to technological devices also depend on traditional method for learning. Direct access to instructor is an advantage in classroom where students may have an opportunity to clarify doubts without more ado.

Both traditional classroom and online learning have its own intrinsic worth. One cannot wrap up that one method is precise and another is erroneous. Experiments from the ancient period have proved that based on the needs, teachers have to adopt different strategies to teach a language. A single method will not cater the needs of all students as the learners may have different learning style and intelligence level. The instructor has to consider all students and should engage both intelligent and dreary students. While teaching, the instructor has to organise teaching contents by considering all types of students. BL is a teaching method which incorporates both traditional teaching and ICT based learning. The learners will get benefit of traditional and modern learning methods. The population of engineering students is the apt group to implement BL for language teaching as they are familiar with technology and in high demand to possess communication skills.

Approaches in English Language Teaching

Educationists or researchers cannot neglect the concept of approach as it gives correlative assumptions regarding teaching. In this experiment communicative approach has been followed which emphasises inter personal communication. The terms approach, method and technique are notable in the field of teaching and are often used interchangeably. An American Applied linguist Edward Anthony in 1963

defined these three terms. According to him, an approach is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning. Method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon, the selected approach. A technique is implementation which actually takes place in a classroom (Anthony 63). “Approach refers to theories about the nature of language and language learning that serves as the source of practices and principles in language.” (Richards and Rodgers 112). Mainly, three different theoretical views of language implicitly or explicitly form current approaches and methods in language teaching; structural view, functional view and interactional view. Structural view has the notion that language is a system of structurally related elements for the coding of meaning. As per functional view, language is a vehicle for the expression of functional meaning. Interactional view perceives language as a vehicle for the social transactions among individuals.

Structural view bestowed emphasis on structures rather than vocabulary and considered that mastery of the structures will make one competent in language. Structuralists focused on phonological and grammatical structures and practice of it. The structures were considered as basic items and frameworks of language. This approach has a number of connections with Direct method; both emphasised the structural pattern. Language items were described in terms of phonemic, morphemic and syntactic structures. Phonemic structures leading to morphemic and those lead to phrases, clauses and sentences. According to Sharada V. Bhatt, “selection of structure is made on four principles: usefulness, productivity, simplicity, and teachability”. She further adds that, “the structural approach distinguishes two types of structures, productive structures and other structures”. Structures with which other structures can be built are known as productive structures.

A language is best learnt in practice through situations and the situations can be genuine or artificial. There is connection between experience and expression as familiarity influences responses directly. Intensive practice of structures in corresponding situations will reinforce the content. This approach can be effective in lower levels but in higher levels it is difficult to implement where the circumstances may be much complicated. Another drawback is that, repeated drilling of structures will turn out to be boring. Moreover, this approach does not help to improve communicative competence but focuses on producing correct sentences. Well trained and dedicated teachers are essential to implement Structural approach successfully.

Oral approach or Situational Language Teaching was developed by British applied linguists of 1930s to 1960s. This approach is popularly known as S-O-S approach (Structural Oral Situational approach). The two famous leaders of this movement were Harold Palmer and A.S. Hornby. As per the general notion during that period vocabulary was one of the most important aspects of foreign language learning and augmented emphasis on reading skills as the goal of foreign language study. “Vocabulary was seen as an essential component of reading proficiency” (Richards 2010). This paved way for the development of principles for vocabulary control. The SOS approach involved principles of selection, gradation and presentation of linguistic items. Grammatical structures have to be presented in effective, meaningful situations, initially through speech and later through reading and writing. Oral approach need not be confused with Direct method though it exercised oral procedures, lacked a systematic basis in applied linguistic theory and practice.

Language was viewed as structurally related elements like phonemes, morphemes, words and phrases. Linguists of SOS approach believed that language exists in situation and not in vacuum. Presenting a language in situations will make it

easily comprehensible. The main characteristics of this approach are; language teaching begins with the spoken language and materials are presented orally before it is presented in written form. The target language is the medium of interaction in classroom. New language items are introduced and practiced situational. Vocabulary selection procedures are followed to ensure that general vocabulary items are covered. Grammatical items are taught using the principle that simple forms should taught first and then move to complex items. Reading and writing are introduced only after attaining mastery over grammatical items.

The objective of this method is to teach practical command over the four basic skills of language. The linguistic elements are advanced through structures. Accuracy in pronunciation and grammar is considered as crucial and errors have to be avoided. The techniques to practice consist of guided repetition and substitution activities. According to the level of class, procedures will be different to make it comprehensible. Irrespective of level difference it will move from controlled to free practice of structures and from oral use of sentence to their habitual use in speech, reading and writing. After 1975 the basics of this approach were questioned. The main allegations were; practice situation does not ensure to produce correct utterances in other contexts and it paid less attention to reading skill. The other charge was that, teachers needed lots of preparation to create situation and not to make it mechanical. In spite of all these charges this approach is widely acknowledged in countries where the syllabus is based on grammatical items.

Communicative approach focuses on communication aspects of language rather than grammar or vocabulary. This approach does not ignore the role of grammar but considers that learning grammatical rules are ineffective unless it is used in meaningful situations. According to this approach language performs certain

functions as apologising, promising, ordering, inviting and describing.

Communicative aspect focuses on the use of language on such functions in real life situations. It emphasises functional, communicative and social interactive activities.

In spite of the difference between communicative competence and linguistic competence, there is a logical relation between the two. To communicate fluently one has to acquire ease in language. “The top ten principles of CLT are communicative interaction, meaningful practice, active involvement, positive reinforcement, choice of suitable materials, changes of pace and activity, making the teaching process enjoyable, teaching English in English, realisation that mistakes are natural and that even beginners can understand when taught in the target language” (Verikaite 28). Language is a tool to communicate and both cannot be a separate entity.

Activities in communicative language teaching classroom involve realistic communication where the attention is on achieving communicative proficiency than on the accuracy of language. Such activities will be stimulation for students to interact. According to Harmer, students should focus on the content of what they are saying and writing rather than on a particular language form. Classroom activities have to be an attempt to replicate real communication. The teacher’s role is of a facilitator and not as a controller and they have to motivate students for active involvement. Dynamic participation can be made through different modes of interaction, changes of activity, change of pace, change of interaction and by offering positive reinforcement in varied ways. “The Communicative Language Teaching, having an aim to improve students’ ability to communicate, has been criticised for having eroded the explicit teaching of grammar with a consequent loss among students in accuracy in the pursuit of fluency” (Harmer, 89). Despite this criticism, communicative approach is followed all over the world as it considers primary

objective of language learning is to interact. Various approaches have shed new light to language teaching and linguists have been followed different approaches over the period.

Assignments included in the research gave special emphasis on communicative aspects. To improve speaking skill activities like debate, extempore, group discussion were included. Written assignments were integrated throughout the session to practice writing skill and enhance concept coordination. The students in the experimental group were clustered and added in online learning platform Moodle. Unrestricted practice on communicative approach was ensured for learners and communication among students and between instructor and learners were emphasised throughout the study.

Literature Review

Frequently updating the trends in language teaching helped to comprehend the current status of teaching and learning. Relevance of English language teaching and scope of blended method has been discussed by various academicians. To substantiate the idea several articles have been reviewed. “Writing Difficulties And New Solutions: Blended Learning As An Approach To Improve Writing Abilities” is an article written by Dana Adis and Ayda Bakir which was published in *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* Vol. 3 No. 9; May 2013. According to them a language cannot be taught by a teacher but they can create the best atmosphere to learn language. They substantiate their opinion by quoting the phrase “A good teacher teaches, a better teacher explains, and the best teacher inspires.” As per the authors’ point of view, lack of knowledge in English reflects not alone in communication but in other subjects also which demand written assignments or exams in English. In this juncture Adis and Bakir stress the need to find an innovative method to teach English, which will create more interest in students so that there will be active participation from the learner’s side. They suggest Blended learning as a tool to improve the writing skill in English and the experiment was carried out in Palestine.

Several academicians have discussed transformation happened in teaching methods over the ages. Tatiana Krasnova and Tatiana Sidorenko wrote an article titled “Blended Learning in Teaching Foreign Languages” and it was published in the International Conference on *ICT for Language Learning* 6th Edition. They make the view that traditional teaching methods are getting changed and the recent trend is to incorporate technology in teaching. Krasnova and Sidorensko observe that English is a tool for professional communication and those who crave for global exposure

should possess remarkable fluency in language. In their opinion, one of the main reasons for the lack of fluency is decreasing learning hours of language and they suggest self-learning as an alternative to minimise the problem. Self learning can be of two types; with the assistance of instructor and the second one learner educating himself. The learner can either depend on the online learning websites or the social networking sites. The experimenters suggest Moodle as the online platform and these sites offer various audio and video materials to provide visualisation of teaching materials. Computer-aided learning will never replace teacher- student interaction and they recommend technology based education as an add on to direct classroom learning. Current research concludes that the best results come from a blended learning method. Blended learning is time saving and provides convenience and flexibility of learning and it has a tremendous potential in teaching foreign languages as it offers an opportunity to integrate innovative and technological advances of online learning with interaction and participation of the best traditional practices.

Traditional teaching method has been compared and contrasted to technology based teaching by many educationists. In *Journal of Teaching and Learning with Technology*, Vol. 3, No. 2, December 2014, an article titled “English Language Teaching and Assessment in Blended Learning” written by Sejdi Sejdiu was published and the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of Blended method when compared to face to face learning. Case study method was the approach for the research and the experiment was carried out in higher secondary level. The students were taught the same content in different ways and the teaching material was designed by two teachers referring the curriculum. The teaching strategy included individual work, group work and feedback. After the instruction results show that the experimental group showed remarkable improvement in communication. The

researcher recommends that the teachers should be given proper training to handle classes using technology so that they can offer more interesting activities to students. Sejdiu winds up that both the methods are effective but blended method is more advantageous as it integrates both the methods.

Combining multiple teaching methods and evaluating its effectiveness in varied contexts is an area of interest for researchers. “Blended Learning In A Teacher Training Course: Integrated Interactive E-Learning And Contact Learning” is a paper written by Rita Kupetz and Birgit Ziegenmeyer from University of Hannover and their article was published in a journal titled *ReCALL17*. They examine the effectiveness of Blended learning in teacher training course. As per their opinion along with traditional methods like task based learning, project based learning and group activities, teacher trainees can be trained in multimedia based environments. According to them, Blended learning refers to the purposeful arrangement of traditional media and methods with e-learning elements and possibilities and the instructor blend the components based on the prerequisites of learners. Students were making use classroom studies, online and offline seminars, video recordings and assignments. Experts from inside and outside the campus instructed them and this provided a wide exposure. Researchers’ aim was to create a holistic concept for teacher training using a multimedia-based case story approach and a purposefully blended arrangement of activities and methods. At the end of their work they conclude that for successful implementation of Blended method in training demands active participation of learners.

Invention of technology has resulted in adding ICT to teaching and learning extensively. Zeynep Kocoglu, Yesim Ozek and Yesim Kesli from Yeditepe University wrote an article titled “Blended Learning: Investigating Its Potential in an

English Language Teacher Training Program” and it was published in *Australian Journal of Educational Technology*. This paper discusses the effectiveness of Blended method in teacher training programme when compare to face to face MA programme in English. During the research the investigators were collecting feedback from the population, in the beginning it was found that there was not much difference in content knowledge in Blended learning group and face to face group. Later when a questionnaire was given, some of the samples from the population expressed their interest in learning through Blended method as it offered more opportunity to interact. As per the researchers’ view, in Blended learning group, only those who had keen interest showed remarkable improvement and learner’s active participation is an unavoidable factor. They recommend blended course delivery method as an acceptable alternate to circulate information at a distance to provide with additional educational opportunities.

In spite of the teaching method and role of the instructor, sincere initiative has to be taken by learners for successful learning. In the article “Motivation and Attitudes towards Learning English: A Study of Petroleum Engineering Undergraduates at Hadhramout University of Sciences And Technology” Atef Al-Tamimi and Munir Shuib outline the motivation and attitude of the Petroleum engineering students in Yemen towards learning English. The paper was published in *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies* Volume 9(2) 2009. The study analysed students’ motivation in terms of three motivational constructs; instrumental motivation, integrative motivation and personal motivation. For the students’ motivation, the results showed the student’s greater support of instrumental reasons for learning English language including utilitarian and academic reasons. Personal reasons were also regarded as important motives by the students and regarding the

integrative reasons, the results provided evidence that learning English as a part of the culture of its people had the least impact in students' English language learning motivation. On the other hand, collected data revealed that most of the students had positive attitude towards the social value and educational status of English. Yemen is an Arabian country in which the first language is Arabic and English is not given much prominence, irrespective of this the wide acceptance of English language globally had created an interest to learn the language. The ample opportunities opened for those who have English fluency motivate people to learn the language.

Relevance of English fluency to acquire a job or for career growth is a topic for discussion in the present scenario. Mane Varsharani Shamrao highlights the importance English communication for engineering students through her research paper titled "Importance of English Communication for Engineering Students from Rural Areas and Its Remedies" and it was published in *IOSR Journal of Mechanical and Civil Engineering*. In this paper she analyses the problems of students from rural areas; they lack fluency in English and she recommends various activities like role play, group discussion, language lab session and seminar to improve language competency. It is observed that English is the language of international business, education, technology, industry and many other fields and to be competent, aspirants should learn English. Students from rural areas have intelligence but they lack confidence in communicating in English language. Inadequate opportunities to communicate in English are the main reason for their inability to interact and Shamrao says that training through integrating different methods will enable them to acquire competency. She adds that English proficiency will open a wide world both in education and in career.

In engineering field, updating the recent trend is a necessary factor for career development. Major research journals are published in English and to imbibe information from these, proficiency in English is mandatory. K. Latha, Assistant Professor of English opinions that learning English language is important for engineering students not only in their scholastic life but in their career also. Her article “Role of English Language for Engineering Students” was published in *American International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*. She says that English is a medium which assures employability. As the engineering student’s main aim is to get a job in renowned firm, along with subject knowledge good communication skill is also important. Moreover English helps to build relationships globally which is essential in professional and marketing sector. The author adds that through activities and by practice students can improve communication skill.

In written communication, writer has to be careful as words are documented and can be retained for future purpose. C. Indira and Meenakshisundaram, through their paper “Engineering Student and The English Language: A Fresh Look at Remediation” analyse the remediation required for engineering students with reference to writing skill in English. They point out that an engineer in multinational companies has to communicate with counterparts in all over the world and in that context English will be the medium of communication. According to them the English syllabus for engineering students should give focus to both accuracy and fluency. They suggest that students should learn basic grammar as it will help to communicate without error. Understanding the needs of learners is also very important, based on that different strategies can be adopted to teach language. Collecting regular feedback will help to identify the progress of learning process.

Prior to implementing a novel teaching method instructor has to analyse the difficulties and needs of learners. “A study of needs, problems and wants of using English of Engineering students at Quaid-e-Awam university of Engineering, Science and Technology, Pakistan” is a review study which investigates the needs of English for engineering students and the problems they face while using this language. The study was carried out by Mansoor Ahmed Channa, Songsri Soranastaporn, Karan Supamas Engchuan and Yuwadee Tirataradol and the article was published in *Journal of Education and Practice*. They analyse the problems of engineering students while communicating in English during academic and professional environment. Authors extend their view that English for Specific Purpose (ESP) has to be included in the curriculum, so that students have more exposure to communicate; instead of just teaching English language students should get opportunities to interact.

Analysing previous researches help to understand possible challenges while carrying out a new study. In the article “The Model of Blended Learning and Its Use at Foreign Language Teaching” A. A. Kudysheva, and A. N. Kudyshev consider the model of Blended learning and its use in English language teaching and problems arise while its implementation. They observe that in many European countries technology is being incorporated in teaching and learning. Blended learning offers more freedom to learners as they can fix the study according to their convenience and one can attend classes wherever the internet facility is available. The problems are; teachers must be competent to use computer and learners should take individual effort to learn. The researchers say that Blended method is effective when it is implemented with at most care. As the learners have ultimate freedom, they will be able to analyse study materials and to make selections.

Each method has its own merits and demerits and the instructor has to choose one method based on the needs of the learners and the situation. Jessie Gleason through his work “Dilemmas of Blended Language Learning: Learner and Teacher Experiences” analyses the problems of Blended learning when compared to face to face to learning. The researcher implemented Blended method in different ways; in one method two days of face to face teaching and third day online learning and in the second method three days of face to face learning and fourth day online learning. In these two methods experimented, it was found that both the methods have advantages and disadvantages; online learning helped to save time and provided freedom to schedule study time while face to face learning resulted in building relationships and interaction among peer group. Gleason adds that for students who are introvert, online communication will be effective as they feel comfortable in their own personal surroundings.

Reading newspaper articles throws light on the recent trends and educationists peep into it with enthusiasm. “For an engineer and engineering student, English language frequency is important both in studies and career. Engineering is one of the largest fields of study and many of the works of research and academics are recorded in English” says Vidyasree in her article which was published in “The Hindu” (May 26, 2012). English is a bridge language in business, technology and research as it helps to gather information from all over the world. Most of the renowned journals are publishing articles in English and to refer these we need proficiency over English language. Writing report is an unavoidable task in engineering profession and this has to be done in English in almost every profession. She adds that, to be successful in any field one has to communicate and understand effectively. Moreover English helps to build relationships globally. In today’s world employers prefer candidates with

proficiency in English as good communication is an asset for the firm. This article highlights the relevance of English language and inspires the young talents to acquire proficiency and good communication skills.

Introduction of technology has upgraded education field to a great extent. Richard Caladine analyses the growth of communication technologies and how it will affect the later generation through his essay “The Future of Real Time Communications Technologies in E- Learning” (91). He cites videoconference as the best example for real time communication. He uses the abbreviation RTC to denote Real Time Communication and it includes videoconference, videoconference plus Virtual Networking Computing (VNC), Access Grid and video chat. To analyse the future these systems he has been done a comparison of them within the context of e-learning and distance education within a three to five year time frame. For this comparison he considered factors like participants, content, learning objectives and the infrastructure. In institutions video conference can be arranged with subject experts from other colleges or even other countries. This will provide different perspectives about the topic. Integrating videoconference and VNC may be more beneficial. VNC is a remote display system that allows a computer desktop system that allows a computer desktop to be viewed by other computers. This will be helpful while teaching subject like mathematics where there needs high demand of student participation. Other than video chat Caladine discusses about web based video chat applications like Skype, MSN Messenger, iChat AV and Windows Live. All these applications became popular because of the easiness to handle and possibility of instant chat. He concludes that in future institutions and organisations may use a mixture of technologies that will facilitate easy interactions and maintain sustainable level of cost, support and implementation. This article can be considered as a

reference material for educationists who want to examine the effects of real time communication technologies.

Possibilities of ICT in teaching and learning have been discussed by various educationists and researchers. Bridget Somekh in his article “Understanding Innovation” examines how ICT can be incorporated in informal learning or learning at home and in assessment. Most of the researches have discussed the possibilities communication technology in schools or other educational institutions. Author points out that young people prefer to use computer and internet at home and they find it more convenient than using at institutions as restrictions will be less in the previous one. This trend can be used for learning. According to Somekh “A key difference between using ICT at home and at school is between informal and formal learning”. Nature and quality of learning at informal setting is under doubt. In school computer use will be more planned to support prescribed curriculum and as there will be monitoring of the instructor chance of distraction will be less. Though informal learning is possible lots of attention and focus has to be there while choosing. In traditional methods of assessment and evaluation human emotions are also considered and it is not mechanical. Introducing technology in assessment will make the process mechanical. Author cites different examples for including the potentialities of technology and he warns that there should be strict control over accessing and using ICT to support the established system or while innovating something new.

A single teaching method cannot be considered as the ultimate learning scheme for any subject. With this assumption blended method has received wide acknowledgement in which two or more different methods are combined together. “Support Structures for Blended E-learning” is an essay written by Allison Littlejohn and Chris Pegler which explains how additional features can be used to assist blended

system. In blended learning where the components are face to face and online learning the service of instructors and mentors are extended. Support for students can be academic or non-academic. Academic includes study preparation, tutorial support, courses office which may be distribution of handouts or preparation of timetables, technical support and academic support like assessment and preparation of transcripts. Non-academic support includes financial advice on how to apply for grants, debt or loan, course and career advice, accommodation and welfare, social, culture and religious support. Counselling required for a student at the beginning in campus and one who is preparing for online learning is different. Locating a book in library and finding a material in internet is not a similar process. A well prepared student to join on campus may be unprepared to be an e-learner. In such situations learners need advice and support from the experts. Nowadays every institution has its own website. Apart from direct counselling, support can be provided through institutional or departmental course website. Large number of students from diverse backgrounds can be benefitted through this facility. Instructors who create and design blended course can handle technical helpdesk which will be very useful for those who want to experiment with similar learning style. Libraries have changed their role from a collection of books to a reference centre which incorporates technology and internet widely. Library staff can arrange discussion forums and searching tool to assist reference purpose. Online peer support also plays an important role in e-learning. The book has covered vast areas of blended e-learning and suggests different possibilities to enhance e-learning.

Several studies have been conducted regarding English language teaching for engineering students and they are guidelines for fresh researchers. “Teaching technical and business communication and technology assisted language learning are

areas that should be taken up on a priority basis while learning English for specific purpose” (Sasidharan 103). The research was carried out in several engineering students belonging to different semesters at Orissa to teach English language for specific purpose. After continuous interaction with learners and instructors the investigator could find that in the present scenario engineering students should acquire fluency in English and regular interactive sessions should be arranged for this. During the experiment it is found that, students who qualified secondary examinations in English medium also lacked proficiency to communicate in English as they did not have real exposure so far. So in engineering curriculum students should be trained to interact in real life situations that will be helpful for them. Teachers also have to be prepared to teach using recent technologies and innovative teaching methods. Both learners and teachers should involve in more interactive sessions to improve communicative competence. Additionally, teaching technical and business communication and technology assisted language learning are areas that should be taken up on a priority basis while learning English for engineering purposes.

In certain countries like Pakistan regional language alone was important and English education got prominence only during the last few years. After conducting a thorough research, Habibullah Pathan asserts this view. The reason behind this thought is that, good communication skill in English offers wide career opportunities and higher education in renowned universities. Though the country is occupied with conservative Muslims and their first language is Persian, nowadays they too are learning English; especially students who seek admission for professional courses. English became popular in India after colonisation. Britishers taught English to have communication between rulers and people and slowly the invader’s language got popularity throughout the country. Earlier Pakistanis were reluctant to accept English

as British claimed to occupy the country by toppling the Muslim government. Certain reformers showed interest to teach English in Pakistan and after independence this language became indispensable. At the start of English language course students did not show much interest, but after completion they could feel the improvement. More than teacher centred method, learner centred method was found effective. It can be concluded that proper method and interest are the factors which resulted in the improvement of English language competency and inclusion activities is an add on to language teaching.

In The University of Melbourne a study was commissioned on “The impact of English language proficiency and workplace readiness on the employment outcomes of tertiary international students”. The study was carried out in Australia and the investigators analysed both natives and students from other countries. They came to the conclusion that employers give importance to subject knowledge and other personal skills while interview. The candidate’s communication skill is also measured along with personality. Employer’s initial priority is on employee’s professional skill, but when there is high competition they consider other attributes like attitude, experience and communication skills. The researchers observe that for migrants, acquiring English language proficiency is essential as there will be demand of English language when they try for a job. Majority of the interviewees agreed that English language proficiency is a key factor to get job in their desired field and they felt that communication skill is essential in the job interview, as in future they have to interact with multi lingual co-workers and clients.

English language teaching is a broad area and has several branches like TESOL, TESR and ESP. “With the globalization of trade and economic, the expansion of scientific and technical activities in international scale and the

continuing increase of international communication in various fields, the demand of English is growing, especially, in countries where English is taught as a Foreign Language” (Kadi). The requirements have resulted in one aspect of English language learning; English for Specific Purpose (ESP). Instructors are enquiring why the student wants to learn English or what is the purpose behind learning this language? In this approach any ESP course should formulate predetermined objectives based on the needs of students and the instructor’s aim is to meet the requirements. The study was carried out in the department of petroleum engineering in Kasdi Merbah University of Ouargla. The students were taught general English and they lacked fluency one or the any other four communication skills. The researcher feels that instead general English, ESP will be more advantageous for students as each will be in need of different training.

Subject knowledge and communication skill is not directly proportionate for many people. “A number of technically-sound students have not been successful in job interviews just because of their lack of communication skills and there are cases of rank holder in engineering studies who could not go for higher studies to the United States and other English-speaking countries because of their lack of proficiency in English” (P’Rayan). The researcher asserts the need to teach Engineering English to students, as those who even know the basics of the language fail to express effectively in professional situations sometimes. More than knowing the grammar rules, it will be helpful to train the engineering students to face the real situations. The investigator formed an experimental group and followed skill based learning. He gave importance to each communication skills, and assigned them different activities like group discussion and oral presentation to enhance linguistic skills. Students found it very useful and effective. The researcher points out

that English should be taught as a life skill; which will enable the students in living to be productive and successful.

Several academicians have attempted to trace the history of English language teaching. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* is a landmark book by Jack C. Richards and Theodore S. Rodgers. They outline the evolution of English language teaching methods and approaches prevalent from the ancestral period. According to them "... a teaching method or approach by which we refer to a set of core teaching and learning principles together with a body of classroom practices that are derived from them." A descriptive framework is used to highlight the similarities and differences between approaches and methods. They have presented a comprehensive picture of major and minor approaches and methods prevalent over time and it helps to get awareness about trends in ELT. After analysing several methods, Richards and Rodgers suggest that a single method will not be the ultimate solution for teaching a language as each method has its own merits and drawbacks.

Apart from Richards and Rodgers, other linguists like Debra also advocated for collaborating different teaching methods. "A range of methods and approaches are often used to introduce new language, and a variety of classroom management techniques are employed to maximize practice opportunities. In short, there is no one way to learn a language, just as there is no one way to teach it" says Marsh Debra in his book *Blended Learning Creating Learning Opportunities for Language Learners*. The author tries to assert that, unknowingly or with a conscious effort, both instructor and learner adopt different methods to imbibe a new language and technically this can be termed as blended method. With the advent of technology, recent communication devices also play a major role in blending. In the traditional methods teachers used to mix varieties of activities within the classroom itself. But nowadays, we can depend

on TV, Internet or other telecommunication methods to learn a new data. Here, instructor's role is to enable the students for self learning and to moderate their activities both online and offline. While blending different methods, students' needs should be given priority and both instructor and learner must undergo self analysis regularly.

British Council is a true guide to language learners and trainers and it always comes up with innovative ideas and training programmes. *Blended Learning in English Language Teaching: Course, Design and Implementation* is a book edited by Brian Tomlinson and Claire Whittaker and published by British Council. The book analyses various aspects of Blended method and its effectiveness in English language teaching. Claire has implemented blended method in one of her teaching projects and she found it effective for teaching and learning. "There are a number of areas of a blend that can be evaluated such as the choice of software and materials, the balance of time spend in each mode, the learners and teachers/tutors' attitudes towards the blend, and its effectiveness in terms of teaching and learning." (Krake 2013). Editors have accumulated opinions about this from different linguists and thus the present book offers a wide outlook on blended method.

English language became prevalent in India as an aftermath of colonisation. In *Teaching English: Approaches, Methods and Techniques* N. Krishnaswamy and Lalitha Krishnaswamy observe that "English has become an international commodity like oil and microchip." They highlight the relevance of English; "English has become a global language and its use is not restricted to one country or continent. It is used in all the five continents of the world." The book traces the background of English in India and different methods experimented in English language teaching over the ages. It also gives a detailed description of how to teach prose, poetry and grammar. This

book can be used as a handbook for language teachers. Authors talk about the relevance of different education committees formed in the history of teaching. They stress that English language competency is essential in all professions as the world is becoming a global market. The four communication skills should be given equal importance as all are interconnected and correspond to each other. The book suggests many exercises to improve the communication skills.

Role of ICT in the field of education is an area of interest for researchers and several studies have done over the years. *Pedagogy and Learning with ICT: Researching the art of Innovation* is a book written by Bridget Somekh and it discusses issues like different prospects of information technology in education and what are the challenges and how to overcome the hazards. The book analyses the role of technology in social interaction also. Author points out Vygotsky's theory that learning best happens in social context especially during interaction with each other. Information and communication technology has developed the scope and possibilities of interaction. Internet is the common medium used to connect people and it not only enhances interaction but make possible easy sharing of text, video or audio files. Image management, calculation, knowledge management and in many other both teachers and students are depending on technology. ICT based syllabus are being framed in many institutions. According to Somekh, in classrooms ICT should encompass various pedagogies rather than one, but until all students have their own portable digital gadgets and internet connection whenever they need, its use for learning is inevitably constrained. Other than this, technical problems and difficulty in preparing materials and such kinds of issues also will affect ICT based learning negatively. To analyse different areas author sites examples and various case studies to validate arguments.

Synchronous communication is a type of online communication in which instructor and learner have direct contact. Richard Caladine in his book *Enhancing E-Learning with Media Rich Content and Interactions* explains the possibilities of video conference and other media based technologies which help learning. He views that videoconference can be best used as an interactive technology in learning. In two way communication model video conferencing is a best tool as it makes possible interaction between learners and interaction between learner and instructor. All the participants will be connected to the videoconference at the same time and it is a synchronous technology. Synchronous is an internet based communication in which sender and receiver have direct and real time contact, the other type is asynchronous in which direct contact will be lacking. Along with advantages, Caladine discusses some drawbacks of video conference; it is quite different from face to face interaction, the audio and video signals need to be compressed and this compression may make the picture slightly out of focus or grainy. Fast movements may result jerky picture and this rough motion sometimes referred to as 'stutter vision'. A video conference can never compare to watching television as there are several limitations. The author suggests that before considering video conference as teaching tool, one has to do several preparations; a variety of activities and inputs like document camera, student and presenter cameras, video sources, and a computer need to be included. With such preparation one can exploit the possibilities of video conferencing in an effective manner.

Effects of ICT can be seen in many fields and in education it is evident in an extended manner. Dr. S. Arulsamy and Dr. P. Sivakumar through their book *Application of ICT in Education* trace out, how ICT can be applied at different levels of education. Areas like online learning, e-journals and advantages and disadvantages

of virtual campus have been discussed in detail. They view web based learning or online learning as an advancement in education which make use of the possibilities of computers, interactive multimedia and internet. This facility has been best utilised in distance learning. With the connectivity of internet and new generation software applications, distance education has evolved to a new model. Authors consider virtual campus as an example for the electronic teaching and learning. It makes possible both real time interaction with each other and access to reference materials which can be used for teaching, research and professional meetings. In the virtual campus community network the learner can talk to other learners or professionals of similar field. In addition to advantages, the effect information technology in human psychology also been interrogated. Internet and similar technology has caused IAD (Internet Addiction Disorder) and cyber crimes. Hacking internet accounts has also become a serious issue nowadays. Writers have incorporated information regarding the psychological aspects of using technology in education and what all measures have to be taken care of. This book can be considered as a reference material for those who want to evaluate the perspectives of ICT and how it has influenced the learning process.

Employing technology in learning is for different purposes like information gathering, storing and sharing. The book written by Dr. Anjali Khirwadkar and Dr. K. Pushpanandham titled *Information and Communication Technology in Education- Interactive Multi-media Instructional Strategies for Learning Process* traces out aspects of ICT and its instructional strategies. According to them ICT play a major role in enhancing education as it offers decentralisation, school based management and learner centred education. ICT makes possible new learning model that change the role of teachers and students. Authors suggest that educational institutions need to

carry out pilot study to check feasibility before shifting to ICT based learning style and necessary modifications have to be made to overcome the shortcomings. Online communities are viewed as an effective platform, one who has an e-mail id and internet connection can be member of such communities. A classification based on function has been made; audio and video conferencing can be for gathering information, technologies such as spreadsheets, databases, word processors to process information, publishing software, drawing programmes, and photo editing to publish information. ICT can be a tool in distance learning and individualised learning. Popularity of World Wide Web has received greater attention because of its communication framework and facilities for representing, storing, exchanging, searching and accessing information. Many studies have been carried out in the field of ICT and its significant contributions in various fields. From the results it is evident that ICT can deliver information much faster and has changed teaching and learning over the years. As per this book technology and ICT based tools are useful in the field of education if implemented with testing and proper planning. Components, needs, utility and situation have to be considered while designing ICT based instruction.

Blended learning has received wide acceptance over the last few years. Incorporating ICT and traditional teaching in a single method is one of the major reasons for this recognition. Allison Littlejohn and Chris Pegler in their book *Preparing for Blended E-Learning* discusses issues like what is blended method and how to make the finest blend and the factors to be considered while implementation. They suggest that the instructor has to take care of certain measures like assumption about the outcome or result of blending, what motivates to blend, what is the expectation of students and situation. They observe that not only teachers, students also indulge in blended method. While having a group discussion or interaction they

may use instant messaging to have privacy. Teachers cannot be so casual and have to give priority to curriculum whenever they are experimenting a method. According to them factors affecting blending are purpose of learning, context of learning and approaches to teaching and learning. Learning as behaviour, learning as understanding concepts, learning as knowledge construction and learning as social practice are some approaches in teaching. Allison and Pegler say “we ‘blend’ different combinations of these teaching approaches. Then we integrate different media, e-tools, and so on”. It is very important and necessary to document all the procedures and intentions of blending. This book gives a clear picture about the different concepts of blending and to manage it effectively.

AICTE is the council for technical education and it focuses on to upgrade and evaluates technical education system. “For Blended Learning” was an article published in the website. It defines blended learning as the “mixing of different learning environments” and views that it offers learners and teachers a potential environment to learn and teach more effectively. They also observe that cross analysis of competences at stake, the nature and location of the audience, and the resources available are the three essential parameters according to which the researcher has to decide whether teaching has to be done through face to face mode or via online interaction or blended learning. The article suggests an example of English language teaching using blended method; all the audio based activities like listening comprehension and oral expression will take place in the classroom and all the text based activities like reading comprehension and essays writing through online. The article discusses about all the relevant areas of blended learning in an explicit way.

UNESCO, the agency which supports education affairs in all the countries belong to UN had supported the University of Djibouti in establishing teacher

training course based on ICT. The course was based on the UNESCO Competency Framework for teachers and would permit them to integrate ICT in their teaching and learning practices. To establish this scheme they conducted a workshop for teachers in association with African Virtual University to finalise the course and make a plan for its role in the 2016-17 academic year. This venture proves that ICT based learning is internationally accepted and it is practicing in more and more institutions day by day.

Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD) is a central government agency and UGC is one of the governing bodies under it. Both UGC and MHRD run and manage several educational programmes. The Consortium of Educational Communication (CEC) is a scheme of UGC and it addresses education through the medium of TV and ICT. It started countrywide educational programmes in the year 1984. Realising the potential and power of broadcasting media such TV and ICT based tools CEC started several media centres in various universities and a nodal agency to coordinate these centres. Production of educational programmes (audio, video or web based) and promoting research activities to increase the effectiveness of educational communication are the primary concern of CEC. This mission shows the relevance of technology in the current education system as a government agency has taken the initiative to inculcate technology based learning style.

Analysis of various articles, dissertations, websites and books highlighted the significance of English language teaching for engineering students and scope of Blended method . The possibilities of technology in education also became evident. The analysed materials illustrated the wide scope of technology in English language teaching. The effect social media as a widespread information sharing platform has also been discussed. The population of engineering students has high relevance as

majority of the students opt engineering after completing higher secondary education. Different articles have showed the importance of acquiring English language competency for engineering students and the advantages of possessing better communication skills. Assessment of many language teaching methods has proved that a single method is not adequate to teach language and different strategies have to be followed according to the situation. Thus the researcher came to the conclusion that using blended method in the present study is relevant as it is a combination of face to face learning and online learning.

Social Relevance

The present research is to enhance the communication skills of engineering students by adopting Blended method and help them to achieve their career goals and be successful in professional and personal lives. Lack of linguistic fluency and inability to express ideas clearly may become hindrances while expressing knowledge or interacting with others. Improving communication skills help the candidates to perform in a better manner during interviews and afterwards to maintain good relationship with colleagues and higher officials. Engineering is one of the most preferred courses for higher education and linguistic skills aid to pursue career in worldwide level. For career augmentation and healthy association, effective communication is an inexplicit factor. Thus the topic has high relevance in current social scenario.

The statement of the problem

Evaluating the effectiveness of blended method to develop the communication skills of engineering students.

Objectives

Major Objectives

- To study the effectiveness of blended method to improve the language skills of engineering students.
- To encourage the learners to adopt the recent techniques to improve communication skills.

Minor Objectives

- To identify communication ability of engineering students.
- To understand the attitude of learners and instructors towards the relevance of improving communication skills.
- To identify the instructional strategies followed in Humanities and Communication classes.
- To analyse the language learning problems encountered by students.
- To improve awareness regarding various online language learning platforms.
- To encourage learners to use technology assisted learning methods.
- To compare the effect of traditional method and blended method in language teaching for engineering students.

Hypotheses

- There is a significant relation between enhanced language competency of the selected population and blended teaching method.
- There is significant difference in the calculated value of the experimental group between pre-test and post-test.

- There is significant difference in following traditional method and blended method for language teaching.
- There is no significant difference in the calculated value of controlled group between pre test and post test.
- There is significant relation between the communication ability of the learner and external factors like institution, instructor and learning atmosphere.

Delimitations of the study

The study is delimited with regard to samples, method, period of experiment and variables. The sample size is limited to 50 as it is the average strength of the class and the MOODLE website group capacity is up to 50. Considering the common traits of engineering students, included them as a representative group in the research. The population comprised of students from different engineering colleges and increasing the number of learners had practical difficulties. Considering the method, blended method incorporated as a combination of online teaching and direct classroom teaching and excluded other prevalent teaching possibilities. Regarding the variable, the dependent variables are language proficiency and communication skills and independent variables are online learning platforms, websites like Moodle and Wordpress and classroom activities. The kind of standardised tests adopted in this study are T test and frequency table.

Population

The selected population for the research was first year engineering students from various institutions and of different branches. The first year students were preferred as they had tutorial hours for remedial teaching and it will be convenient to conduct classroom activities during that time. Three types of management systems are

existing in engineering colleges; government, aided and self financing. Students under these three categories have been included in the study. The general assumption is that in govt. colleges students may be meritorious and their communication level will be high. During intervention it was evident that communication skills and academic merit may not be proportional all the time. Considering this aspect, students from govt., aided and self financing colleges are included in the experimental group. Students who already possessed remarkable language fluency were included in the research to analyse that, how to modify their skill and make them competent to have excellent profession and those who were familiar only with the basics of effective communication strategy were considered to revise, how to enhance their communication skills and make them capable to achieve professional goals. Sample group comprised of students from Palakkad, Thrissur, Malappuaram and Kozhikode districts. Initially the researcher met 250 students and from that 50 students were selected to form the experimental group. The researcher got prior permission from the authority in all the institutions. The photographs and data collected during survey were used only for research purpose and followed the regulations established by the institutions.

Inclusion criteria of the sample group

- Engineering students of first year.
- Students who have genuine interest to improve communication skills.
- Students who can avail internet connection.
- Students familiar with online interaction and social media.
- Students with basic knowledge in English language and communication skills.

Exclusion criteria of the sample group

- Students with learning difficulties.
- Students who are not familiar with technology and cannot avail internet.

Distribution of the sample

Table 1.1

College	Frequency
Aided	10
Government	20
Self financing	20
Total	50

Relevance of English Language Learning for Engineering students

Multinational companies and Information Technology firms recruit candidates who have good communication skills and proficiency in English. In this scenario, English competency has become one of the employability skills. Recent surveys conducted by various IT companies show that communication skill among engineering students is very poor in India. In an article published in *The Hindu* R. Rajaram, HR head says, “The worse of it often comes out in mails - the most important medium of communication in corporate offices”. He explains, “They write incomplete sentences; their punctuation is non-existent and grammar very poor. This is why most companies have readymade templates with sentences, and employees just have to choose what they have to say.” From this statement it is evident that, those who managed to get a job also fail to interact properly in English. Many of the

students know the technical concepts clearly, but they fail to express it during interview, as they are not confident about communicating in English. One of the major reasons for this situation is the wide gap between what the students need and what is taught at the tertiary level. It will not be practically possible to teach grammar and usages at college level, instead of that students can be given tips to improve vocabulary and communication skills instantly. Initiating the habit of self learning also may be useful.

Globalisation brought technical communication to the forefront and professionals are facing new challenges in interaction. In this competitive environment success not only depends on acquiring knowledge and technical skills but on effective interaction also. Everyone has to promote their product or service successfully in the market and effective connections is the key factor in the competition. English builds confidence and enables one to compete in the global market. It has become the language of industry, science and technology around the world. People from different parts of the world widely use English and it has gained the status of lingua franca of the world. Kavitha Kishore in her article “Know Your English” published in *The Hindu* highlights the importance of communication skills in the present scenario. Communication is the central part of all activities and without communicating one cannot convey their ideas to others. Engineering is a profession which needs lots of clarity of ideas, as innovative thoughts are seeds of creation. The requirements, needs, orders and relevance have to be communicated among the team members and with higher officials. In this scenario, an engineer has to master the art of communication.

Many of the engineering graduates are unable to comprehend official reports even when the information is stated explicitly. The major problem is the lack of using

English in colleges though this language is the medium of instruction prescribed. In rural areas, classes are mostly conducted in translation method, the text books or other reference material will be in English and the instructor will translate concepts and explain in regional language. Sometimes the ideas are well understood by learners if explained in regional language and this notion tends to minimise the use of English while taking classes. The number of engineering graduates is getting increased every year, but the index of employability is not increasing when compared to the passing rate. The institutions arranging campus interviews acknowledge that, a number of the candidates get disqualified during personal interview because of their inability to express ideas clearly. Companies consider communication skill essential as employees have to deal with international clients. Even among the inter-state workers English is the medium for communication. English acts a linking factor in many contexts. Considering this aspect companies conduct frequent training sessions to improve the communication competency of their employees.

To become a global engineer multilingual skills are considered as a salient feature. English for Specific Purpose (ESP) focuses on particular terminology which needs for different professions. Engineering communication skill primarily consists of fluency in English language and fundamentals of visual communication. Lack of communication skill undermines the whole profile of a professional engineer. Globalisation has influenced industrial needs and a global engineer should easily cross national and international boundaries. As a result of globalisation, the number of international projects and cross cultural collaboration are increasing, to compete in this situation, one has to speak fluently. English is used as a medium of communication globally; to converse with British and when two non native English people interact, the same language mediates. Realising the need of English

proficiency for engineers, some international universities have already started programmes like English for Specific Purpose in Engineering Education.

The concept of team work is emphasised and it is one of the major premises of working environment in many industries. This notion stresses the need of team spirit and to proceed with joining hands collaboratively. Organisations have changed master-servant relationship to partnership rapport. Everyone has to offer individual views clearly to the team to avoid confusion. Clarity in thought and expression is vital in this circumstance and it demands tremendous communication fluency. While working as part of a team, each one has to respect other's emotions at the same time has to be in tune with one's own senses. Without hurting pride, convincing someone is a tedious task. You have to encourage and appreciate others to get back their best. Industries have realised the importance of communication and prefer employees with excellent communication skill. As English is the accepted global language, companies prefer those who have fluency in English along with subject knowledge. For a professional, regular meeting, e-mails, reports are certain areas which demand good communication skills.

Academicians like William Bentinck (English Education Act 1835) and Thomas Macaulay (Minute on Education) have an opinion that English education in India needs to be advanced in several areas. Instructions in vernacular medium will restrict the career opportunities of the learners. English is the medium of communication accepted all over the world and the aim of the instructors has to be to prepare the learners for global competitiveness. Attitude of learners towards communication, lack of teaching content and inappropriate teaching methods are the major reasons for insufficient fluency in English. Moreover, students are not getting enough opportunities to practice communication skills in engineering curriculum.

In engineering colleges communication skills are not given much importance; their primary aim is to learn the scientific and technical concepts. The post of Communication skills instructor does not exist in government or aided engineering colleges. Only a few private and self financing colleges appoint communication teachers. In schools learners are taught grammar and are asked to memorise the different rules of language usage. The outcome this method is that, students know the rules but are ignorant of using it in appropriate situations. In colleges they are not getting ample opportunity to communicate in English. Instructors can take an initiative to arrange real life situations to interact within the classroom itself. This will boost the learners' confidence to use English. Rather than merely teaching language, teachers have to make the learners to compete in the job market. English language teaching has to be based on the principles of globalism and an innovative approach which focuses on creativity, critical thinking, group communication and inter personal skills has to adopted.

Lack of learning hours can be compensated with self learning, but to be effective, this process should be organised and methodologically supported by tutors and teaching tools. In this scenario one can depend on Blended Learning (BL), which makes use of both technology based online learning and traditional classroom teaching. In Blended method we can explore the possibilities of both the methods. Broadly the stages involved in BL can be denoted as; 1. Direct face to face to learning as in classroom 2. Online learning without the assistance of instructor (learner searching information and learning on their own) 3. Online learning with the assistance of instructor (doing online courses and interacting in discussion forums). Teaching and learning hours can be extended through this innovative method. For proper result the instructor can guide the learners using online platforms. When

compare to previous methods experimented by various educationists, advantages of blended method are availability of materials at one place and easy monitoring; the notes assignments, worksheets and schedules are well organised in every online learning website and students can analyse their own scores for self assessment.

Engineering students have to see the broader setting of the corporate world and should realise the importance of acquiring communications skills, or else it will be a hindrance to achieve higher career goals. Oral and written communication skills are necessary for professionals. To become effective speaker or writer, one has to listen and read carefully. In short, all the four communication skills are equally important and inter related. Technical communication can be explained as a transmission technical information or scientific data from one source to another. Requirements for effective technical communication are; subject knowledge, linguistic competence and organisational aptitude. Solid information and appropriate vocabulary along with logical presentation will help to convey the message clearly and objectively. Technical communication involves presentation of technical data in reports, proposals, manuals and journals. This needs linguistic competence and several types of functional skills.

Development of Information Technology has influenced the way of communication and everyone prefers fast and result oriented modes of communication. E-mail, video conferencing, and tele -conferencing have replaced the traditional forms of contact such as letter, memos and notices. Whether working as a scientist, engineer, or laboratory assistant, one has to be effective in communicator to be successful in the respective profession. In the diverse, competitive, result oriented world, communication is playing a key role in economic growth and transformation. The ability to understand and explain complex information in a simple and familiar

style and ability to analyse and prioritise information is helpful to be successful in communication. Technical and professional skills will be useless if one does not know to communicate and elicit result from the application of these skills. Considering the scenario of the corporate world, every student should take initiative to develop communication skills.

To create an insight about the relevance of learning English, training sessions for teachers and mock interviews for students were arranged while implementing the research. The tendency of concentrating only on core subjects has been discouraged. Along with technical subjects, communication skills also should be given importance. Most importantly teachers have to make the learners realise about their future language needs. Secondary reading and allotting library hours may encourage the reading habit of students. Many engineering colleges have implemented language laboratories to enhance speaking skill. In engineering curriculum, language course has to be included focussing on the four communication skills. The instructor encouraged web based learning and learner autonomy. Teaching has been modified based on the target needs. Adopting these measures will help to develop teaching of English as a life skill.

Major effort has to be taken from the side of the learner. After entering to a job also one has to improve their skills and update knowledge. Attending refresher courses and self learning programmes will enable lifelong learning. Self assessment of communication tasks makes possible to identify the weaker areas and one can concentrate on that aspect while improving. The skills necessary for career improvement have to be practiced while doing the professional course itself. This may act as demonstration and reinforcement for the learners to accomplish future needs. Organising programmes to reflect the needs of the society and industry will pave way

to envisage the real picture of the world. Rather than isolating as an optional subject, English has to be included as a core subject in the engineering curriculum. Prioritising communication skills in engineering subject and integrating with mark system will arouse more seriousness among learners and this will enable to change their attitude towards the subject. Emphasis on communication activities will always enhance more active participation. Successful communication is an advantage in teamwork and it is an essential part in the field of engineering.

Tracing the evolution of teaching methods and approaches has helped to formulate a concrete objective for the study. A controlled group and an experimental group were formed to employ the study. The latter group was trained by following blended learning while the former group with traditional direct method. Blended method offered them an additional opportunity to interact with the peer group and instructor. Students were provided with more assignments in online. The selected online platform was MOODLE and activities in online were also monitored by the instructor. After the experiment it was found that there was a tremendous change in the writing abilities of the experimental group. This research shows that blended learning which exploits the possibilities of technology is effective in English language learning for engineering students.

The documented study has been divided into five chapters. Introductory chapter describes the background of English language teaching and explains the purpose and population of the research. The next chapter is about the theory and method followed and narrates various online platforms. The consequent chapter is methodology which gives details of procedures undertaken to carry out the investigation. Fourth chapter validates the actions taken and evaluates the collected

data. The final chapter sums up the whole research and peep into further scope for research.