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DEGRADATION OF ENGLISH COMPETENCE AT UPGRADING STATE: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF  
THE GENERAL ENGLISH TEXTBOOK PRESCRIBED FOR SECOND YEAR STUDENTS AT UG LEVEL  
IN SATAVAHANA UNIVERSITY, TELANGANA STATE

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**ABSTRACT**

English is an international language used for communication all over the world. It enables the foreign learners and local speakers to meet their interests and opinions. In Indian society, there is a need for learning English to assemble the needs, particularly for international interaction and benefits. In this case English was introduced in schools and colleges. Although students have been learning English for their school level, they are unable to communicate in English even for two minutes. Of course there are a lot of problems but the many scholars argue that the textbooks don't encourage the students to learn English. The paper tries to bring out a critical analysis of the General English which was prescribed for the undergraduate level second year students in Satavahana University, Telangana State

**Keywords:** English language, textbooks, undergraduate level students

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English is an international language used for communication all over the world. In Indian society, there is a demand for English among the students, their parents and others also. Therefore there is a need for learning it to meet the Indian society's needs, particularly for international interaction and benefits. In this case English was introduced in schools and colleges. English textbooks are prescribed by the boards and universities. English language teaching and learning was begun once upon a time. Marvelous efforts have been made to ensure the teaching of English successful and offer both the students and teachers with English language skills and provide them with the modern ways of learning English. In spite of many efforts, the teaching of English is always unsuccessful. Although there are many reasons for it, the prescribed textbooks too don't satisfy the needs of the learners. Textbook is an important source of information and knowledge available to the students and teachers. Most of the times, the textbooks fail to bring real issues and focus on interesting points. The syllabus of the textbook must raise the curiosity of the learners. Generally English language syllabus is content-based, with topics such as achievements by great people, environmental issues, and different discriminations and intercultural communication. The syllabus is a plan what to teach. Richards and Schmidt mention that syllabus refers to "a description of the contents of a course of instruction and the

other in which they are to be taught” (2002: 532). The course writers should incorporate all the language skills with current examples. The syllabus should attract the learners to follow it. It is a part of textbook gives content and language skills. Nation & Macalister (2010) mention that “syllabus refers to the inner circles which consist of goals, format and presentation, content and sequencing, monitoring and assessment.” According to Breen (1984: 47), “syllabus is a plan of what is to be achieved through our teaching and our students’ learning.” Generally a syllabus consists of list of content to be taught through a course of study. The course writers should find the materials that must meet the students’ needs. They should try to know what type of material is necessary and whether the material will satisfy students as well as teachers. They must incorporate why they are writing the textbooks and what objectives they are trying to achieve. The textbook must have an effect on methodology and learning language skills. Of course, in directly, the textbooks stop teachers from being innovative and creative. For example most of the English lecturers who are teaching for undergraduate level students are completely depended on the prescribed textbooks.

**Objectives of the Course:**

1. To encourage the students to speak English.
2. To expose the learners to cultural diversity and value education through the humanistic curriculum;
3. To enable students to use English in day-to-day communication
4. To build up their confidence in the usage of English
5. To empower the learners with skills necessary for global placements;
6. To equip the learners with the skills essential for their academic subjects;
7. To acquaint the learners with reference skills;
8. To encourage learner autonomy through pair and group activities;
9. To help the learners and the facilitator visualize the theoretical and practical components of the course as a complement to each other;
10. To encourage the facilitator to make creative use of various pedagogical tools and the new educational technology;
11. To orient the learners to utilize the fruits of the ICT Revolution for equipping themselves for international competitive examinations.
12. To expose them to light prose and poetry
13. To develop their written communicative competence
14. To prepare them for competitive exams

**Expected Outcome:**

The expected outcome of the course is that the learners will be able:

1. To improve employability skills
2. To set the goal for their future
3. To be aware of cultural diversity and values of life
4. To communicate effectively with coherence and relevance in speech and writing
5. To be proficient with the Soft Skills required for national and global placements
6. To participate in brainstorming sessions for cooperative learning
7. To be proficient in modes of web-based learning

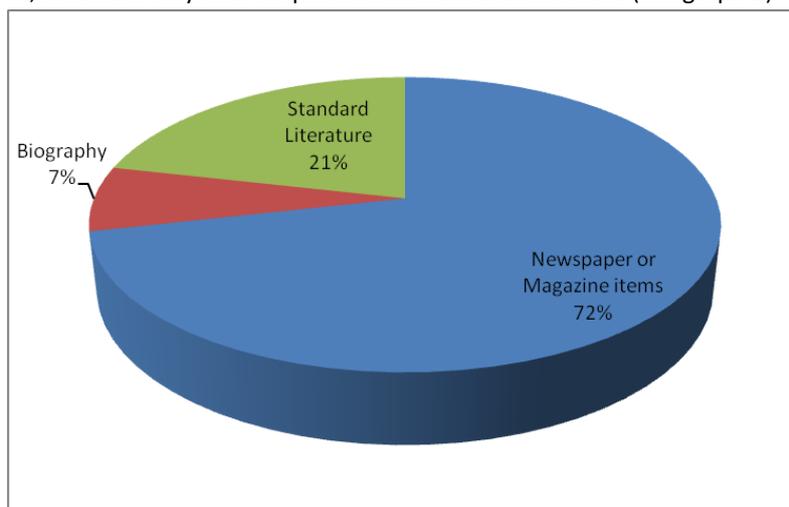
Concerning the teachers, there will be a growing awareness of their role as facilitators. The syllabus enables the teachers to adopt progressive use of interactive teaching besides greater recognition of the role of learner–centric approach.

S.No	Reading	Corporate Communication	English for Competitive Examinations	Speaking
1	Six Sigma: Dabbawala	Goal Setting	Synonyms	Speech sounds and corresponding symbols, consonants, vowels and diphthongs, consonant

				clusters
2	Yet, I am Not Defeated!	Time Management	Antonyms	Word stress, sentence stress
3	Thinking? Walter D Wintle	Interview Skills	Analogies	Mother tongue interference in English language learning
4	Toxicology: Qamar Rahman	Personal appearance and facial expressions	Syllogisms	Commonly mispronounced words
5	Patricia Narayan: An Entrepreneur by Accident	Confidence	One word substitutes	Using the dictionary to learn the correct pronunciation of words
6	When I born, I black: Anonymous	Teamwork	Phrasal Verbs	Describing people, places and objects
7	Satya Nadella: CEO of Microsoft	Group Discussions	Idioms	Reporting what others said
8	Chhavi Rajawat: Village Mayor of Soda: Tann vom Hove and Mayraj Fahim	Presentations, plan, rehearse, perform	Commonly misspelt words	Talking about future plans
9	The Ladder of St Augustine: H.W. Longfellow	Interpersonal Communication	Correction of errors of sentences	Asking and answering questions
10	Dream Your Own Dream: Rama Govindarajan	Problem solving	Correction of errors in sentences	Talking about purpose
11	From Bhajias to Reliance: Dhirubhai Ambani	Project Proposals	Word order within sentences	Explaining and Giving reasons
12	Success: Bessie A Stanley	Convening official meetings and drawing up agendas	Sentence completion	Making comparisons
13	Rendezvous with Indra Nooyi	Minutes	Paragraph close test	Persuading
14	Crossing Hurdles in Style	Writing show cause notices	Rearranging jumbled sentences in paragraphs	Expressing certainty, probability and possibility

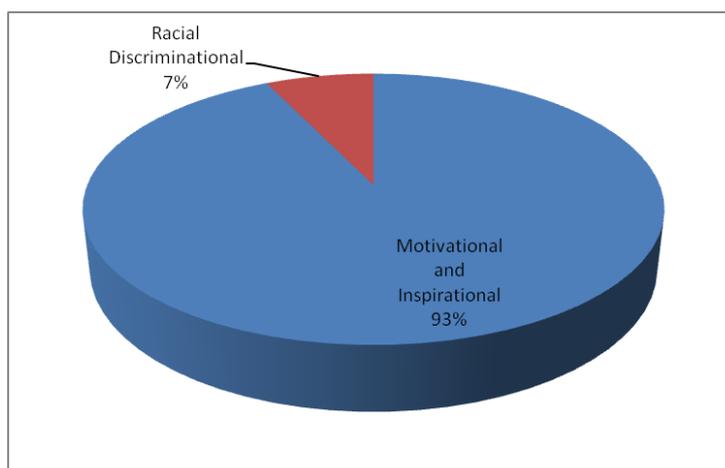
One can learn a language through all the language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The textbook must provide good literary items which should impress students and make them read all the chapters so that they get the curiosity of learning a language but unfortunately the textbook General English Prescribed for the undergraduate level second year students in Satavahana University, Telangana State has all the newspaper columns which encourage them to read for some time and not influencing them in the matter of learning a language. The present textbook has a suitable title *English for Employability*, well designed, good-looking cover page and high excellence of editing with color pages. It's simple to carry. *English for Employability* satisfied the subject matters language and literary aspects. It has fourteen chapters. All the chapters are taken from some newspapers and magazines. There one can hardly find one or two interesting and impressing chapters. The rest of the chapters might be indulged in the textbook to motivate the students to set goal as the chapters are speeches by well-known people across the world and some of the topics are

taken from local people who achieved something although they come from poor and rural background. The other side of the coin, there are only four chapters from standard literature. (see graph 1)



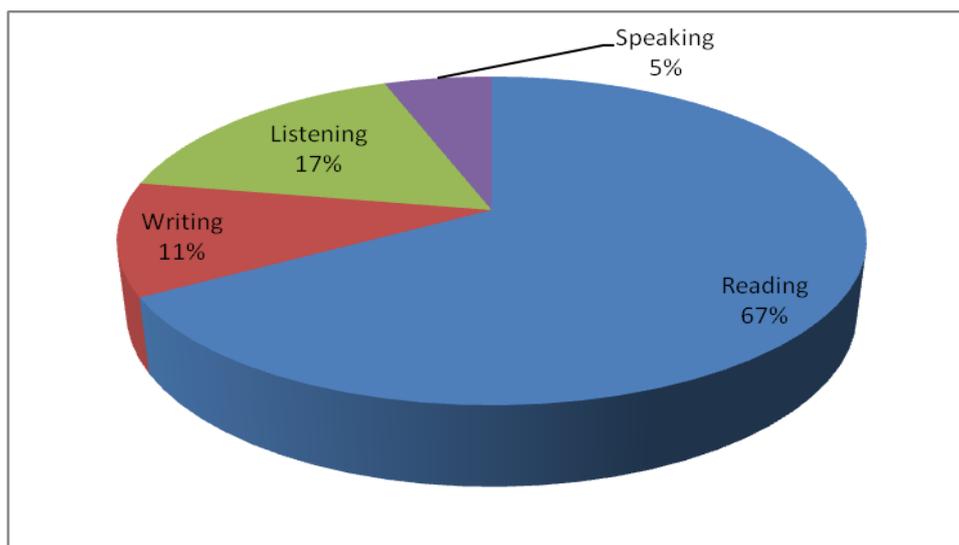
**Graph 1: Distribution of literary items in the textbook *English for Employability***

The chapters (Six Sigma: Dabbawala Yet, I am Not Defeated!, Thinking? By Walter D Wintle, Toxicology by Qamar Rahman, Patricia Narayan: An Entrepreneur by Accident, Satya Nadella: CEO of Microsoft, Chhavi Rajawat: Village Mayor of Soda by Tann vom Hove and Mayraj Fahim, Dream Your Own Dream by Rama Govindarajan, From Bhajias to Reliance: Dhirubhai Ambani, Success by Bessie A Stanley, The Ladder of St Augustine by H.W. Longfellow Rendezvous with Indra Nooyi Crossing Hurdles in Style) are motivational and inspirational themes in them. From fourteen lessons, thirteen chapters deal with the same theme. Don't students get boredom in the classes? Do they attend the classes to improve English or listen to speeches? Only one chapter 'When I born, I black,' which was written by anonymous writer, deals with racial discrimination. (see graph 2)



**Graph 2: Distribution of literary items based on themes in the textbook *English for Employability***

The first page of every lesson should have been presented the aims of the lesson or unit to the students. It must be started with a reading section and move on to language skills. Although every chapter has been started with reading, it is not so impressing. The book does not give anything about the writer. The overall weighting of the sections devoted to skills in the textbook, there is an imbalance between speaking and other skills. Speaking is completely neglected. (graph. 03) Reading seemed to be given more importance throughout the book with 14 chapters. Listening is also somewhat neglected. There is unequal distribution of language focus in the sections contained in the chapters of the book.



**Graph 3: Distribution of language skills in the textbook *English for Employability***

The textbook *English for Employability* also contained four sections—reading, corporate communication, English for competitive examinations, and speaking. The textbook provides theoretical items, not practical and application oriented chapters. It does not give any appendices at the end of the book. Language works such as listening, writing and vocabulary seemed to be given more attention than speaking skills. Though two sections such as corporate communication and speaking skills are included in this book, the textbook gives a brief introduction of the topics. There is no single task on practical communication of the students.

The section corporate communication includes the topics such as goal setting, time management, interview skills, personal appearance and facial expressions, teamwork, group discussions, presentations, plan, rehearse, perform, interpersonal communication, problem solving, project proposals, convening official meetings and drawing up agendas, minutes and writing show cause notices. These are useful topics for the undergraduate level students but the topics are introduced and not focused seriously. What is the use by giving definitions and introducing the topics without providing exercises and practical sessions?

The other section which is English for competitive examinations includes synonyms, antonyms, analogies, syllogism, one word substitutes, phrasal verbs, idioms, commonly misspelt words, correction of errors of sentences, word order within sentences, sentence completion, paragraph close test, rearranging jumbled sentences in paragraphs are very much useful to the students in their competitive examinations. All these are basic chapters that the students have already learnt. The book does not give even some exercises on all these topics. The question in the reader's mind comes that why all the definitions of the above chapters are given in the textbook instead of giving some exercises. For example even single task does not have more than twenty questions. All these in roundabout way extended some pages but not at all raise student's interest.

#### **Conclusion**

The study spotlighted on the assessment of the textbook used for undergraduate level second year students of Satavahana University. When the close evaluation of the components of the book was over, the findings proposed that the in general organization of the textbook and the themes included were not completely satisfactory. Although there are real like situations role plays, group discussions, debate, interview skills and other communicative tasks, the textbook mainly focused on the reading text rather than all the four language skills and also they are not given equal preference. Many problematic areas were noticed as to the practicality of the book, its contents were taken from local magazines and newspapers so that there is newspaper language is used where the students are not encountered with any single unfamiliar word. The findings also suggest that the course editor has followed a thematic approach for the setting of its chapters in a sequential order. Writing column is completely neglected by writer of the book. The cover page's pompous

look may draw the attention of the readers but soon they come to know that there is nothing. There is no single topic for practical session. Throughout the book, the definitions of all the topics such as vocabulary and speaking activities were highly focused. Thus the textbook is a book with the value of marks in a year for the undergraduate level students of Satavahana University, Telangana State.

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