

CHAPTER IIABOUT THE PRESENT STUDY

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Dissatisfaction with the results of teaching English in India is growing. Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao, the former Education Minister, found that "methods of teaching English are ineffective" (Tickoo, 1971<sup>a</sup>, p. 2). It is also reported (Tickoo, 1971<sup>a</sup>, p. 2) that the Second Study Group on English, appointed by the Ministry of Education, Government of India called for a "rethinking on methods". Pillai (1968, p. 35) observed that improving the methods of teaching English economically and effectively has become a felt need.

The level of students' performance, whatever be the reasons, is not encouraging. One of the head examiner (The Report Rajasthan Secondary Examination, 1971, p. 13) has observed "I am of the opinion that as a whole the performance of the candidates is not at all upto the mark". The performance of most of the students of government and private schools, other than the public and the English medium

schools is poor in English. The improvement of standards in English needs concerted efforts.

The investigator decided to take up research work in the area of English teaching and to address himself to two crucial questions:

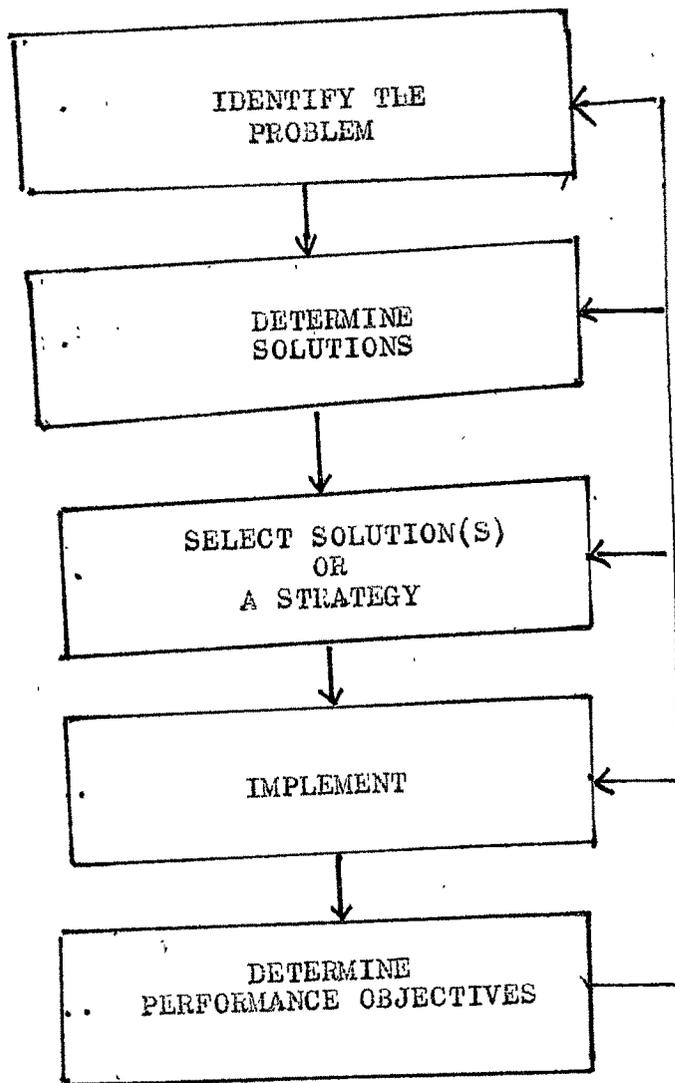
- (a) Why is students' achievement poor?
- (b) How can the achievement of students be improved?

Stolurow (1965) has offered two approaches to improve students' performance. One is to model the master teacher and the other is to master the teaching model. The investigator adopted the second approach in his work.

#### 1. Adopting Systems Approach

In the West the systems approach is increasingly used for exploring solutions to educational problems. The work of Barson (1965), Newmark and Sweigert (1966), Meals and Coulson (1967), Kooi (1967) and Bratten (1969) have shown that the systems approach can be useful in solving educational problems. The investigator, therefore, decided to adopt the systems approach to the study of the problem of students' under-achievement in English. The overall design of the study is based on Kaufman's (1971) model. Flow chart 2 gives Kaufman's systems model of education.

SYSTEMS MODEL OF EDUCATION  
(Kaufman, 1971)



FLOW CHART 2

## 2. Kaufman's Systems Model of Education

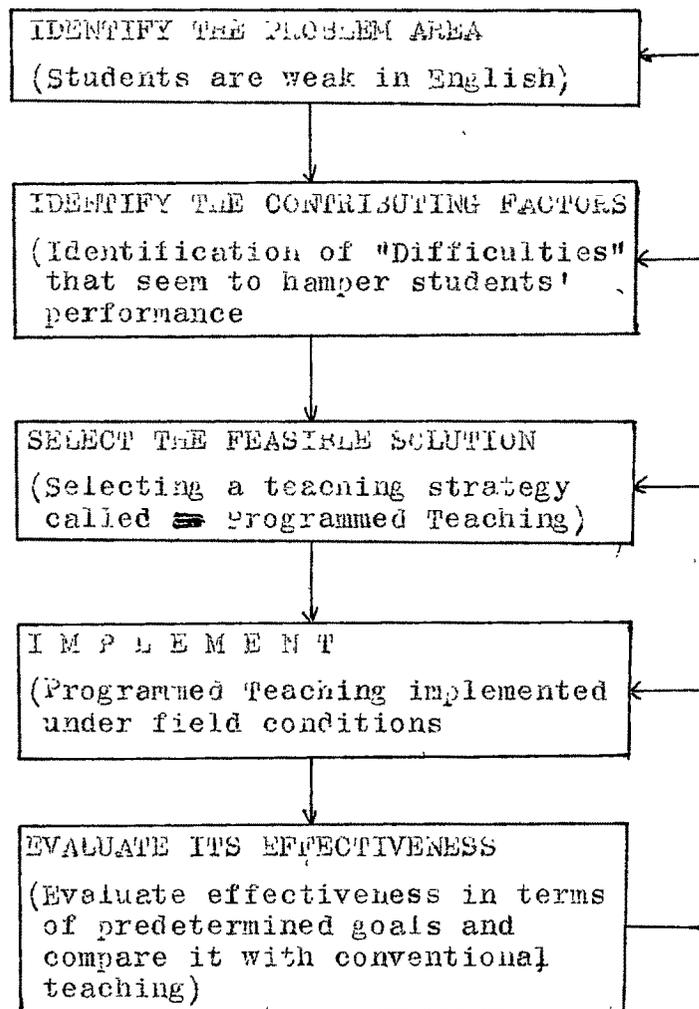
Kaufman has given a six-step systems model to study educational problems.

The first step is to identify the problem. The second step is to explore different alternatives or solutions which promise to solve the problem. The third step is to select an appropriate and suitable alternative. There may be a number of alternatives which may promise a solution to the problem, but the systematist has to select the most feasible one. The environment in which a system works puts some constraints on the selection of alternatives. One cannot select an alternative which is socially un-acceptable or one which is administratively not feasible. The alternative must be workable and feasible.

The fourth step is to implement the alternative. The fifth step is to empirically find out to what extent the alternative has solved the problem. The sixth step is the feedback loop. If the systematist finds that the selected alternative has failed to solve the problem, he makes necessary changes at appropriate steps. In the sixth step (at the feedback step) the systematist uses the output data as inputs to improve the systems performance.

## 3. The Model followed in the Study

The steps followed in this study are given in Flow Chart No.3.

SYSTEMS MODEL OF THE STUDYFLOW CHART NO. 3

The first step was to identify the problem.

The problem identified and one which needed a solution was that of students' poor performance in English at the Government higher primary and secondary schools in Rajasthan.

The second step was to identify those difficulties that seem to contribute to the existence of the problem. The study has revealed that there are some difficulties which teachers regard as main factors hindering students' performance. It is due to these difficulties that students fail to achieve the expected standards in English.

The third step was to explore an alternative which would eliminate some or most of the difficulties. Programmed Teaching as an instructional strategy was proposed. The strategy promised to eliminate most of the difficulties.

The fourth step was to implement the strategy under field conditions.

The fifth step was to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy in terms of stated goals.

#### 4. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study were:

- (a) to study teachers' perception of difficulties which hamper effective teaching and learning of English.

- (b) to develop the concept of 'Programmed Teaching'
- (c) To develop a package for programmed teaching comprising of
  - (a) programmed instructional material for students;
  - (b) remedial exercises for students;
  - (c) content-notes for teachers;
  - (d) teaching guides for teachers,
- (d) to appraise effectiveness of programmed teaching in terms of utility and students' performance on a written criterion measure,
- (e) to incorporate systems approach in the analysis of the problem and design of strategy.

##### 5. Delimitation

- (1) The study is delimited to the teaching of English as a foreign language.
- (2) The perception of difficulties is delimited to the views of teachers only. That is the study does not investigate all those factors which conspire to retard students' performance. The study deals with factors which are perceived by the teachers of English as main difficulties and not the views of parents, students and educational administrators.
- (3) The programmed teaching strategy, offered as an ~~late~~ alternative, delimits itself to teaching of one modality only viz. written English. The study limits itself to the teaching of a unit of content involving:
  - (i) writing of <sup>some</sup> ~~some~~ sentence structures.
  - (ii) use of sane punctuation marks. The experimental part of this study doesn't incorporate teaching items pertaining to -

- (a) oral expression
- (b) oral comprehension
- (c) written comprehension.

It does not incorporate items on phonetics or listening ability or reading speed.

- (4) Evaluation of programmed teaching has been done on two categories only, viz. performance and utility. Programmed Teaching is not evaluated in terms of cost and time.
- (5) The investigator has followed the systems approach. All the systems analysis is not based on mathematical models.

#### 6. Terms Defined

Some terms like 'difficulties', 'significant difficulties', 'programmed teaching', 'programmed teaching package', 'the system', have been frequently used in this study. It is advisable that the precise meaning of these terms should be specified right at the beginning of the study.

##### (1) Difficulties

The term 'difficulties' in the study means those factors which work as barriers <sup>to the</sup> ~~in~~ effective teaching and learning of English. Speaking broadly, there can be seven categories of difficulties:

- (a) Difficulties inherent in the very structure of the subject matter taught and learnt.
- (b) Difficulties that creep up due to teachers' personality.
- (c) Difficulties that arise due to administrative and financial causes.
- (d) Difficulties that arise due to the learners' personality.
- (e) Difficulties that arise ~~out of~~ <sup>from</sup> parental attitude.
- (f) Difficulties that arise as a result of teaching-learning climate; and
- (g) Difficulties that arise as a result of poor <sup>in</sup> and/effective methodology.

(2) Significant Difficulties

Those difficulties perceived by teachers and having a weightage of 93 or more have been termed as 'significant difficulties'. The process of screening significant difficulties from other difficulties was this. A questionnaire containing 50 items on difficulties was administered on 93 teachers. Responses were sought on a five-point scale, ranging from -2 to +2. An item that could get a weightage of 93 points or more was considered a significant difficulty.

(3) Programmed Teaching

Programmed teaching is a strategy which shapes

the behaviour of the teacher (Ellson 1971 p167). It manipulates teacher's responses and controls his behaviour by giving him a detailed plan about instructional procedure. Programmed Teaching integrates live teachers with programmed learning material. Programmed teaching approach includes material both for the student and the teacher.

#### (4) Treatment

In an Experimental Design research the term 'treatment' means the experimental condition provided in the study. The variable which is manipulated is called treatment or independent variable.

In this study there are two treatments or independent variables. One is 'Programmed Teaching' and the second is 'Conventional Teaching'. The first treatment, viz. Programmed Teaching is introduced in the experimental group. The Conventional Teaching is introduced in the control group.

#### (5) Programmed Teaching Package

The programmed teaching package in this study means the following materials.

- (a) Programmed Learning materials
- (b) Remedial exercises.
- (c) Content Notes.
- (d) Teaching Guides.

(6) The System

A system is "an integrated assembly of interacting elements designed to carry out cooperatively a pre-determined function" (Banghart 1969, p.26). The term 'system' in this study means the Instructional System. The instructional system is made up of three components viz the teacher, the student and the teaching-learning material which interact with each other. School, home and the society form the supra system.

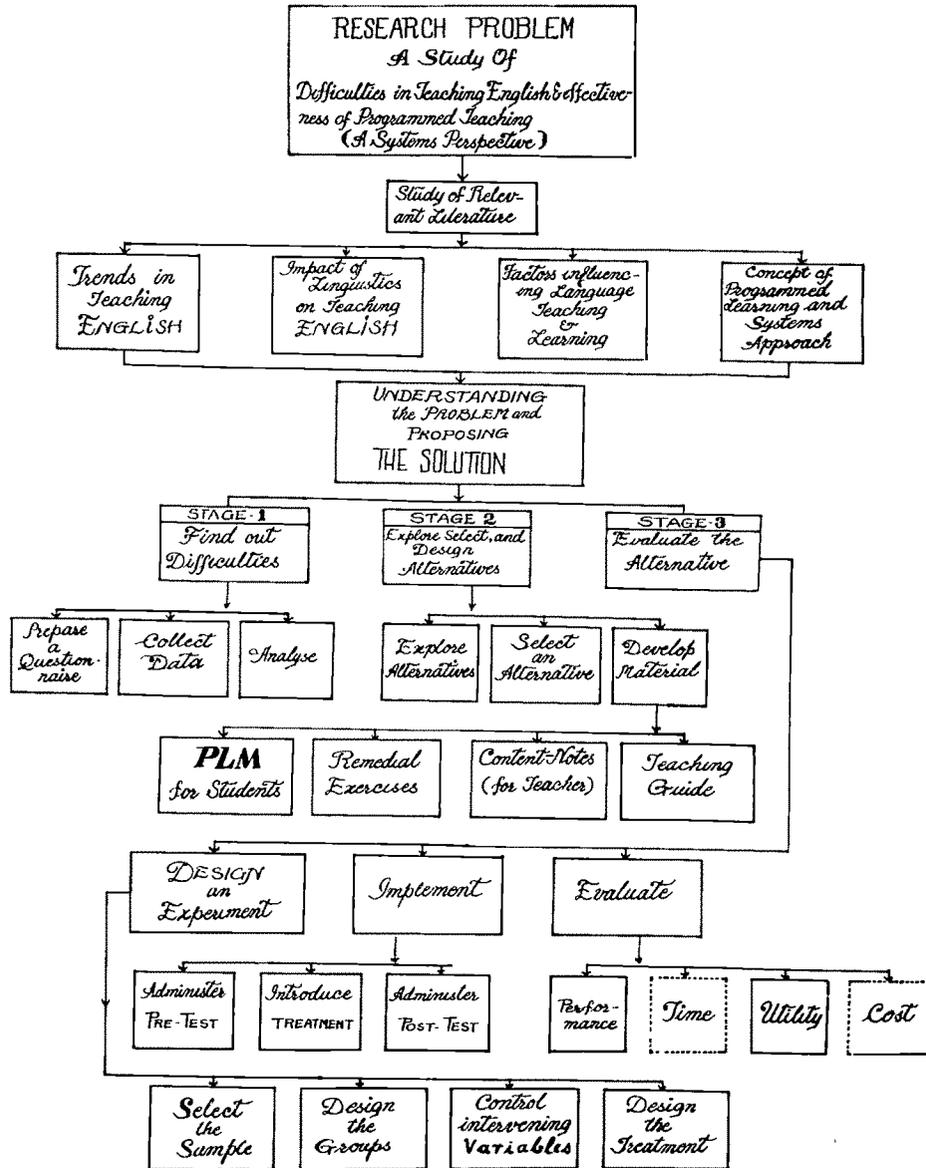
(7) The Systems Approach

The systems approach comprises of three steps, system analysis, system design and system evaluation. After analysing the system and after specifying the problem area the systemist designs a tentative solution to attain the predetermined goals. The tentative solution is then evaluated. In this study the problem area identified was students' poor performance in English. Further analysis revealed that there are some basic difficulties which tend to obstruct students' performance. A tentative solution in the form of programmed teaching was proposed. The solution i.e. programmed teaching was then evaluated.

7. The Procedure followed

Major details of the procedure followed by the investigator are shown in Flow Chart No. 4. The problem

# Flow-Chart showing Major Details of the Study



undertaken for study was "A study of difficulties in teaching English and effectiveness of Programmed Teaching". The first step was to study relevant literature and the second step was to study empirically why students perform poorly in English and if there can be any solution to it.

The study of the relevant literature, both conceptual and empirical, was the first step. The investigator consulted relevant literature in four different areas viz teaching of English, linguistics, factors influencing language teaching and learning, programmed learning and systems approach. Chapter three deals with the study of relevant literature.

The second step was to understand the problem of students' under achievement in English and to propose a solution. The task was completed in three stages.

In the first stage, difficulties which, according to classroom teachers, stood in the way of students' performance were found out. For finding out 'difficulties', the investigator prepared a questionnaire, administered it to a group of teachers, collected data and analysed them.

In the second stage the investigator explored different alternatives and selected one which seemed to overcome most of the felt difficulties. To the investigator,

Programmed Teaching strategy seemed to overcome some of the difficulties. Hence the alternative i.e. Programmed Teaching was selected and relevant material was prepared. Chapter four is devoted to the analysis of difficulties and selection of an alternative viz programmed teaching. Chapter six is devoted to preparation of material for programmed teaching strategy.

In the third and the last stage the investigator empirically evaluated, in field setting, the proposed strategy. Chapters five, seven and eight are devoted to the experimental evaluation of the strategy. Chapter five is devoted to planning of the experiment, chapter six and seven deal with the implementation of the strategy and chapter eight deals with the statistical evaluation of the strategy. The effectiveness of programmed teaching was evaluated by comparing the performance of students of the experimental group, taught through programmed teaching, with the performance of students of the control group; taught through conventional teaching.

Flow Charts 1 and 4 give a gestalt view of the study. Flow Chart No. 1 views the present investigation from systems perspective. Flow Chart No. 4 gives a panoramic view of the study. Chapters following now would discuss each step in detail. The next chapter deals with the study of the relevant literature.