

INTRODUCTION

The object of this investigation is to present a study of 'An English Miscellany' prescribed for the S.Y.B.A. class for the years 1982 to 85. Whenever a new set of textbooks is prescribed a readjustment of teaching strategies have to be adopted. But Before that some kind of assessment of the prescribed book has to be done. It is to be taken for granted that the authorities responsible for prescribing the book have taken into consideration the needs as well as the capacity of the students for whom it is intended. However, there is often a feeling that prescribed books are somehow unsuitable. The present investigator started with some such initial reaction to the textbook.

Once again most books promoted by publishers declare that they have been produced according to the best principles of textbook production. They also indicate roughly the level at which they may be found useful. The present textbook is produced for the undergraduate level of Indian universities. This means that the book could suit any of the three classes and perhaps any of the three faculties - Arts, Science and Commerce. The actual choice is left to the Universities. The present book was chosen for S.Y. B.A. class in Shivaji University. While prescribing books the authorities have naturally not the time to make a detailed study of the book. So they go by intuition. In other words, the assessment of the book is impressionistic. I feel that an objective study of textbooks prescribed at different levels is likely to promote better teaching and learning. As far as I know no objective studies of books prescribed for undergraduate classes in this University so far have been done.

So the working hypothesis of this study is a null hypothesis : we want to find out how far 'An English Miscellany' is suitable for the S.Y.B.A. class in this University. The techniques of study are analysis and interpretation of the materials. As to the principles there seems to be no body of accepted principles of textbook production. However, certain working principles are being evolved in the last twenty years. The C.I.E.F.L. produced some textbooks and in the course of producing them evolved certain criteria. CIEFL (1967, 1975). I have drawn on these criteria for my analysis, and investigated the book under two main heads : (1) linguistic criteria (vocabulary and syntax) (2) Non-linguistic criteria : (type of writing, theme, treatment etc.). I have used the conventional method of extracting the new or difficult words in each passage and determining the difficulty index. As to syntax I have used Quirk et al (1972) as a model for describing the syntactic structures and determining the complexity of syntax with reference to the phenomena of co-ordination and subordination and particularly kinds of dependent clauses - finite and non-finite. For content analysis I have used a modified set of criteria based on CIEFL (1975), Shastri (1972) and what is stated in the preface to the textbook under investigation.

On the basis of the results of these analyses I have offered some observations in terms of the possible difficulty level of the textbook and indicated in what way these observations may be of use to the people concerned.

In Chapter I of the dissertation I have given an outline of English studies in India with some observations in general) and tried to place the Shivaji University curriculum in proper perspective.

General observations

In Chapter II I have presented my analysis of the three aspects of the textbook - vocabulary content, syntactic complexity and the type of materials.

In writing the report, I have followed a slightly modified MLA style. References to sources are given by surname of the author followed by the year of publication, page number/s where relevant in brackets. Instead of chapter-wise list of references, I have given a consolidated bibliography towards the end of the dissertation. I have appended lists of difficult words phrases etc., both passage-wise and in a consolidated form at the end of the dissertation.