

**CHAPTER - 3**

**METHODS AND APPROACHES OF ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE TEACHING IN INDIA**

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### **3. 1 Introduction:**

The history of Language teaching in India, as we know, has a long tradition. Memorization of vocabulary and translation of sentences often formed the major part of such learning process in the past. Ancient languages such as Sanskrit and Pali were mastered in India through the process of memorization of texts and vocabulary lists. “Learning vocabulary lists indeed formed the core of language learning.”<sup>1</sup>

But this tradition of language teaching has been subjected to a tremendous change, especially, throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In case of English language teaching in India, there are some milestones in the development of this tradition. According to D. Kanta Rao and J.M.Kanthi Thilakha:

“If language teachers teach as they taught earlier, then one may not achieve the required goals of teaching English in the present global scenario.”<sup>2</sup>

So, there could be as many ways of learning languages as there are people learning them. The way one learnt English is not exactly the way one is teaching it. Again, the way one acquired one’s mother-tongue may be quite different from the way one learnt English. The following observation by V. Saraswathi is very important to quote in this connection. She says:

“There is no best method. The history of language teaching presents a fascinating variety of methods. If there is such a variety of methods, which one are we to choose? There is

no definite answer to this question, what works with one learner may not work with another. One may be a wizard in grammar but another may just hate it. Others might enjoy memorizing sentences.”

She further adds:

“Different methods may be appropriate to different contexts. If we start searching for the perfect method or the ideal single solution to the problem of language learning, we bound to fail”<sup>3</sup>

Like V. Saraswathi, Diane-Larsen-Freeman’s remark on language teaching methodology sums up a major trend away from unity to diversity in the following words. They comment:

“There is no single acceptable way to go about teaching language today.”<sup>4</sup>

The statements quoted above make it clear that no single approach or method is appropriate for all learning styles. A good lesson will, therefore, be one in which the teachers use a smorgasbord of activities taken from a variety of sources. By varying our techniques, we will give students of all styles the chance to shine some of the time.

In English language teaching pedagogy the three key terms viz- Method, Approach and technique are used frequently and interchangeably. This tripartite arrangement is hierarchical in order.

The term ‘Method’ is very ambiguous, and refers to the overall plan for the orderly presentations of language material, no part of which contradicts and all of which is based on selected approach and procedure.<sup>5</sup>

A method includes three components viz- Approach, Design & Procedures, the subcomponents of which are shown in the following figure 3.1:

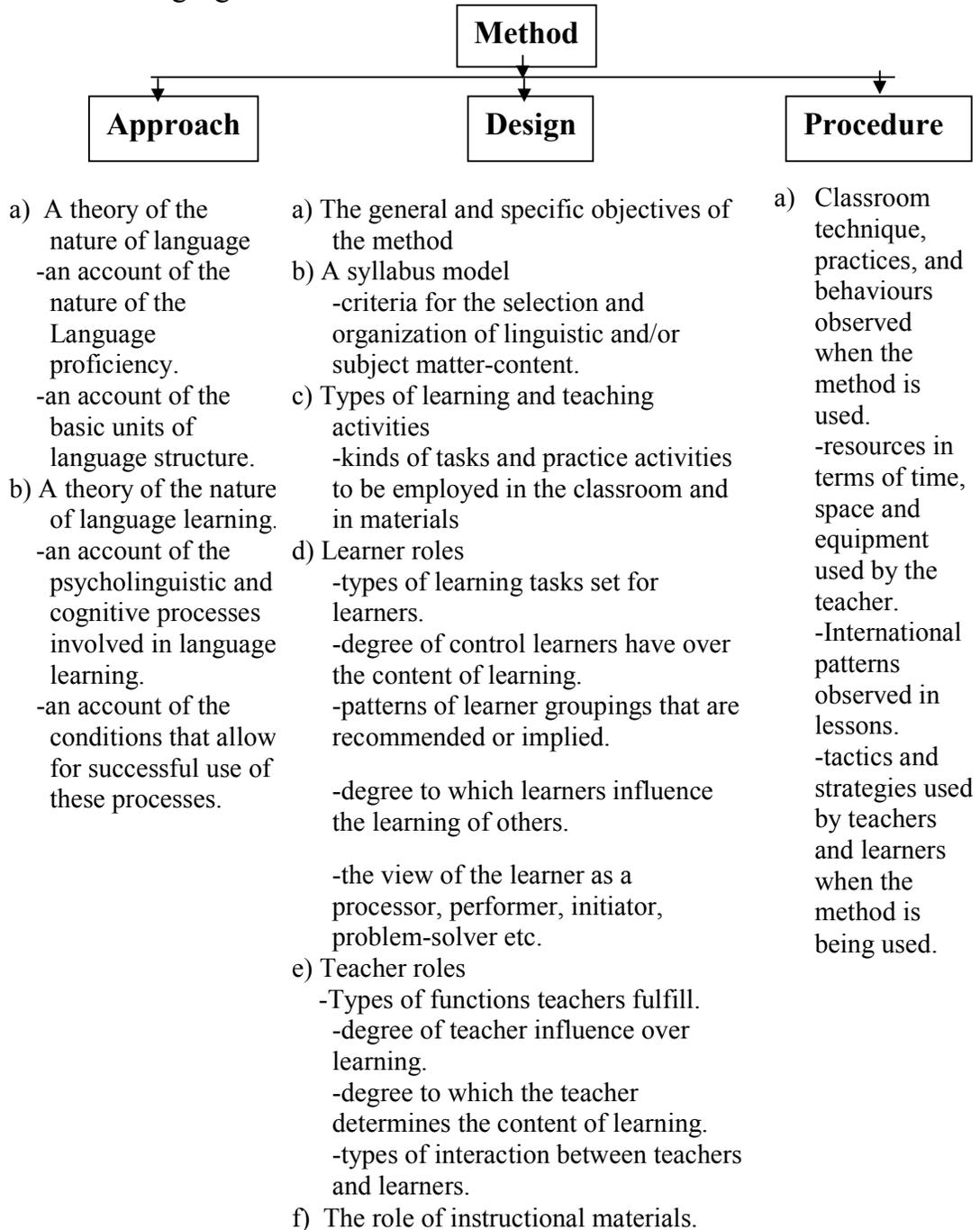


Figure 3.1 Figure Stating summary of elements and sub-elements that constitute a method.

An ‘approach’ is concerned with the theory of the nature of language and language learning.

‘Design’ concerns itself with:

- The general and specific objectives of the course.
- A syllabus model.
- Types of learning and learning tasks.
- Roles of learners and teachers, and
- Role of learning materials.

‘Procedure’ is concerned with:

- The actual happenings in the classroom.
- Classroom techniques, practices and behaviours.

The term ‘Method’ is sometimes compared with the term ‘Approach’. According to Yardi “Method is rigid while Approach is flexible”. Pointing out the different views often held in less informed circle of teachers about the importance of method. He further asserts:

“What matters is the man (the teacher) not the method.”<sup>7</sup>

Yardi further explains the connotational difference between the terms ‘method’ ‘methodology’, and ‘methodics’. These are often used in English language teaching pedagogy. Each one of them carries a different shade of meaning. ‘Method’, in his opinion ‘is used in the context of language- teaching methods like ‘Direct Method’, ‘The grammar- translation Method’ or ‘The Bilingual Method’.<sup>8</sup>

Yardi further went on to add that the term ‘method’ is not strictly speaking a ‘technical term’. It is a popular one, and means ‘a

way of doing something'. It is often used loosely as a substitute for 'methodology'.

'Methodology', according to Yardi, 'is a technical term which refers to a body of principles and techniques of teaching'.<sup>9</sup>

The third term 'methodics' is being used frequently in recent years by the British linguists. The term 'Methodics' means 'a framework of organization for language teaching which relates linguistic theory to pedagogical principles and techniques'.<sup>10</sup>

Edward M. Anthony, the American Applied linguists, distinguished between technique, method, and an approach in the following words:

"The arrangement is hierarchical. The organizational key is that techniques carry out a method which is consistent with an approach... An approach is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning. An approach is axiomatic. It describes the nature of the subject matter to be taught... 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. An approach is axiomatic, a method is procedural, within one approach, there can be many methods... A technique is implementational-that which actually takes place in a classroom. It is a particular trick, stratagem, or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective.

Technique must be consistent with a method, and therefore, in harmony with an approach as well.”<sup>11</sup>

The above quote makes it clear that approach is the level at which assumptions and beliefs about language and language learning are specified; whereas, method is the level at which theory is put into practice and at which choices are made about the particular skills to be taught, and the order in which the content will be presented; technique is the level at which classroom procedures are described.

“Methods are evolved for quick and effective results” says A.D. Kulkarni in his article presented at a seminar on the Teaching of English held in February, 1972 at the then Marathwada University, Aurangabad. “The natural method of learning by trial and error has no place today as human beings cannot afford to waste time in experimenting”,<sup>12</sup> he opines.

The skill of a second language teacher lies in selecting an approach, method, and a technique in view of the learner’s educational, social and economical background; the syllabus and the textbooks prescribed, and the goals / objectives to be achieved. He should be flexible enough to swift to multiple approaches so as to enable him / her to make learning effective.

K. Bose cautions the teaching community regarding their pedagogical duties in the following words:

“...It is expected of a teacher that he / she should think and reason out some fundamental assumptions that lie underneath the syllabus construction, that might bind together the

syllabus, objectives, and instructional materials (method), and that might justify the use of any/ every classroom techniques that he /she adopts while teaching. It should under no circumstances appear like a layman's trick to teach the second language.”<sup>13</sup>

The above statement makes it evident that the teachers of English should be cautious about some of the fundamental assumptions that lie underneath the syllabus construction.

With this backdrop, it would be proper at this juncture to review the methods and approaches that have been used by the teachers of English in India in general and Maharashtra in particular. A teacher at times uses a single approach, a single method, or even resorts to multiple approaches and methods in view of several factors including the background, age of learners, and the teaching items. The skill of a teacher lies in shifting to and evolving new approaches and methods of teaching English comfortably in the Indian context. Therefore, an attempt has been made to review some of the methods and approaches which are being used commonly by the teachers of English in India.

### **3. 2 English Language Teaching Methods:**

The grammar -translation method, the Direct method, Audio-lingual method, Bilingual method, Dr. Michael West's the new method, and Suggestopedia etc., are among the methods used commonly by the teachers of English in India. An attempt, therefore, has been made to review these methods as below:

### **3.2.1 The Grammar - Translation Method:**

This method, also known as the classical method, is one of the oldest or traditional methods of teaching English. In Europe it was used in the teaching of Latin and Greek for several centuries, and got introduced in India with the arrival of the British.

This method as Tickoo said:

“came to English Language Teaching in most of Asia in general and India in particular with support in the long- established tradition of teaching classical languages in the United Kingdom. The system of education in the country served as a model for schools in most of its colonies. The psychological beliefs that prevailed then were (a) that classical languages with their intricate systems of grammar were capable of training human faculties including memory, and (b) that learning these languages was part of a truly liberal education. Teaching and learning primarily aimed at the ability to read full texts rather than to communicate orally in everyday situations”<sup>14</sup>

Thus, the above statement makes it clear that this method makes no provision for training in speech but lays stress on reading. Commenting on how this method operates in our schools and colleges, Bhatia and Bhatia assert:

“This method gives equal importance to grammar in the course in as much as the linguistic material presented for study is graded

on a grammatical plan, and teaches the meaning of new English words, phrases and sentences, by means of word-by-word translation in the vernacular.”<sup>15</sup>

They further add that:

“the unit of speech or reading is not a sentence- a sentence comes last of all, first letters and words and then sentence.”<sup>16</sup>

This method, according to Pahuja, “has no psychological basis but has two suppositions: that a foreign language can easily be learnt through translation and that grammar is the soul of language.”<sup>17</sup>

Criticizing this method, Rouse remarks that the aim of this method was “to know everything about something, rather than the thing itself.”<sup>18</sup>

Students found the method frustrating as they had to memorise words and rules. The use of ‘L<sub>1</sub>’ in the classroom prevented the learner from developing confidence to communicate in English. The learners found it very difficult to emancipate themselves from the clutches of their mother- tongue. They were unable to use English in their day-to-day communication. The excessive obsession with accuracy and competence in written rather than oral language inhibited learners who often preferred to remain silent rather than expose their ignorance.<sup>19</sup>

The emphasis in this method is mainly on translation of English words, phrases, and passages into and from the mother-tongue of a learner. Tracing out the roots of this method Yardi observes:

“Latin became very popular as the Roman Empire grew, and attained the status of an international language. It became the sole medium of instruction and remained so until after the middle ages. The emphasis in teaching Latin was, by and large, on formal grammar. This method grew out of this practice...”.<sup>20</sup>

J.B. Carroll, however, is of the view that this ‘traditional approach’ is of a comparatively recent origin. He states:

“In the colonial days of America, language instruction seems to have included considerably more attention to oral aspects of language, even when the language was Latin, Greek or Hebrew. The ‘traditional’ approach then seems to have been developed to meet the needs of rapidly expanding popular education in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Before 1875, members of the elite classes learned foreign languages through individualised instruction by native instructors ...”.<sup>21</sup>

The advocates of this method, as stated by Bhatia and Bhatia, assert that it is based on some sound principles such as:

- “(i) foreign phraseology is best interpreted through translation.
- (ii) foreign phraseology is best assimilated in the process of interpretation.

(iii) The structure of foreign language can best be taught by comparing and contrasting it with that of mother-tongue; and this is best effected through translation.”<sup>22</sup>

A number of methods and techniques have evolved for the teaching of English and also other foreign languages in the recent past, yet grammar- translation method is still in use in many parts of India. This method dominated European and other foreign language teaching for nearly a hundred years (1840 to 1940), till the advent of structural linguistics.

The popularity of this method among generations of teachers in India can be related to factors that are universal. As we know, it maintains the mother- tongue of the learner as the reference particularly in the process of learning the second / foreign languages.

Again it does not require special training or specialised skills on the part of the teacher. Its special appeal for teachers in India lies in the long established beliefs in the power of memory and its successful use in early learning of not only languages but other subjects as well.<sup>23</sup>

H.E. Palmer catalogues the weaknesses of this method in the following words:

“It is one which treats all languages as if they were dead, as if each consisted essentially of a collection of ancient documents to be deciphered and analysed... It is the one which categorically ignores all considerations of

phonetics, pronunciations and acoustic image, and boldly places language on a foundation of alphabets, spellings and writing systems... It is the one which assumes translation to be the main or only procedure for the learning of vocabulary... It is the one which assumes that word and sentence structure is to be attained mainly or solely through the memorising of the so-called rules of grammar.”<sup>24</sup>

In spite of the weaknesses catalogued by Palmer, the method could best be put in use by discarding the overemphasis on the grammatical rules and by making a room for imparting training in the spoken aspects of English. The grammar-translation method in its modified form continues to be widely used in some parts of the world even today. In the mid-and late 19<sup>th</sup> century opposition to it gradually developed, and as a result of this it lost its hold in the domain of teaching of English.

### **3.2.2 The Direct Method:**

The direct method, sometimes also called as the ‘reform’ method, ‘natural’ method, ‘psychological’ method, ‘phonetic’ method,<sup>25</sup> and ‘anti- grammatical’ method, was established in France and Germany around 1900, and introduced in India in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as a reform which was needed in the methods of teaching English.

This was developed, as Rao has pointed out, “as a reaction against the grammar-translation method”.<sup>26</sup>

The major assumptions of this method were in opposition to the grammar-translation method. Hence, it is considered as a

reaction against the grammar-translation method with a distinct grammatical bias.<sup>27</sup>

Again this method is a logical extension of the Natural method. It is also an offshoot of the Behaviourist school of psychology. It insists that the key to all language learning lies in association. It stresses the need for direct association between experience and expression in the foreign language. The aim is to enable the learner to think in foreign language and to cultivate an unerring language sense. It recognises that language sense has its roots in the spoken language and lays stress on the oral approach.<sup>28</sup>

In the opinion of Diller this method has one basic rule: “no translation is allowed”<sup>29</sup>. In fact, this method receives its name from the fact that meaning is to be conveyed directly in the target language through the use of demonstration and visual aids, with no recourse to the students’ native language.

For example, in a reading lesson to class V, a new word ‘watch’ occurs. If we associate it with its intermediate in the vernacular, i.e. ‘Gharee’, we are teaching the meaning indirectly; but if on the other hand, we associate the word with an actual ‘watch’ or with the picture of a watch, we are teaching the meaning directly.

If such a direct association is not possible, the teacher can explain the meaning of new words by giving synonyms, definitions, explanations, or by inference from the context. The same technique with a few modifications here and there, can be followed in teaching compositions-oral or written. Many new words can be added to the vocabulary of the learner without the intervention of the mother-tongue.

According to Bhatia and Bhatia, the main aim of teaching English by this method is to enable the learner:

“to think in English and to discourage the practice of inwardly thinking in one’s vernacular and then overtly translating the thought into the foreign language. He should be able to grasp what he hears or reads in English and should be able to express his thoughts and wishes directly and fluently so that in due course of time he obtains a real command over the language”.<sup>30</sup>

The other significant assumption of this method according to Thirumalai is:

“Adult L<sub>2</sub> learners can learn a second language in essentially the same manner as a child. Therefore, if possible, the teacher should try to create a natural learning environment within the classroom. Instead of explicit grammar instruction, the major emphasis is on communicating. Classes are carried out totally in the second language with absolutely no reliance on the first language or on any form of translation. The expectation is that through question-and-answer dialogues, the second language will gradually be acquired. Problems have arisen with such an approach because adults do not, in fact, learn exactly like children, and they express the need for explicit

instruction in grammar and other aspects of the second language.”<sup>31</sup>

Teaching of receptive skills (listening and reading) rather than teaching of productive skills (speaking and writing) was encouraged as the first step. Contrastive analysis of the native language of the learner with the target language was done. Teachers are required to have a good knowledge of phonetics of the language they teach, but they would use it to teach pronunciation and not phonetics. As this method uses conversation as the main tool in the teaching of a foreign language, the other tools are discussion and reading in the target language itself. Grammar is taught inductively.

W.F. Mackey points out the main characteristics of this method as:

“there is an ample scope for the use of everyday vocabulary and structures; grammar is taught by creating situations through visual presentations. There is ample scope for extensive listening and imitation until form becomes automatic.”<sup>32</sup>

Thus, it becomes evident that there is almost no scope for the learners’ mother- tongue. The method presupposes that a second language could be acquired as one acquires one’s mother-tongue through its ample natural exposure.

Wilga Rivers comments on this method as:

“A direct method class provided a clear contrast with the prevailing grammar-translation classes. The course began with the learning of the

foreign words and phrases for objects and actions in the classroom. When these could be used readily and appropriately the learning moved to the common situations and settings of everyday life, the lesson often developing around specially constructed pictures of life in the country where the language was spoken. Where the meaning of words could not be made clear by concrete representations, the teacher resorted to miming, sketches or explanations in the foreign language but never supplied native-language translations. From the beginning, the students were accustomed to hear complete and meaningful sentences which formed part of a simple discourse, often in the form of a question-answer interchange. Grammar was not taught explicitly and deductively as in the grammar-translation class but was learnt largely through practice. Students were encouraged to draw their own structural generalizations from what they had been learning by an inductive process. In this way, the study of grammar was kept at a functional level, being confined to those which were continually being used in speech. When grammar was taught more systematically, at a later stage, it was taught in a foreign language with the use of foreign language terminology.”<sup>33</sup>

From the aforesaid statement it becomes clear that this method discards the use of L<sub>1</sub>, even in teaching grammatical rules, favours the situational use of English, considers meaningful sentences at the core, teaches grammatical rules inductively, provides with ample opportunities to the students of using target language, takes care of the spoken aspects of the target language, and above all seeks gradual development of all, the basic linguistic skills viz-LSRW.

According to William E. Bull “any given method is only as effective as its implementation”.<sup>34</sup> He further adds that “the superior teacher has regularly gotten superior results regardless of the method.”<sup>35</sup>

From the comments cited above it becomes evident that no method could be a complete one in itself. What makes it important is the man (the teacher) who does not allow the explanations in the students’ native language creating English environment in the classroom. The main reason of the failure of this method in Indian context is perhaps the dearth of the expert teachers.

Therefore, the direct method considered better than the previous grammar-translation method, was not completely free from certain weaknesses either. For one thing the method is not all that direct, for only a limited number of words can be directly associated with their meanings or the objects they represent. Moreover, its main claim that it teaches a foreign language directly, and not through the mother-tongue, is only partly true.

Commenting on the limitations of this method Scott remarks:

“The clever youngster thrives on the direct method by defeating it.”<sup>36</sup>

Thus, the mother-tongue equivalents of words may not be used by the teacher but may be in the students' mind, and the student does not exclude them from his own mind.

Another limitation of this method in Verghese's opinion:

“arises from its neglect of the language skills like writing and reading because of overemphasis on oral work. This method practically ignores the study of grammar, this is not desirable because the knowledge of grammar is useful to the students to correct errors and strengthen language habits.”<sup>37</sup>

Wyatt also appears to be a critic of this method particularly in the Indian context. He observes that extreme followers of the direct method overlook a simple fact of human nature, of pupils' nature in particular. An Indian pupil cannot but utter in thought the vernacular equivalent of the new English word taught to him, because in associating the new English word with a familiar word in the vernacular, he is simply reinforcing the memory of the old friends. He Says:

“The Direct method in all its rigour mistakes the end for the means, the goal for the path that leads to it - the direct association of words and phrases with their meanings is the eventual objective of language study and not a means. We cannot expect the pupil to make the association at the outset.”<sup>38</sup>

Thus in summing up it may be admitted that the direct method, in spite of its merits, did not make much progress because it

neglected the facts mentioned above, and therefore, failed in the Indian contexts.

### **3.2.3 The Audio-Lingual Method:**

During the World War II, American soldiers had an urgent need to learn languages like-German, French, Chinese or Japanese to communicate effectively when posted in various countries. The Army Specialised Training Programme (ASTP) was established in 1942 by American linguists to meet this urgent need. 55 American Universities were involved in the programme by the beginning of 1943. This technique of teaching was initially called the ‘Army Method’ and was the first to be based on linguistic theory and behavioural psychology.

The objective of this programme, as stated by Richards Jack, C. and T.S. Rodgers, was for students “to attain conversational proficiency in variety of foreign languages.”<sup>39</sup>

Since this was not the goal of conventional foreign language courses in the US, new approaches were necessary. Leonard Bloomfield, a linguist at Yale, had already developed training programmes as a part of their linguistic research that were designed to give linguists and Anthropologists mastery of American-Indian languages and other languages they were studying. Textbooks did not exist for such languages. The technique which Bloomfield and his colleagues used was sometimes called as the ‘informant method’.<sup>40</sup> Excellent results were achieved by this method.

The ‘ASTP’ lasted only two years but attracted considerable attention in the popular press and in the academic community. For the next ten years the army method and its suitability for use in regular language programmes were discussed.

Charles Fries of the University of Michigan led the way in applying principles from structural linguistics in developing the method and for this reason, it has sometimes been referred as the ‘Michigan Method’.<sup>41</sup>

Later in its development, principles from behavioural psychology were incorporated. It was thought that the way to acquire the sentence patterns of the target language was through conditioning- helping learners to respond correctly to stimuli through shaping and reinforcement. Learners could overcome the habits of their native language and form the new habits required to be target language speakers.

The term ‘Audiolingualism’ was coined by Nelson Brooks in 1964, highlighting the basic belief of structuralism that: ‘speech is primary’.<sup>42</sup> Language is viewed as a set of structures. The behaviourist theory of learning was adopted. Language learning was assumed to involve a chain of stimulus-response-reinforcement; and it was believed that one learnt a language by acquiring a series of stimulus-response chain.

V. Saraswathi quotes the assumptions of this method stated by Stern as follows:

- “(i) Foreign language learning is basically a mechanical process of habit formation.
- (ii) Language skills are learned effectively; if items of the foreign language are presented in the spoken form before the written form.
- (iii) Analogy provides a better foundation for foreign language learning than analysis.

- (iv) The meaning which the words of a language have for the native speaker can be learned only in a matrix of allusions to the culture of the people who speak that language.”<sup>43</sup>

The Audio-lingual method, according to Thirumalai, in some sense:

“represents a return to the Direct Method, as its main goal is to develop native-like speaking ability in its learners. It is an extension as well as refinement of the direct method. Translation and reference to ‘L<sub>1</sub>’ are not permitted.”

Underlying this method, he further adds that:

“L<sub>2</sub> learning should be regarded as a mechanistic process of habit formation...Audio-lingual learning comprises dialogue memorization and pattern drills, thus, ensuring careful control of responses. None of the drills or patterns are to be explained, since knowledge of grammatical rules would only obstruct the mechanical formation of habits.”<sup>44</sup>

From the statements cited above it is evident that Audio-lingualism had its theoretical roots in the direct method; which was an extension of the Natural method. Again the audio-lingual method used exhaustively the linguistic structures identified in the descriptive analysis of the target language. It was skill oriented, with a practical emphasis on ‘Oracy’.

This method provided ‘contextualized’ language practice in true-to-life situations including dialogue. Again, it provided a wide variety of activities to help maintain interest, and it made extensive use of visuals. It arranged for abundant practice although “the grammar based audiolingual approach moved cautiously from supposedly simple to more and more linguistically complex features, often without adequate consideration for what might be needed in everyday situations.”<sup>45</sup>

William Moulton has stated five important characteristics of this method as follows:

- “(i) Language is speech, not writing.
- (ii) A Language is a set of habits.
- (iii) Teach the language, not about the language.
- (iv) A language is what its native speakers say, not what someone thinks they ought to say; and
- (v) Languages are different.”<sup>46</sup>

Examining each one of the five characteristics of this method, Wilga Rivers made the following recommendations with regard to Audio-lingualism:

- “(i) Learners’ perceptions, motivation, and feelings should be taken into account.
- (ii) The emphasis should be shifted from linguistic form to communication in a socio-cultural context.”<sup>47</sup>

Thus, it becomes clear that this method emphasises teaching through oral presentation prior to written presentation. It believes in the fact that the children learn to speak before they learn to read or write. Thus, the teaching materials, that we prepare, should be based on the ‘primacy of speech.’

B.F. Skinner strongly believes that ‘a language is a set of habits.’ He further adds that “language is verbal behaviour.”<sup>48</sup>

Followers and supporters of this method were extremely influenced by its ‘operant conditioning’ theories. For them, the linguistic behaviour of the child can change as does its social behaviour through the process of habit forming. The kind of thinking introduced mimicry, memorization, and pattern drill into foreign language teaching.

Audio-lingual teachers consider that ‘teaching through grammar-translation method is teaching about the language and not the language.’ They give little attention to grammar. In this connection Moulton says:

“The real goal of instruction was an ability to talk the language and not to talk about it.”<sup>49</sup>

The statement cited above thus, makes it clear that the Audio-lingual method laid the practical emphasis on ‘oral’ practice of the language. Again, the assumption that ‘a language is what its native speakers say’ prompted the advocates of this method to prepare learning materials with expressions which student would hear around them in the country where the language is spoken. The teaching materials avoided prescriptive school grammars, passages from literary texts, and classics. Materials embodied with day-to-day experience were of prime importance for teaching.

The increasing use of Audio-visual aids in second language teaching, according to Allen H.B. is based on the modern Audio-lingual theory which stresses on a 'listening-speaking-reading-writing sequence' in second language learning situations. The theory insists that 'learning to speak a language becomes easier, if the learner has enough training in comprehension.' Linguists and language teaching experts lay emphasis on planned listening experiences. Their main arguments are:

- “(i) Ear-training facilitates speaking. Articulation is dependent upon hearing sounds accurately...
- (ii) Concentration on one skill at a time facilitates learning by reducing the load on the student and by permitting the use of materials and techniques geared to the specific objectives and requirements of each skill.
- (iii) When students are required to speak from the outset, the likelihood of errors is increased... where listening comprehension precedes speaking, the students' initial experience includes more correct responses and more frequent positive reinforcement less comprehension, and more rapid development of confidence in his language learning ability.
- (iv) Prematurely listening to his own unauthenticated pronunciation, and to that

of other students, may interfere with the students' discrimination and retention of correct sounds".<sup>50</sup>

Dr. Sharada Bhat has recorded the main strengths of this method as follows:

“the teaching materials are more scientifically and systematically prepared than the one-author texts; it teaches a language in a graded manner; the motivation of the students is of a higher degree; the students enjoy learning the target language because the teaching materials are specially designed to interest the students avoiding boring passages from the classes”.<sup>51</sup>

Apart from these strengths, the Audio-lingual method was not completely free from its weaknesses and flaws. Behaviourist assumptions underlying this method have come under severe criticism. The importance given to achieve ‘oral accuracy’ only has prompted many linguists to question the very necessity of a teacher. Albert Valdman has criticized “the exaggerated emphasis on oral drilling”<sup>52</sup> in this method.

Decanny has the following to say about mechanical drilling.

He says:

“Drills are inherently unnatural, contrived examples of the use of language. Humanising these devices is left to the teacher. Unless the students are stimulated by variety, novelty, and a quick change of cues, they may be mouthing

meaningless sentences and in this unwilling frame of mind no learning takes place.”<sup>53</sup>

In spite of the strong objection to the mechanical drilling, many pedagogues see some values in this method. In this regard K. Chastain writes:

“to harvest these values the method must be made more responsive to the students’ intellectual needs. The methods of drill and pattern have proved pedagogically very sound. Therefore, the language teacher should devise methods to make the drills more meaningful and interesting bringing in real communicative situations outside the classroom”.<sup>54</sup>

Thus, no Audio-lingual method can, however, be successful in the absence of a qualified, trained, inventive and resourceful teacher. Machines cannot replace teachers. The approach is and ought to be teacher-centred; that is to say, the aids require planned utilization by specially trained teachers. The high incidence of poorly qualified teachers only increases the waste of student time and public resources. Good teachers and good materials are an indispensable condition for the successful implementation of any scheme of teaching English as a second language in India.

#### **3.2.4 The Bilingual Method:**

This method was developed by Dr. C.J. Dodson. As the name suggests, the method makes use of two languages- the mother tongue and the target language. Hence, this can be considered as a combination of the direct method and the grammar-translation method. ‘Selection, ‘Gradation’, ‘Presentation’, and ‘Repetition’ are

the four cardinal principles of all language teaching methodology. This method has all the four principles in it.

In the opinion of Dodson a good method should promote thinking in the language. According to him a new method should have the following features as:

- “i) It must be simple.
- ii) It must strike a balance between the spoken and the written word, accuracy and fluency.
- iii) Constant revision of what is taught and learnt.
- iv) A new method must offer a new approach to the application of translation work.
- v) The method must give the teacher an opportunity to promote inter-communication between himself and the individual pupil.
- vi) The method must be sufficiently flexible to cope with various classroom conditions and the pupils’ specific and general abilities.”<sup>55</sup>

The aims of this method as stated by Yardi are-to make the pupil fluent and accurate in the spoken and written words and to prepare the pupil in such a manner that he can achieve true bilingualism.<sup>56</sup>

The main principles of the bilingual method as stated by Dr. Sharada Bhat are: Controlled use of the students’ mother-tongue, the

introduction of reading and writing early in the course of language learning and integration of writing and reading skills.<sup>57</sup>

The advocates of this method believe that it is the wastage of time for recreating a situation while teaching a foreign language. They think that teaching-learning method is useful when mother-tongue equivalents are given to the pupil without duplicating the situation.

It differs from translation method in two respects. In the first case it is the teacher only who uses the mother-tongue to explain meaning. Furthermore, pupils are given a lot of practice in the drill of sentence patterns. Such practice is not provided in the translation method.

The Bilingual method was the reaction against the direct method. Dodson vehemently attacks the direct method in the following words:

“It is one of the tragedies at present being enacted in some emergent countries, where a major world language is being taught as a second language to young children by the direct method, that if this type of teaching were successful, which by all account it is not, the vernacular would disappear within a few generations. It is only possible to teach a second language by direct method techniques at the expense of the first language, and it is sheer hypocrisy to claim that the final aim of such teaching philosophies is bilingualism. Every aspect of the direct method teaching is directed

towards keeping the two languages as far apart as possible, thus destroying the bridge which the learner must continuously cross to and fro if he wishes to be truly bilingual.”<sup>58</sup>

Dodson, thus, makes it clear that the excessive use of the direct method would result in disappearance of the vernacular in future. He was of the view that the direct method, operated at the expense of the first language, could not make the learner truly bilingual.

This method is not an independent new method with new concepts and models. It is, in fact, a happy synthesis of the best principles and features present in the other methods. It has modified the principles of other methods to overcome the objections and criticisms and to suit the objectives of the second language learning today. This idea was expressed by Carrol in the following words:

“But, then, in these highly advanced times it could hardly be expected that a new method would represent anything more than a new combination of procedures.”<sup>59</sup>

The important contribution of this method is that it had made possible for the students to get both quantitative and qualitative acquisition of language skills.

The equipments necessary for the Bilingual method in Yardi’s opinion are: a printed text of the situation to be learnt. This text ought not to be exceeding thirty sentences in length at the secondary level. The text has to be linguistically graded and made interesting to the learner. Each situation in the text should have a picture strip, not just one composite picture as in the usual textbook, representing the

development of the content in the text- lesson. The intention in using the picture strip is not to help the learner acquire the sentence meaning but to retain it. Paucity of good teachers with excellent command of spoken and written English is the main difficulty in Yardi's opinion to introduce this method in the present Indian contexts.<sup>60</sup>

To conclude in the words of Dr. H.N.L. Sastry<sup>61</sup> this method is simple from the point of view of teaching and learning. That is why we see majority of teachers in Indian schools follow this method. The method increases the rate and amount of learning in the classroom and it creates better attitudes in the minds of students towards learning English. It also establishes rapport between the teacher and the taught.

### **3.2.5 Dr. Michael West's The New Method:**

This method was evolved by Dr. Michael West, who taught English in India for a number of years and was well-aware of the English language teaching situation in India. He found that for Indian learners of English, learning to read English was easier than speaking it. He recommended an emphasis on reading not only because he regarded it as the most useful skill to acquire in a foreign language but also because, as Stern points out:

“it was the easiest skill with the greatest surrender value for the student in the early stages of language learning.”<sup>62</sup>

West viewed language teaching programme as a whole and gave each skill its legitimate place. He believed that:

“The initial stage of learning a foreign language should, we believe, be to learn to read it-even in the case of the student who aims at complete mastery (of reading, writing and speech)”.<sup>63</sup>

His compilation of the ‘New Method Readers’ paved the way towards the method based primarily on reading and it came to be known as ‘The Reading Method.’

According to Yardi, this method was of ‘particular relevance’ to India. West realized that, by and large, most Indians required only the receptive skills of English. Besides, learning and teaching how to read and comprehend written English is easy and not affected by the size of the class. Stern says:

“The reading method was a theory of language teaching which deliberately restricted the goal of language instruction to one of practical attainable utility.”<sup>64</sup>

Thus, the statement cited above makes it clear that this method was well supported by the psychological principle that listening and understanding precede speaking and writing. Hence, this method had a strongly pragmatic basis.

Dr. West’s book ‘Bilingualism’ contains several observations. The following one cited by Yardi makes clear the utility of the first, second, and third language. West observes:

“In the typical case the first language is the vehicle of thoughts about the home life and perhaps of the literature expressive of emotions and ideas connected with the home; while the

second language is a vehicle of communication for matters of government, commerce, industry, scientific thought and higher culture generally. There may be a third language which is a medium of communication for international relations and higher education, and fourth necessary for the religion and ancient culture of the people.”<sup>65</sup>

West’s account of the linguistic needs of a country, with certain modifications, may fit the Indian situation well. To prove the efficacy of his method and to achieve his professed aim West prepared a series of readers containing interesting reading matter with graded vocabulary. Some special features of these readers, according to Pahuja, are: new words were evenly distributed in the lessons to facilitate reading with understanding. The aim of the series was to awaken in the students the desire to read more and more.<sup>66</sup>

In Michael West’s view as cited by Kripa, K. Gautam “plenty of exercises in reading comprehension would make for later progress in speech and writing”.<sup>67</sup> Here he overestimated the value of the passive work as an aid to active work. West’s assertion that silent reading is a key to speech and writing is not corroborated by modern investigations into language learning.

Assessing this method Stern asserts :

“This method grew out of practical educational considerations, not from a shift in linguistic or psychological theory...It introduced into language teaching some important new elements as:

- (a) The possibility of devising techniques of language learning geared to specific purposes, in this case the reading objective;
- (b) The application of vocabulary control to second language texts, as a means of better grading of texts;
- (c) The creation of 'graded readers'; and
- (d) Thanks to vocabulary control, the introduction of techniques of rapid reading to the foreign language classroom.”<sup>68</sup>

In view of the above it becomes clear that Dr. West's the New Method introduced into language teaching some important new elements, but its appeal did not last long. The method suffered the usual fate of any method; lack of adequately trained teachers who could use it effectively.

This method, like others, is not free from its weaknesses. Some of these are pointed out by Vildomec as cited by Yardi in the following words:

“This, of course, is a great error, utterly disregarding the experience of any able teacher of modern languages in any good modern European school. It may be psychologically an admissible method with highly educated adults, but certainly not with an average child who should, if possible, hear the foreign words, use them in conversation, see them and write them in one and the same lesson.”<sup>69</sup>

To conclude, it may be said that the main demerits of this method are that it ignores the important basic three linguistic skills viz- listening, speaking and writing. Its emphasis is only on reading skill; and lastly it relied on the bulky text books.

### 3.2.6 Suggestopedia:

This method was advocated by Dr. Georgi Loznov, a Bulgarian doctor of medicine, psychiatrist and parapsychologist. It is also known as Desuggestopedia, a specific set of learning recommendations derived from Suggestology which Loznov describes as a “science... concerned with the systematic study of the non-rational and/ or non-conscious influences” that human beings are constantly responding to.<sup>70</sup>

The most conspicuous characteristics of this method are the decoration, furniture, and arrangement of the classroom, the use of music and the authoritative behaviour of the teacher. The claims for suggestopedic learning are dramatic.

Loznov comments on the utility of this method as:

“There is no sector of public life where Suggestology would not be useful.”<sup>71</sup>

He further adds that:

“memorization in learning by the Suggestopedic method seems to be accelerated 25 times over that in learning by conventional methods.”<sup>72</sup>

According to Richards and Rodgers a most conspicuous feature of Suggestopedia is the centrality of music and musical rhythm to learning. Loznov employs music “to relax learners as well as to structure pace and punctuate the presentation of linguistic material.”<sup>73</sup>

Suggestopedic learning is built on a particular type of music and a particular rate of presentation. Loznov recommends a series of

slow movement (sixty beats a minute) because it is under stimulation of sixty rhythmic patterns that the body relaxes and the mind becomes most alert and aware to receive learning.

The central assumption that underlies the suggestopedic method is that the learner learns not only from the effect of direct instruction but from the environment in which the instruction takes place. The bright decor of the classroom, the musical background, the shape of the chairs, and the personality of the teacher are considered as important in instruction as the form of the instructional material itself.

Suggestopedic method places a high value on vocabulary recall and memorization of vocabulary pairs. However, Laznov emphasizes that increased memory power is not an isolated skill but is a result of “positive, comprehensive stimulation of personality.”<sup>74</sup>

Suggestion is at the heart of the theory of learning underlying suggestopedia. Laznov distinguishes his theory of suggestion from the “narrow clinical concept of hypnosis as a kind of static, sleep like, altered state of consciousness.”<sup>75</sup> He further claims that what distinguishes his method from hypnosis and other forms of mind control is that these other forms lack “a desuggestive-suggestive sense” and “fail to create a constant set up access to reserves through concentrative psycho-relaxation.”<sup>76</sup>

Bancroft notes that the teaching material is “presented with varying intonations and a co-ordination of sound and printed word or illustration.”<sup>77</sup>

This method puts several challenging demands on both the teacher and the administration of the learning situation and it is not

possible to adapt the existing ELT framework in Indian situations to suit these demands.

To conclude it may be said that to meet the present day challenges in teaching English, first of all, English should not be treated as a subject as it is to be used actively in interacting with one another throughout the world. By using conventional methods, maximum portion of class time will be wasted in exercises and drilling, dealing with grammar and pronunciation which takes away a large portion of class time. One can teach the language effectively and motivate the students towards language learning with the help of latest language teaching tools and with the support of technology. If they teach as they taught earlier, then they may not achieve the required goals of teaching English in the present global scenario.

### **3.3 Approaches to English Language Teaching:**

#### **3.3.1 The Structural Approach:**

This approach as Kripa K. Gautam states “is based on the belief that language consists of ‘structures’ and that the mastery of these structures is more important than the acquisition of vocabulary. Since structure is what is important and unique about a language, early practice should focus on mastery of phonological and grammatical structures rather than on mastery of vocabulary”.<sup>78</sup>

This approach, according to Kulkarni ‘emphasizes the teaching and learning of the basic items or materials that constitute the framework of a language’.<sup>79</sup>

The cause of the emergence of this approach was the extensive research conducted on English language teaching as a foreign language at the University of London institute of Education.

This approach as, Dr. Bhat asserts 'is definitely an improvement upon the Direct Method, though the techniques and principles are not widely different'.<sup>80</sup>

The exponents of this approach consider that language consists of 'structures' and structures are more important than the vocabulary. These structures are carefully graded in terms of both meaning and form.

The term 'structural' according to Kripa K. Gautam "is referred to the following characteristics:

- "a) Elements in a language are linearly produced in a rule governed way.
- b) Language samples can be exhaustively described at any structural level of description (phonemic, morphological and syntactic).
- c) Linguistic levels are thought of as a system within systems. These sub-systems are pyramidally structured-phonemic systems leading to morphemic systems, and those in turn lead to be higher level systems of phrases, clauses and sentences".<sup>81</sup>

The two essential features of this approach are careful grading of structures, and vocabulary control. J.B. Bruton in a working paper presented at the Nagpur Seminar in 1958 summarises the basic assumptions regarding the nature of language and the methods best suited for the presentation of linguistic items. He says:

“a) language is primarily a spoken thing and... therefore, our approach to a foreign language should in a first instance be through its spoken forms, b) ...mastery over the signalling system of a language is more important than detailed knowledge of the forms of the language; c) ...this mastery is best acquired by repetition of the various components of the system in varied forms; d) ... since language arises from situation, the teacher’s task is to create meaningful situations from which language will arise easily and naturally; e)... mastery over a given range of structures and confidence in their use are best imparted by concentrating on the teaching of one item at a time; f)...each item must be firmly established orally before pupils encounter it in their textbooks”.<sup>82</sup>

Yardi defines the term ‘structures’ as an “internal ordering of linguistic items”, and further adds that structures may be defined as “devices that we use to make signals, to convey meanings, and indicate relationship.”<sup>83</sup> Yardi further points out that although the terms ‘structure’ and ‘pattern’ are generally used interchangeably by some teachers, they are not identical, as the former has a linguistic orientation, while the latter has a pedagogic orientation.

Thus the structural approach is based on structures which have been carefully selected and graded. According to Dr. (Mrs) Sharada V. Bhat :

“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”.<sup>84</sup>

Productive structures, as Dr. Bhat opines, are those with which other structures can be built. Naturally the productive structures are given more importance, since after the mastery of those structures the student can build other structures by themselves. Some structures can be taught easily with demonstration.

According to C. Paul Verghese “a language is best learnt through practice in real situations, this is because of the close relation that exists between experience and expression”. Verghese further adds that “there are two kinds of situations: real and artificial... Every structure must be encountered and practised in a context of situation”.<sup>85</sup>

The intensive practice and drill in this approach provide multiple opportunities to the learner. In India this approach has been found effective at lower levels, but inadequate at higher levels. Another limitation of this approach is that the intensive drilling of structures might turn mechanical very soon. Yardi finds out one main inadequacy with this approach that “they don’t help to develop ‘communicative competence’”, and he further states that “the structural approach may help in making correct sentences, it fails in helping the learner to make correct utterances”.<sup>86</sup> Without making any exaggerated claims for this approach, we may say that, it is quite

effective in the hands of trained, and dedicated teachers. Inadequate teacher-training has been the cause of the setback the structural approach has suffered in India.

### **3.3.2 The Structural-Oral-Situational Approach:**

This approach, popularly known as the S-O-S approach, came into being as an alternative to the direct method. It is an outcome of the experiments carried out in the army camps during world War II<sup>87</sup>. It is the presentation and practice of carefully selected and graded grammatical structures of English in effective, meaningful situations, initially through speech and later through reading and writing.

Language is viewed as structurally related elements for encoding of meaning, the elements being phonemes, morphemes, words, structures and sentence types.

According to Rao the theory underlying this approach is that language exists in situations; it cannot be used in vacuum. Language is used according to the needs of the situation.<sup>88</sup> In view of this Rao suggests presenting a new language item in meaningful situations. It would make the input comprehensible for the learner. Situational use of English is aimed at in this approach.

Prominent names associated with this approach are Charles Fries, Harold Palmer and A.S. Hornby.

Harold Palmer points out that there are three processes in learning a language- receiving the knowledge or materials, fixing it in the memory by repetition, and using it in actual practice until it becomes a personal skill.<sup>89</sup>

By using meaningful situations, according to Geetha Nagraj, the use of mother-tongue can be avoided. In view of this Geetha Nagraj suggests that these language items should be given in meaningful situations, the learners can deduce the meaning and the context from the situation in which it is used.<sup>90</sup>

Pitman suggests that the situations will be controlled carefully to teach the new language material...in such a way that there can be no doubt in the learners' mind regarding the meaning of what he hears.<sup>91</sup>

Summarizing the characteristics of this approach Geetha Nagraj Says:

- I. Speech is the basis of language teaching-new language items and vocabulary items are presented orally before they are presented in the written form.
- II. The language items which are commonly used by native speakers in their day-to-day language are selected for teaching.
- III. The items are also graded according to their usefulness, frequency and teachability.
- IV. The language items thus selected are presented and practised in meaningful situations.
- V. Vocabulary items are selected with reference to the general service list.
- VI. Reading and writing are based on items which have already been introduced and practised orally.<sup>92</sup>

This approach got well established by 1975 but soon then some doubts were also raised on its efficiency. In Prabhu's words 'the S-O-S principles were increasingly being questioned, mainly on the grounds that learners practice situation didn't ensure that they could make sentences correctly in other contexts, and that, although learners seem to learn their command of language structure at the end of a structurally graded course, lasting several years, was still very unsatisfactory, requires good deal of remedial re-teaching which, in turn, led to similarly unsatisfactory results.'<sup>93</sup>

The other charges were that the teachers were required to do a lot of preparatory work, the structures soon become over generalized and mechanical, less attention in this approach, was paid to the reading skill etc.

### **3.3.3 The Communicative Approach:**

Dr. Sharada Bhat opines that the communicative approach to teaching of English is organized on the basis of certain communicative functions, such as apologizing, describing, inviting, promising etc. that the ESL learners need to know. She further, adds that this approach, as applied to English explains the language in terms of the functions it performs. This approach, according to Dr. Bhat, does not ignore the role of grammar in the process of language learning, but it insists that the grammatical rules are useless unless they are applied to real-life situations<sup>94</sup>.

Communicative approach focuses on the significance of language functions because the learner needs knowledge of both meaning and functions. It lays emphasis on functional, communicative and social interactive activities. It also lays emphasis on the semantic aspect of the language. In order to improve the

ability of reading comprehension it is essential that the learner knows the semantic aspect of the language.

Dr. N.S. Prabhu draws a distinction between linguistic competence and communicative competence and says that there is a logical relationship between the two. Prabhu says that a language structure is best acquired when the learners' attention is on meaning, when the learner is preoccupied with understanding, working out, relating or conveying messages and copes with the language.<sup>95</sup> This 'coping' or 'deployment' is central to the process of language learning. Prabhu further states that there is no syllabus in terms of structure, no pre-selection of language items for any given lesson. The basis of each lesson is a problem or a task and the conduct of the lessons consists of setting the task, demonstrating ways of tackling it and, in the process, giving some pupils a chance to attempt it, then getting all the pupils to attempt and, finally giving each pupil a rough indication of the measure of his success.

The function of the task, as Prabhu opines, is to bring about a self-reliant effort by the learners. Tasks, according to him, consist of : interpreting a schedule, giving a set of directions, deciding which action is right and why. Attention to grammar is entirely incidental. Incorrect sentences are rectified by the teacher.

William Littlewood has distributed communicative competence into pre-communicative and communicative learning activities.<sup>96</sup> In the methodology of the pre-communicative activities the teacher isolates specific elements of knowledge or skill which compose communicative activity and provides the learner with opportunities to practise them separately. The learners are thus trained in the part-skills of communication rather than practising the

total skills to be acquired. This aimed at providing command of the linguistic structures, without actualising it for communicative purposes. Therefore, the learners' main purpose is to produce language which is acceptable and appropriate. Pre-communicative activities are categorised into structural activities and quasi-communicative activities, the latter take account of communicative as well as structural facts about language.

A major aspect of the ethnography of this approach, according to Patrik T. Kameen, is the analysis of the events in terms of their constructive components. These are: participants (speaker, hearer, sender, and receiver), setting (i.e. a psychological or cultural setting), the actual form of a message (i.e. a linguistic description of the message), topic (i.e. what is the message about), Purpose (i.e. goal, intention), key (i.e. serious, mock), channel (e.g. oral, written), code (i.e. language or variety within a language), norms of interpretation (i.e. how different norms of interaction or violation of them interpreted), genre (i.e. casual speed, poem, prayer, form, letter).<sup>97</sup>

Allen Widdowson points out: 'utterances can take on an enormously wide range of meanings in different contexts'.<sup>98</sup> He further adds that the learner must be aware of the social meanings of the language forms in different types of social contexts which he may have to face in his life. The classroom teaching should preserve the communicative character of the language and it should enable the learner to face the real-life situations.

Keith Morrow is also of the same opinion. He writes:

“any use of language will take place in a context, and the language forms which are

appropriate will vary in accordance with context”.<sup>99</sup>

Experts in the field of CLT observe that creating and interpreting everyday situations in the language class should be the important strategies of teaching English as a second language. This is evident from what Littlewood has to say:

“Foreign language learners need opportunities to develop the skills, by being exposed to situations... the learners need to acquire not only repertoire of linguistic items, but repertoire of strategies for using them in concrete situations”.<sup>100</sup>

Littlewood further writes elaborately on the significance of meaning or semantic options, as language is essentially a system of meaning potential i.e. it consists of sets of semantic options available to the language users that relate what the user can do in terms of social behaviour, what the user can say in terms of grammar. Littlewood writes:

“Students must also learn to relate language to the social meaning that it carries and to use it as a vehicle for social interaction. To this end, it is necessary to increase their sense of performing in a meaningful social context, rather than simply responding to promote... with the necessary linguistic form and the necessary links between form and meaning”.<sup>101</sup>

Howatt distinguishes between a ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ version of this approach as:

“There is in a sense, a ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ version of the communicative approach. The weak version which has become more or less standard practice in the last ten years, stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching...The ‘strong’ version of communicative teaching, on the other hand, advances the claim that language is acquired through communication, so that it is not merely a question of activating an existing but inert knowledge of the language, but of stimulating the development of the language system itself. If the former could be described as ‘learning to use’ English, the latter entails ‘using English to learn it’”.<sup>102</sup>

Summarising the main characteristics of the communicative approach Richards and Rodgers asserts:

- “i) Language is a system for the expression of meaning.
- ii) The primary function of language is for interaction and communication.
- iii) The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses.

- iv) The primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse”.<sup>103</sup>

An important aspect of communicative approach which has attracted attention of the applied linguists is the syllabus model. Wilkins’s notional- syllabus was one of the very first syllabus models, which specified the semantic-grammatical categories and the categories of communicative function that learners need to express. But it was soon criticized by linguists as merely replacing functions. According to Richards and Rodgers “it specified products rather than communicative processes”.<sup>104</sup>

Widdowson argued that notional-functional categories provide:

“only a very partial and imprecise description of certain semantic and pragmatic rules which are used for reference when people interact. They tell us nothing about the procedures people employ in the application of these rules when they are actually engaged in communicative activity. If we are to adopt a communicative approach to teaching which takes as its primary purpose the development of the ability to do things with language, then it is discourse which must be at the centre of our attention”.<sup>105</sup>

Prabhu regards task-specification and task-organisation as the appropriate criteria for communicative syllabus as:

“The only form of syllabus which is compatible with and can support communicational teaching seems to be a purely procedural one-which lists in more or less detail, the types of tasks to be attempted in the classroom and suggests an order of complexity for tasks of the same kind”.<sup>106</sup>

The roles of the learner and the teacher as visualised in CLT are different from those found in the traditional second language classrooms. Breen and Candlin describe the learner’s role within CLT in the following terms:

“The role of the learner as negotiator-between the self, the learning process, and the object of learning, emerges from and interacts with the role of joint negotiator within the group and within the classroom procedures and activities, which the group undertakes. The implication for the learner is that he should contribute as much as he gains, and thereby learn in an interdependent way”.<sup>107</sup>

Thus, it is the co-operative approach to learning which Breen and Candlin stress in CLT. Students interact primarily with each other rather than with the teacher.

Breen and Candlin further describe the role of the teacher in CLT which is essentially as two-fold:

“The teacher has two main roles: the first is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the classroom, and between these participants and various activities and texts. The second is to act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group. The latter role is closely related to the objectives of the first role and arises from it. These roles imply a set of secondary roles for the teacher; first, as an organiser of resources and as a resource himself, second as a guide within the classroom procedures and activities... A third role for the teacher is that of a researcher and learner with much to contribute in terms of appropriate knowledge and abilities, actual and observed experience of the nature of learning and organizational capacities”.<sup>108</sup>

Thus, the CLT teacher’s primary role is to organize the classroom as a setting for communication and communicative activities. The teaching materials are also designed to promote communicative language use. Richards and Rodgers consider three kinds of instructional materials currently used in CLT and label these as: ‘text-based, task-based, and realia’.<sup>109</sup>

Michael Swan argues against the belief that the traditional structure-based courses neglect the teaching of functions, notions and skills. He writes:

“It is quite false to represent older courses as concentrating throughout on form at the expense of meaning, or as failing to teach people to do things with language”.<sup>110</sup>

However, Swan concedes that we have, by and large, gained more than we have lost from the communicative approach in that it has helped us to analyse and teach the language of interaction. We can benefit from the innovative language teaching methodologies only if “we can keep our heads, recognize dogma for what it is, and try out the new techniques without giving up useful older methods simply because they have been proved wrong”.<sup>111</sup>

Richards and Rodgers catalogue some of the important questions which are raised by the applied linguists and pedagogues alike regarding the communicative approach as:

- “i) can the communicative approach be applied at all levels in a language programme?
- ii) is communicative approach equally suited to ESL and EFL situations?
- iii) does communicative approach require grammar-based syllabuses to be abandoned or merely revised?”.<sup>112</sup>

To conclude, the communicative approach takes into account all the four basic linguistic skills viz. listening, speaking, reading, writing and also the conversational skill where the social context of utterances play the significant role.

### **3.4 Conclusion:**

Thus it could be concluded that it is impossible to arrive at the perfect approach or technique for language learning in Indian context. Language learning is such a complex process that it is impossible to offer a single solution to all our problems. Perhaps the best method is the one which works, and this varies from context to context. Any method which creates conditions for learning to take place is good. It should enable the learner to acquire the strategies of learning rather than merely equipping him with knowledge. What is important for the teacher, therefore, is to find out what approach and what method will enable him to realize a particular objective under a set of particular circumstances.

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