

CHAPTER 3

METHODS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (ELT)

Language teaching is discussed in terms of a few related aspects – namely, methods, approaches, strategies and techniques. The terms "approach", "method" and "technique" are hierarchical concepts. An approach is a set of correlative assumptions about the nature of language and language learning, but does not involve procedure or provide any details about how such assumptions should translate into the classroom setting. A method is a plan for presenting the language material to be learned and should be based upon a selected approach. In order for an approach to be translated into a method, an instructional system must be designed considering the objectives of the teaching/learning, how the content is to be selected and organized, the types of tasks to be performed, the roles of students and the roles of teachers. A technique is a very specific, concrete stratagem or trick designed to accomplish an immediate objective. Such are derived from the controlling method, and less-directly, with the approach.

Dhand (1990) observes: “There is a tremendous semantic confusion in the use of such words as methods, strategies and techniques because they are used interchangeably in the educational literature. Basically, there are three methods of teaching: transmission, inquiry and a combination of the two (or eclectic method). A method is an overall procedure or process to achieve certain goals”.

To define the term ‘method’, Webster’s *Third New International Dictionary* often uses expressions such as “a procedure or process for attaining” a goal or “a systematic procedure, technique” or “a set of rules” very often related to a science or art (Method).

For the purposes of this thesis, we can consider the method to be a well staged procedure to teach a new language. Before entering the arena of data analysis, it is apt to cite different methods formulated from time to time for making English language teaching more effective.

There are many methods of teaching languages. Some have had their heyday and have fallen into relative obscurity; others are widely used now; still others have a small following. The English language teaching tradition has been subjected to a tremendous change. Perhaps more than any other discipline, this tradition has been practiced, in various adaptations, in language classrooms all around the world for centuries. While the teaching of Mathematics or Physics, that is, the methodology of teaching Mathematics or Physics, has, to a greater or lesser extent, remained the same, this is hardly the case with English or language teaching in general. There are some milestones in the development of this tradition, which we will briefly touch upon, in an attempt to reveal the importance of research in the selection and implementation of the optimal methods and techniques for language teaching and learning.

i. The Classical Method: The Grammar-Translation Method

The Grammar-Translation Method cannot probably be traced back to the tenets of any particular master teacher or methodologist but it seems to be rooted in the formal teaching of Greek and Latin which prevailed in Europe for many centuries (Nagaraj 2008). Stern (1983) observes, “No full and carefully documented history of grammar translation exists”. In the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, foreign language learning was

associated with the learning of Latin and Greek; and both supposed to promote their speakers' intellectuality. At that time, it was of vital importance to focus on grammatical rules, syntactic structures, along with rote memorisation of vocabulary and translation of literary texts. There was no provision for the oral use of the languages under study; after all, both Latin and Greek were not being taught for oral communication but for the sake of their speakers' becoming 'scholarly' or creating an illusion of 'erudition'. Late in the nineteenth century, the Classical Method came to be known as the Grammar-Translation Method, which offered very little beyond an insight into the grammatical rules attending the process of translating from the second to the native language.

It is widely recognised that the Grammar-Translation Method is still one of the most popular and favourite models of language teaching, which has been rather stalwart and impervious to educational reforms, remaining a standard and *sine qua non* methodology. With hindsight, we could say that its contribution to language learning has been lamentably limited, since it has shifted the focus from the real language to a "dissected body" of nouns, adjectives, and prepositions, doing nothing to enhance a student's communicative ability in the foreign language. Translation is a useful tool to learn grammar, syntax, and lexis in both second language and target language. Teaching English to non-natives is always regarded as a daunting task. As the number of students and users has risen steadily since independence to make English the most widely learned language in India, the issue of English acquisition among the population has become a vital one.

The grammar translation method instructs students in grammar, and provides vocabulary with direct translations to memorise. It was the predominant method in Europe in the 19th century. It is a way of learning a language through a detailed study of its grammar. The learner then applies the rules of grammar in translating sentences and parts of texts from the mother tongue into the target language and vice versa (Nagaraj 2008). The first language is maintained as the reference system in the acquisition of the second language (Stern 1883). Most instructors now acknowledge that this method is ineffective by itself. It is now most commonly used in the traditional instruction of the classical languages.

According to Prator and Celce-Murcia (1979), the salient features of the Grammar-Translation Method are as follows:

1. Classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language.
2. Much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words.
3. Long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given.
4. Grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words.
5. Little attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis.
6. Often drills are exercised in translating disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother tongue.
7. Little or no attention is given to pronunciation.

Diane Larsen-Freeman (2000) provides some common/typical techniques closely associated with the Grammar-Translation Method:

- Translation of a Literary Passage (Translating target language to native language)
- Reading Comprehension Questions (Finding information in a passage, making inferences and relating to personal experience)
- Antonyms/Synonyms (Finding antonyms and synonyms for words or sets of words)
- Cognates (Learning spelling/sound patterns that correspond between L1 and the target language)
- Deductive Application of Rule (Understanding grammar rules and their exceptions, then applying them to new examples)
- Fill-in-the-blanks (Filling in gaps in sentences with new words or items of a particular grammar type)
- Memorization (Memorizing vocabulary lists, grammatical rules and grammatical paradigms)
- Use Words in Sentences (Students create sentences to illustrate that they know the meaning and use of new words)
- Composition (Students write about a topic using the target language)

The grammar-translation method dominated the foreign language teaching scenario for a long time since 1840s. It is still used for teaching foreign language, where understanding the literary text of the target language is considered to be the primary focus of language learning. Again, as it demands a very traditional type of teacher (traditional

teacher refers to one who likes to teach translating texts into mother tongue without applying any innovative modern techniques and methods of teaching), in many situations where the foreign language teachers are not exposed to the other methods of teaching foreign language, the teachers make their task easy by translating the foreign language texts in to the mother tongue of the learner. But memorizing endless list of unusable grammar rules and attempting to produce perfect translation of the literary text sometimes becomes a very tedious and frustrating experience for the learners. Richards and Rodgers (2007) observes, “The texts (followed in Grammar Translation Method) are frequently the products of people trained in literature rather than in language teaching or applied linguistics. Consequently, though it may be true to say that Grammar- Translation Method is still widely practiced, it has no advocates. It is the method for which there is no theory. There is no literature that offers a rationale or justification for it or that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology, or educational theory.”

Goals and Objectives:

- (i) to teach translation,
- (ii) to read and understand literary texts in the target language,
- (iii) to make students aware of their native language structure and vocabulary, and
- (iv) to improve students’ mental capacities with grammar exercises.

Teachers’ Role: Teacher is the strict authority. Classes are teacher centred.

Students’ Role: Students are the passive receivers of the new information. The teacher starts the activities and directs them. Students are supposed to memorise the rules and the new vocabulary with their meanings in their native language.

ii. The Direct Method: Gouin and Berlitz

A child never relies on another language to learn its first language, and thus the mother tongue is not necessary to learn a foreign language. The direct method operates on the idea that second language learning must be an imitation of first language learning, as this is the natural way humans learn any language. It is based on the belief that learning happens best when the foreign word and the idea or concept that it conveys get linked together via a direct method (Tickoo 2003). This method places great stress on correct pronunciation and the target language from outset. It advocates teaching of oral skills at the expense of every traditional aim of language teaching. The direct method, sometimes also called natural method, is a method that refrains from using the learners' native language and just uses the target language. It was established in Germany and France around 1900. According to this method, printed language and text must be kept away from second language learner for as long as possible, just as a first language learner does not use printed word until he has good grasp of speech. Learning of writing and spelling should be delayed until after the printed word has been introduced, and grammar and translation should also be avoided because this would involve the application of the learner's first language. All above items must be avoided because they hinder the acquisition of a good oral proficiency. The method relies on a step-by-step progression based on question-and-answer sessions which begin with naming common objects such as doors, pencils, floors, etc. It provides a motivating start as the learner begins using a foreign language almost immediately. Lessons progress to verb forms and other grammatical structures with the goal of learning about thirty new words per lesson.

In 'The Art of Learning and Studying Foreign Languages' (1880), Francois Gouin described his painful experiences of learning German, that helped him gain insights into the intricacies of language teaching and learning (Brown 2000). Gouin came up with the insights that children use language to represent their conceptions and that language is a means of thinking and of representing the world to oneself. This approach gave way to the Direct Method, conceived by Charles Berlitz. The basic tenet of Berlitz's method was that second language learning is similar to first language learning. In this light, there should be lots of oral interaction, spontaneous use of the language, no translation, and little if any analysis of grammatical rules and syntactic structures. In short, the principles of the Direct Method were as follows:

- Classroom instruction was conducted in the target language;
- There was an inductive approach to grammar;
- Only everyday vocabulary was taught;
- Concrete vocabulary was taught through pictures and objects, while abstract vocabulary was taught by association of ideas.

Goals and Objectives:

- (i) to teach students how to communicate in the target language,
- (ii) to teach thinking in the target language.

Teachers' Role: The teacher usually directs the interactions; but he/she is not as dominant as in the Grammar-Translation Method. Sometimes, the teacher acts like a partner of the students.

Students' Role: Students are active participants. Sometimes pair works take place. Even the teacher takes roles in activities.

The Direct Method enjoyed great popularity at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Still, the Direct Method was not without its problems. As Brown (1994) points out, “(it) did not take well in public education where the constraints of budget, classroom size, time, and teacher background made such a method difficult to use.” By the late 1920s, the method was starting to lose its importance and there was a return to the Grammar Translation Method, which guaranteed more in the way of scholastic language learning orientated around reading and grammar skills. But the Direct Method continues to enjoy a popular following in private language school circles, and it was one of the foundations upon which the well-known “Audio-lingual Method” expanded from starting half way through the 20th century.

iii. The Audio-lingual Method

The audio-lingual method (also called the “Army Method”), very popular in the 1940s to the 1960s, was used by the United States Army for “crash” instruction in foreign languages during World War II. In this method, students listen to or view recordings of language models acting in situations. Students practise with a variety of drills, and the instructor emphasizes the use of the target language at all times. Just as with the Direct Method that preceded it, the overall goal of the Audio-lingual Method was to create communicative competence in learners. However, it was thought that the most effective

way to do this was for students to “overlearn” the language being studied through extensive repetition and a variety of elaborate drills. The idea was to project the linguistic patterns of the language (based on the studies of structural linguists) into the minds of the learners in a way that made responses automatic and “habitual”. To this end it was held that the language “habits” of the first language would constantly interfere, and the only way to overcome this problem was to facilitate the learning of a new set of “habits” appropriate linguistically to the language being studied. William Moulton of Princeton University enumerated five slogans which formed the basis of the audio-lingual method.

- Language is a speech, not writing.
- A language is a set of habits.
- Teach the language, not about the language.
- A language is what native speakers say, not what someone thinks they ought to say.
- Languages are different.

These slogans are influenced by behaviourist psychology and structural linguistics (Nagaraj 2008). Thus, it was based on linguistic and psychological theory and one of its main premises was the scientific descriptive analysis of a wide assortment of languages. On the other hand, conditioning and habit-formation models of learning put forward by behaviouristic psychologists were mixed with the pattern practices of the Audio-lingual Method. The following points sum up the characteristics of the method:

- Dependence on mimicry and memorisation of set phrases;

- Teaching structural patterns by means of repetitive drills;
- No grammatical explanation;
- Learning vocabulary in context;
- Use of tapes and visual aids;
- Focus on pronunciation;
- Immediate reinforcement of correct responses.

The Audio-lingual Method falls far short of the overall goal of creating sustainable long-term communicative competence in language learners. Still, there are reasons why the method is still popular, and perhaps even appropriate in certain educational contexts. In countries where one of the prime objectives of learning English is to take and achieve successful results in a variety of tests, and where many learners are not intrinsically motivated to learn English but do so because they feel they have to, the method is not without merits. The term “practice makes perfect” was coined at a time when the concept of practice was synonymous with repetition, and if English is seen as just “another subject to be learned”, then the philosophy of repeating the required patterns until one get them right without needing to think about them does have a lot of supporters.

Goals and Objectives:

- (i) to enable students to speak and write in the target language,
- (ii) to make students able to use the target language automatically without stopping to think,
- (iii) to form new habits in the target language.

Teachers' Role: Teacher acts like an orchestra leader. He/she directs and controls the language behaviour of the students. Teacher is a good model of the target language, especially for pronunciation and other oral skills. The differences between students' L₁ and L₂ should be known by the teacher.

Students' Role: Students are imitators of the teacher who acts as perfect model of the target language or the native speakers in the audio recordings.

iv. The Oral Approach / Situational Language Teaching

This approach was developed from the 1930s to the 1960s by British applied linguists such as Harold Palmer and A.S. Hornsby. They were familiar with the Direct Method as well as the work of 19th century applied linguists such as Otto Jespersen and Daniel Jones; but they attempted to develop a scientifically-founded approach to teaching English than was evidence by the Direct Method. It was discovered that languages have a core basic vocabulary of about 2,000 words that occurred frequently in written texts, and it was assumed that mastery of these would greatly aid reading comprehension. It led to the notion of "vocabulary control". Parallel to this was the notion of "grammar control", emphasizing the sentence patterns most-commonly found in spoken conversation. Such patterns were incorporated into dictionaries and handbooks for students. Pitman (1963) opines that 'almost all the vocabulary and structures taught in the first four or five years of learning English and even later can be placed in situations in which the meaning is quite clear'. Situations are denoted by the use of concrete objects, pictures and realia, which together with actions and gestures, can be used to demonstrate the meaning of new language items (Nagaraj 2008). The

principal difference between the oral approach and the direct method was that methods devised under this approach would have theoretical principles guiding the selection of content, gradation of difficulty of exercises and the presentation of such material and exercises. The main proposed benefit was that such theoretically-based organization of content would result in a less-confusing sequence of learning events with better contextualization of the vocabulary and grammatical patterns presented. Last but not least, all language points were to be presented in “situations”. Emphasis on this point led to the approach's second name. Teaching methods stress PPP (presentation / introduction of new material in context), practice (a controlled practice phase) and production (activities designed for less-controlled practice).

Many of the structural elements of this approach were called into question in the 1960s, causing modifications of this method that led to Communicative Language Teaching. However, its emphasis on oral practice, grammar and sentence patterns still finds widespread support among language teachers and remains popular in countries where foreign language syllabuses are still heavily based on grammar.

Goals and Objectives:

- (i) to teach students how to communicate in the target language,
- (ii) to have mastery over selected vocabulary (about 2000 words) and grammatical patterns,
- (iii) to contextualize the vocabulary and grammatical patterns with the learning events.

Teachers' Role: The teacher usually directs the interactions; but he/she is not as dominant as in the Grammar-Translation Method. Rather, he acts as a coordinator. Sometimes, the teacher acts like a facilitator of learning.

Students' Role: Students are active participants.

v. The Bilingual Method

C. J. Dodson's Bilingual Method is a product of experiments done in a bilingual teaching-learning environment in Wales and the UK. According to Dodson, a method should be simple and balanced between the spoken and the written forms and at the same time the method should be within the capability of all teachers. He also opined that a method must overcome the conflict between accuracy and fluency and gear up the interpersonal communication between the teacher and the taught. In the Bilingual Method, the teacher can use the mother tongue in the class. In the initial stage, the teacher uses the mother tongue more liberally even in asking questions and in giving explanations and instructions. Gradually, the use of mother tongue is reduced, and the teacher and learners communicate only in the target language (Dodson 1967). It follows the traditional three-phase model of presentation, practice and production. However, it charts the path with great care and moves on step by step from controlled imitation to free 'communicative' use of the language (Tickoo 2007).

Tickoo (2007) observes, "The Bilingual Method has not been a part of the discussions on ELT methodology of the last three decades of the twentieth century. But given the fact

that it demonstrates the value of the learner's L₁ as an updated resource, there may be reason to consider its use as an alternative methodology for non-English medium classrooms”.

Goals and Objectives:

- (i) to teach students how to develop interpersonal communication in the target language,
- (ii) to enable students move from ‘controlled imitation’ to ‘free communicative’ use of the language.

Teachers’ Role: Initially the teacher takes over the control of the classroom. Gradually, it is relaxed and acts as a coordinator.

Students’ Role: In the presentation phase, students are passive recipients; their attitude and role change with the progress of time.

vii. The “Designer” Methods of the 1970s

The Chomskyan revolution in linguistics drew the attention of linguists and language teachers to the ‘deep structure’ of language, while the psychologists took account of the affective and interpersonal nature of learning. As a result, new methods were proposed, which attempted to capitalise the importance of psychological factors in language learning. David Nunan (1989) referred to these methods as “designer” methods, on the grounds that they took a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach. Let us have a look at two of these ‘designer’ methods.

vi. a. The Silent Way

The Silent Way was evolved by Caleb Gattegno, a teacher of Mathematics. In the 1960s, he proposed this method, which was based on the tenet 'teaching must be subordinate to learning'. In the silent way, the teacher is almost silent, and the learners do all the talking. The most important aids that the teachers of the silent way use are the *fidel chart* (blocks of different colours on a blackboard, representing a different sound in the target language) and *cuisine`ere rods* (coloured wooden rods of different lengths, each representing different words or sounds) (Nagaraj 2008). The Silent Way rested on cognitive rather than affective arguments, and was characterised by a problem-solving approach to learning. Gattegno (1972) held the second language learning as an intellectually appealing method of problem solving and discovery. According to him, it is in learners' best interests to develop independence and autonomy and cooperate with each other in solving language problems. The teacher is supposed to be silent; (hence the name of the method is the silent way) while the learners concentrate on the task. The teacher must disabuse himself of the tendency to explain everything to them. The Silent Way came in for an onslaught of criticism. More specifically, it was considered very harsh, as the teacher was distant and, in general lines, the classroom environment was not conducive to learning.

Goals and Objectives:

- (i) students should be able to use the target language for self expression (to express their thoughts, feelings, ideas),
- (ii) to help students improve their inner criteria for correctness,

- (iii) students should rely on themselves to be able to use the target language.

Teachers' Role: The teacher is a technician or an engineer who facilitates learning. Only the learner can do learning. The teacher is aware of what the students already know and he/she can decide the next step. The teacher is silent. Silence is a tool because teacher's silence gives the responsibility to the student. Besides, teacher's silence helps students monitor themselves and improve their own inner criteria.

Students' Role: Students should make use of what they already know. They are responsible for their own learning. They actively take part in exploring the language. The teacher works with the students and the students work on the language. Interaction among students is important. Students can learn from each other.

vi.b. Suggestopedia

Suggestopedia, also known as 'suggestopedy' or 'desuggestopedia', is a humanistic approach advocated by Lozanov (1979), a Bulgarian doctor of medicine, psychiatrist and parapsychologist. It follows the principle of joy and easiness. He believed that we are capable of learning much more than we think. Lozanov introduced the contention that students naturally set up psychological barriers to learning - based on fears that they will be unable to perform and are limited in terms of their ability to learn. He believed that learners may have been using only 5 to 10 percent of their mental capacity, and that the brain could process and retain much more material if given optimal

conditions for learning. Based on psychological research on extrasensory perception, Lozanov began to develop a language learning method that focused on “desuggestion” of the limitations learners think they have, and providing the sort of relaxed state of mind that would facilitate the retention of material to its maximum potential. Suggestopedia was found to be influenced by both Indian Raja Yoga and Soviet psychology. ‘From raja-yoga Lozanvo has borrowed the techniques for altering states of consciousness and concentration, and the use of rhythmic breathing. From Soviet psychology Lozanvo has taken the notion that all students can be taught a given subject matter at the same level of skill.’ (Richards and Rodgers 2002: 100). According to this method, music plays a pivotal role which facilitates learning through relaxation. Nagaraj (2008) observes, “Much of the methodology is based on suggestology, a psychological theory which says that human beings respond to subtle clues of which they are not consciously aware”. The three main principles of suggestopaedia are:

- (iv) joy and psychorelaxation
- (v) gaining access to the reserve powers of the mind
- (vi) harmonious collaboration of the conscious and the unconscious

One of the most unique characteristics of the method was the use of soft Baroque music during the learning process. Baroque music has a specific rhythm and a pattern of 60 beats per minute, and Lozanov believed it created a level of relaxed concentration that facilitated the intake and retention of huge quantities of material. This increase in learning potential was put down to the increase in alpha brain waves and decrease in blood pressure and heart rate that resulted from listening to Baroque music. Another

aspect that differed from other methods to date was the use of soft comfortable chairs and dim lighting in the classroom (other factors believed to create a more relaxed state of mind). Other characteristics of Suggestopedia were the giving over of complete control and authority to the teacher and the encouragement of learners to act as “childishly” as possible, often even assuming names and characters in the target language. All of these principles in combination were seen to make the students “suggestible” (or their fears of language learning “desuggestible”), and therefore able to utilize their maximum mental potential to take in and retain new material. It promised great results if our brain power and inner capacities are utilized in the right way. The notable features of this method are:

- Bright and colourful classrooms are considered to be ideal for suggestopedia.
- Music plays pivotal role in this method of learning.
- Students can learn from what is present in the environment, even if their attention is not directed to it. Lozanov claims- ‘There is no sector of public life where suggestology would not be useful.’ (Lozanov 1978: 2)
- The teacher is authoritative and speaks confidently, while the students trust and respect the teacher’s authority. It is believed that learners can learn best if the information comes from an authoritative source.
- Vocabulary is emphasized. Grammar is dealt with explicitly but minimally.
- An impression is given to the student that learning the target language is easy and enjoyable.
- Native language translation is used to make meaning clear. But as the course progresses, the use of the native language is reduced gradually by the teacher.
- Teachers correct errors in a gentle manner, not in a direct, confrontational manner.

- In order to enhance learning, both conscious and subconscious processes are amalgamated in such a way that the distinction between the two is sometimes blurred.

Goals and Objectives: Teachers hope to accelerate the process by which students learn to use a foreign language for everyday communication. For this, more of the students' mental power must be tapped. This can be achieved by removing psychological barriers.

Teachers' Role: Teacher is the authority. Learners learn better if they get the information from a reliable authority. Students must trust and respect that authority.

Students' Role: Students play a child's role (infantilization). They adopt a new identity (new name, job, family...etc.). As they feel more secure, they can be less inhibited.

Suggestopedia offered valuable insights into the "superlearning" powers of our brain; but it was demolished on several fronts. For instance, what happens if our classrooms are bereft of such amenities as comfortable seats and Compact Disk players? Certainly, this method is insightful and constructive and can be practised from time to time, without necessarily having to adhere to all its premises. A relaxed mind is an open mind and it can help a student to feel more confident and, in a sense, pliable.

vii. Community Language Learning

Community Language Learning is also a humanistic approach developed by Charles Curran (1976), a Roman Catholic priest and a professor of clinical psychology, where the group or the community decides what transpires with the teacher in the job of a consultant in the group. To put Tickoo (2007): “A learner-centred approach, CLL draws upon the group’s supportive capacities. ... The goal is to build a warm and supportive community among pupils to enable them to move in stages from dependence (on the teacher) to full autonomy. ... In a CLL session pupils sit in a circle facing each other.” Initially, they can use their mother tongue, gradually moving fully into using the target language.

Goals and Objectives:

- (i) students should learn how to use the target language communicatively,
- (ii) they should learn about their own learning to take an increasing responsibility about it,
- (iii) non-defensive learning is the result when the teacher and the students treat each other as a whole person.

Teachers’ Role: Teacher’s initial role is that of a counsellor. The teacher tries to remove the threatening factors in the classroom. Even the teacher stands behind the students to reduce fear and anxiety because the teacher’s superior knowledge and his existence are also threatening factors.

Students’ Role: Initially the learner is dependent on the teacher. As he/she goes on studying the language, he/she becomes more and more independent.

viii. Total Physical Response

The observation that children learn in stress-free environments by responding physically to commands before they start speaking, influenced psychologist James Asher in formulating the method called Total Physical Response (TPR) in the 1970s. In the process of language learning by children, Asher saw adults using imperatives to young children, who then reacted to them. One of the primary objectives underlying this method was that learning needed to become more enjoyable and less stressful. Asher thought that a natural way to accomplish this was to recreate the natural way children learn their native language, most notably through facilitating an appropriate “listening” and “comprehension” period. This method combines information and skills using the kinaesthetic sensory system, permitting the learners to assimilate information and skills at a rapid pace. Resultantly, this success leads to a high degree of motivation. Some of the key features of the Total Physical Response method are:

- i. The teacher directs and students “act” in response. “The instructor is the director of a stage play in which the students are the actors” (Asher, 1977: 43).
- ii. Listening and physical response skills are given prime importance over oral production.
- iii. The imperative mood (that indicates order, request, advice etc.) is the most common language function employed, even well into advanced levels. Interrogatives are also frequently used.

- iv. Whenever possible, humour is used to make the lessons more lively and enjoyable for learners.
- v. Students are to speak only when they are naturally ready or acquires enough confident to do so.
- vi. Grammar, vocabulary and spoken language are emphasized over other language areas and written language respectively.

“Asher sees Total Physical Response as directed to right-brain learning, whereas most second language teaching methods are directed to left-brain learning. Drawing on work by Jean Piaget, Asher holds that the child language learner acquires language through motor movement – a right-hemisphere activity. Right-hemisphere activities must occur before the left hemisphere can process language for production. Similarly, the adult should proceed to language mastery through right-hemisphere motor activities, while the left-hemisphere watches and learns. When a sufficient amount of right hemisphere learning has taken place, the left hemisphere will be triggered to produce language and to initiate other, more abstract language processes” (Richards and Rodgers 2002: 75).

Goals and Objectives:

1. to make students enjoy learning the target language and communicate with it,
2. stress should be reduced.

Teachers’ Role: Initially the teacher is the director of all student-behaviour. In the later stages, the teacher is being directed.

Students’ Role: Initially students are the followers of the teacher. Usually after ten to twenty hours of instruction, some students will be ready to speak the language. At this point, they start to direct the teacher.

ix. The Natural Approach

Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell developed the Natural Approach in the early eighties (Krashen and Terrell, 1983), based on Krashen's theories about second language acquisition. The approach shared a lot in common with Asher's Total Physical Response method in terms of advocating the need for a silent phase, waiting for spoken production to "emerge" of its own accord, and emphasizing the need to make learners as relaxed as possible during the learning process. Some important underlying principles are that there should be a lot of language "acquisition" as opposed to language "processing", and there needs to be a considerable amount of comprehensible input from the teacher. Meaning is considered as the essence of language and vocabulary (not grammar) is the heart of language.

As part of the Natural Approach, students listen to the teacher using the target language communicatively from the very beginning. It has certain similarities with the much earlier Direct Method, with the important exception that students are allowed to use their native language alongside the target language as part of the language learning process. In early stages, students are not corrected during oral production, as the teacher is focusing on meaning rather than form (unless the error is so drastic that it actually hinders meaning).

Communicative activities prevail throughout a language course employing the Natural Approach, focusing on a wide range of activities including games, role plays, dialogues, group work and discussions. There are three generic stages identified in the approach: (i) Preproduction - developing listening skills; (ii) Early Production - students struggle with the language and make many errors which are corrected based on content

and not structure; (iii) Extending Production - promoting fluency through a variety of more challenging activities.

Krashen's theories and the Natural approach have received plenty of criticism, particularly orientated around the recommendation of a silent period that is terminated when students feel ready to emerge into oral production, and the idea of comprehensible input. Critics point out that student will "emerge" at different times (or perhaps not at all!) and it is hard to determine which forms of language input will be "comprehensible" to the students. These factors can create a classroom that is essentially very difficult to manage unless the teacher is highly skilled. Still, this was the first attempt at creating an expansive and overall "approach" rather than a specific "method", and the Natural Approach led naturally into the generally accepted norm for effective language teaching - Communicative Language Teaching.

x. The Communicative Language Teaching

Based on Wilkins' (1976) notional and functional categories, Communicative approaches to the teaching of languages emphasize interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language. This approach developed out of sociolinguistics in the 1970s, and the interactive views of language teaching in the 1980s. It focused on communication rather than just grammar and vocabulary. In recent years, Task-based language learning (TBLL), also known as task-based language teaching (TBLT) or task-based instruction (TBI), has grown steadily in popularity. TBLL is a further refinement of the CLT approach, emphasizing the successful completion of tasks as both the organizing feature and the basis for assessment of language instruction.

The need for communication has been relentless, leading to the emergence of the Communicative Language Teaching. Having defined and redefined the construct of communicative competence; having explored the vast array of functions of language that learners are supposed to be able to accomplish; and having probed the nature of styles and nonverbal communication, teachers and researchers are now better equipped to teach (about) communication through actual communication, not merely theorising about it. At this juncture, it is apt to opine that Communicative Language Teaching is not a method; it is an approach, which transcends the boundaries of concrete methods and, concomitantly, techniques. It is a theoretical position about the nature of language and language learning and teaching. Fluency is a pivotal aspect of communication; at the same time it also emphasizes the integration of different language skills. Nunan (1991: 279) lists five basic features of this approach:

- i. An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- ii. The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- iii. The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on the language but also on the learning process itself.
- iv. An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- v. An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

Finnochiaro and Brumfit (1983:91-93) cite the features as follows:

- Meaning is paramount.

- Dialogues, if used, centre round communicative functions and are not normally memorized.
- Contextualization is a basic premise.
- Language learning is learning to communicate.
- Effective communication is sought.
- Drilling may occur, but peripherally.
- Comprehensible pronunciation is sought.
- Any device which helps the learners is accepted - varying according to their age, interest, etc.
- Attempts to communicate may be encouraged from the very beginning.
- Judicious use of native language is accepted where feasible.
- Translation may be used where students need or benefit from it.
- Reading and writing can start from the first day, if desired.
- The target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate.
- Communicative competence is the desired goal.
- Linguistic variation is a central concept in materials and methods.
- Sequencing is determined by any consideration of content function, or meaning which maintains interest.
- Teachers help learners in any way that motivates them to work with the language.
- Language is created by the individual often through trial and error.
- Fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal: accuracy is judged not in the abstract but in context.

- Students are expected to interact with other people, either in the flesh, through pair and group work, or in their writings.
- The teacher cannot know exactly what language the students will use.
- Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in what is being communicated by the language.

Goals and Objectives: To enable students to attain enough communicative competence (i.e., being able to use the target language appropriately in a given context). For this reason, students need knowledge of linguistic forms, meanings, and functions. Students must know that many different forms can be used to perform a function, and one single form can serve a variety of functions. Students should be able to choose the most appropriate form for a specific function.

Teachers' Role: The teacher is a facilitator of his/her students' learning. He/she is a manager of classroom activities. He/she acts as an advisor and monitors students' performance.

Students' Role: Students are communicators. They are engaged in negotiating meaning actively. They are responsible managers of their own learning.

From all the above we can see that the manageable stockpile of research of just a few decades ago has given place to a systematic storehouse of information. Researchers, all over the world are meeting, talking, comparing notes, and arriving at some explanations that outscore the past explanations. As Brown (2000) notes: "Our research miscarriages are fewer as we have collectively learned how to conceive the right questions". Nothing is taken as gospel; nothing is thrown out of court without being put

to the test. This “test” may always change its mechanics, but the fact remains that the changing winds and shifting sands of time and research are turning the desert into a longed-for oasis.

Bax (2003) writes: “In my view methodology can - if treated with excessive reverence - act as a brake on teachers. If we are not careful, we hinder teachers from developing their abilities to analyse and respond to the context productively. ... Some teachers do break out of the straitjacket, but why can't the profession empower them to do so? ...The teacher is not to be merely ‘reactive’ to the context - teachers should not only be sensitive to the context, but also provide the key ingredients for language learning such as opportunities for input, output, attention to accuracy, and so on...”

To conclude with Dhand (1990), “The rationale for choosing one methodology over another depends upon objectives, content, learner needs, learning principles, instructional resources, teacher competencies, climate in the school and expectations of the community in which the school is located. It is, to a large extent, a personal and individual decision made by the author.” Thus, it is evident enough that adaptation and application of only one specific method by the teachers will not help them in attaining the desired effectiveness in the language classroom. They should always be aware of the need, nature, and socio-economic background of the students. At the same time, applicability of many methods of teaching English language is closely associated with the physical conditions of the classroom. Hence, the teacher has a great responsibility to shoulder in making teaching-learning effective – he/she should be informative, judicious, and well-aware of the requirement inside the classroom.