

NEW PERSPECTIVES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

LMR Swaruparani

Lecturer in English, Maris Stella College, Vijayawada,
Krishna University, Andhra Pradesh
Email: swaroopalmr@gmail.com

Received: Aug. 2019 Accepted: Sep. 2019 Published: Oct. 2019

Abstract: Language, which is a most natural activity, distinguishes human beings from animals. Animals have their own way through which is different from human beings. It is the most natural way through which man can communicate his feelings and thoughts with the people in the community. With this appliance man performs his day-to-day business. Since philosophy, poetry and many other attributes are being transmitted to him by language only. That is why it is important to study the origin and nature of further development of his own language. To do so we need not be a philologist or linguist to acquire this. These days a well educated man can do structuring his language and positioning of it, with respect to other languages in the world. It is necessary to him to learn his richness of his vocabulary from where it is derived and is being enriched in general the political, social and cultural influences which made the totality of his languages. Thus the study of one's language is of a well-educated man's interest as a cultural subject. It is well understandable the all important role played by the English in India and the world.

It is very clear that the relation between language and the people speaking it is very intimate. Any greatness given to any language is by the people who speak their native language. It survives as long as the people continue to use their language. English, French and German become very important languages because history reveals great and most important personalities in the past.

English is learned as a library language for acquiring the knowledge. English acts as a window on the world of several branches of knowledge including its rich literature, arts and music. The specific aim of learning English language in schools and colleges relate to language being a skill subject. Earlier English was taught to enable students to appreciate and enjoy literature, even in schools. But with the changing status of English in India, specific aims were redefined to be in line with English as a language for communication not for appreciation. The syllabus was also recast to include a limited number of sentences; structures and vocabulary items. The students after a six year course were expected to learn the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing with reference to the prescribed language. These four skills were grouped as passive and active skills. Listening and Reading being passive or Receptive skills, speaking and Writing being active or Productive skills.

New Perspectives in English Language Teaching: Language, which is a most natural activity, distinguishes human beings from animals. Animals have their own way through which is different from human beings. It is the most natural way through which man can communicate his feelings and thoughts with the people in the community. With this appliance man performs his day-to-day business. Since philosophy, poetry and many other attributes are being transmitted to him by language only. That is why it is important to study the origin and nature of further development of his own language. To do so we need not be a philologist or linguist to acquire this. These days a well educated man can do structuring his language and positioning of it, with respect to other languages in the world. It is necessary to him to learn his richness of his vocabulary from where it is derived and is being enriched in general the political, social and cultural influences which made the totality of his languages. Thus the study of one's language is of a well-educated man's interest as a cultural subject. It is well understandable the all important role played by the English in India and the world.

It is very clear that the relation between language and the people speaking it is very intimate. Any greatness given to any language is by the people who speak their native language. It survives as long as the people continue to use their language. English, French and German become very important languages because history reveals great and most important personalities in the past.

English language is widely used not only in India but all over the world. Today it works as a connecting language across all barriers. In this era of globalization, English is the best medium to communicate with people across the globe. The accents may be different, the pronunciation may be different but it definitely helps in conveying the feelings, emotions and sentiments of one person to another. In this context today English should be taught to learners so that they are able to interact in this language with a fair amount of fluency in speaking, reading and writing. Hence, to achieve this, there needs to be a change in the teaching and learning pattern of this language.

English is learned as a library language for acquiring the knowledge. English acts as a window on the world of several branches of knowledge including its rich literature, arts and music. The specific aim of learning English language in schools and colleges relate to language being a skill subject. Earlier English was taught to enable students to appreciate and enjoy literature, even in schools. But with the changing status of English in India, specific aims were redefined to be in line with English as a language for communication not for appreciation. The syllabus was also recast to include a limited number of sentences; structures and vocabulary items. The students after a six year course were expected to learn the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing with reference to the prescribed language. These four skills were grouped as passive and active skills. Listening and Reading being passive or Receptive skills, speaking and Writing being active or Productive skills.

Twenty-first century students are tech-savvy, worldly and quick to disregard what cannot be proven. Today's students see right through false claims that learning a language is easy. The perception that one can play an audio program while drifting-off to sleep and wake up fluent, an idea that once seemed to be easy is now dismissed as a myth.

The world is changing at a rapid pace. How we learn is changing. How we teach and assess learning is also changing. Old, authoritarian models are giving way to gentle, more collaborative models. Students are as hungry as they were ever to be guided, coached and mentored. Their curiosity about the world around them continues to be irritated. The difference now is that they have that world at their fingertips. They are experiencing the world through technology in a way that their parents and teachers never did. Today's language classroom is hugely different from that of the mid to late twentieth century. The focus is no longer on grammar, memorization and learning from root, rather using language and cultural knowledge as a means to connect to others around the globe. Geographical and physical boundaries are being transcended by technology as students learn to reach out to the world around them, using their language and cultural skills to facilitate the connections they are eager to make. There is a case for a re-conceptualized field that is more learner-centered, more collaborative and more technologically driven. The trends in language learning are moving us forward in such a way as to empower our students to communicate with others across the globe in real time.

Methods and Approaches of English Language Teaching: According to Asher and James (1982), Methods are the combination of techniques that are used by the teachers in the classrooms in order to teach their students and approaches are the philosophies of teachers about language teaching that can be applied in the classrooms by using different techniques of language teaching. For example, if a teacher has an approach that language is the communication and learning a language is in fact learning the meanings, functions and uses of language. So the techniques will be based on the communicative language teaching and task based methods.

According to Freeman (2000), Methods which are taught to the teachers make a base and give them thinking about the applicable techniques and principles according to the situation where they stand.

They are clear about their attraction towards certain methods and also think that why have they repelled certain method. The knowledge of method is very necessary because their knowledge is base of teaching.

Grammar Translation Method: Grammar translation method was the most popular and widely used method for language teaching between the ages of 1840 to 1940. But this method was first used for teaching and learning Latin language which was not the language of common use at that time. Latin was considered as a classic language. The learners were made able to study the literature of Latin language through learning the grammatical rules of language and learning the vocabulary so that learners may translate the language in their first language and in the second language. Grammar translation method was criticized intensively in the nineteenth century because it was considered that this method cannot fulfill the demands of language learning in nineteenth century.

Direct Method: The direct method was the outcome of the reaction against the grammar translation method. It was based on the assumption that the learners of foreign and second language should directly think in English. This method is against the translation of written and oral text and focuses on giving the meanings of the words through action, demonstration or real objects. This method focuses on directly thinking, doing discussion and conversation in second language (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Purwarno (2006) described the aims of the direct method. He described that direct method is an attempt and effort to form a link between thought and expression and between experience and language.

Direct Method was Criticized Due to the Following Reasons: Direct method is successful in private language schools because this method can be applied only in small classes where all the learners can get individual attention.

In Direct method, the teachers extravagantly excel in keeping the mother tongue of the learners away from them.

Direct method demands the learners to do oral communication in the second language and it also demands the pronunciation and accent to be just like the native speakers so there is need for the language school to hire the native speakers which actually can be very expensive.

The success of the direct method depends on the teacher's skills and personality more than on the methodology (Richards and Rodgers, 1986).

Structural Approach: The structural approach mainly employs the techniques of the direct method but the reading and writing skills are not totally neglected. The structural approach is based on the sound principles of language learning. The structural approach says that the arrangement of the words in such a way as to form a suitable pattern and that pattern may make the meanings of the language clear to us. Any language has its own structure and skeleton which gives this language a decent appearance. A structure is a pattern and a particular arrangement of words which to indicate grammatical meanings. It may be a word, a phrase or a sentence (Gauridushi, 2011).

Structural approach was criticized because it was only suitable for lower grades. Continuous teaching of structures and their repetition make the atmosphere dull and boring. It also neglected the reading and writing abilities and there was also a lack of skilled teachers (Sharma, 2011).

Oral Approach/ Situational Language Teaching: The oral approach is a method in which children to use whatever hearing they get from their surroundings. They also take help from the context to understand and use language. The target is to develop the skills in the individual so that he can communicate and function independently. This approach helps in the development of reading and writing skills (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

The oral approach was developed from 1930s to the 1960s by British applied linguistics such as Harold Palmer and A.S. Hornsby. The main difference between oral approach and the direct method was that the methods which were developed under this approach had theoretical principles about the selection, grading and presentation of the content and material. This sequencing of the content would lead to better learning with a good knowledge of vocabulary and grammatical patterns. In this approach all the points of language were to be presented in "situations" which led to the second name of the approach i.e. situational language teaching. Although, the teachers are not aware of this approach today but it had long lasting impact on language learning. However, its focus on oral practice, grammar and sentence patterns is still supported by the teachers (Ibid).

Audio-Lingual Method: Audio-lingual method is also known as 'Army Method' because after the outbreak of World War II, the army soldiers decided to be proficient in the languages of their enemies. So a new learning method of foreign languages was discovered which is known as audiolingual method. This method is based on a linguistic theory and behavioral psychology. The audiolingual method was widely used in the 1950s and 1960s and the emphasis was not on the understanding of the words rather on acquisition of structures and patterns in common everyday dialogues (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

The teaching of the oral skills with accurate pronunciation, grammar and the ability to respond quickly and accurately is the main objective of audiolingual method. Reading and writing skills may be taught but they are dependent on the oral skills (Richard and Rodgers, 1986).

Total Physical Response: In Total Physical Response (TPR), the teacher gives the students instructions and the students follow the instructions by using whole body responses. James J. Asher, a professor, of psychology at San Jose State University developed the method Total Physical Response in late 1960s to help in learning second languages (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

According to Asher (1977), "TPR is based on the premise that the human brain has a biological program for acquiring any natural language on earth including the sign language of the deaf". We can see this process if we observe the language learning process of an infant. The communication between parents and the child consists of both verbal and physical aspects. When the child is not able to speak, at the time he/she is internalizing the language. This is the time when code breaking occurs. After this process the child becomes able to speak and reproduce language. In TPR, the teacher repeats the process in the class. Students respond to the commands of the teacher which require physical movement. TPR is most useful for beginners. TPR is also used for teaching students with dyslexia or related learning disabilities.

Silent Way: Silent way is the method of language teaching which was proposed by Caleb Gattegno. This method is based on the view that the teachers should be silent in the classroom as much as possible but the teacher must encourage the students to speak and use the language. The most important aspect of this method is its elements that are used for language teaching i.e. colored charts and colored rods (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

This method focuses on the learners to discover on their own rather than they remember or memorize something. The learners are facilitated in learning by giving them some problem to solve which involves the materials that are needed to be learnt (ibid).

Communicative Language Teaching: Communicative language teaching was developed in the era of revolutions in British language teaching traditions from late 1960s. Before communicative language teaching, situational language teaching was in practice in Britain for language teaching. Communicative language teaching was actually developed in the opposition of audiolingual method which focuses on drilling and memorization. Communicative language teaching focuses on developing the ability of communication in learners in real life situations. It focuses on meaning rather than accuracy (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Natural Approach: In 1977, Tracey Terrell proposed the natural approach of language teaching. This approach was influenced by Stephen Krashen's theory of language acquisition. The natural approach focuses on communication as the major function of language. In this approach, language is considered as the vehicle or means of conveying a message and information. The natural approach was actually based on the observation and understanding of the acquisition of the first and the second language in informal settings (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Task-based Language Teaching: Task- based language teaching is an approach that is based on the assumption that tasks are the major unit of language learning. This approach is based on the problem solving view that the learners should be given some tasks to be solved. These tasks are related to the language structures that are required to be learnt. The learners interact and communicate with each other during solving these problems. In these way, they learn the language (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Grammar Translation Method: Grammar translation method was first known in the United States as Prussian Method. Grammar translation method dominated European and foreign language teaching from 1840 to 1940.

According to the Richards and Rodgers (2001), the principle characteristics of Grammar Translation Method are:

- The goal of learning a second or foreign language is mainly to be enabling to read the literature of that language and is to get benefit from intellectual development that results from foreign and second language study. Grammar Translation Method enables to learn detailed grammatical rules of target language and enables to translate into and out of the target language.
- Reading and writing skills are focused while listening and speaking skills are totally ignored.
- The memorization of grammatical rules of foreign language and of the vocabulary items is focused. Vocabulary items are limited to the text that they are taught. Vocabulary items are memorized with the help of their meanings in the native language.
- Sentenced is the basic unit of teaching and language practice. The learners are enabled to do detailed analysis of a sentence through this method. The learners are enabled to translate a sentence into and out of the target language.
- Accuracy is emphasized rather than fluency. The basic purpose of this method used to be able to pass the written examinations.
- Grammar is taught deductively i.e. by presenting and practicing the detailed grammatical rules of target language. A syllabus of grammatical rules if followed in which rules are systematically put in to a sequence starting from the simple rules to the complex rules.
- Students are directed and instructions are given in the student's native language so that they may easily understand the instructions. The students' native language is used to explain new items and to enable them to compare two languages i.e. native language of the learners and foreign language.
- Main techniques associated with grammar translation method:
- There are some major techniques that are adopted in the teaching of second or foreign language through Grammar Translation Method.
- Translation of a literary passage. Students translate a reading passage into and out of the target language. In checking of the translation, the focus of the teacher is on vocabulary and grammatical structures. The translation may be written or spoken or both. Students should not translate idioms but must understand their meanings.

- **Reading Comprehension Questions.** A passage for reading and understanding is given to the students and they have to answer the questions given at the end of the passage in the target language. The questions are put into a sequence. The first group of questions is related with the information drawn from the passage, second group of questions require students to make inferences based on their understanding of the passage. The third group of questions requires students to relate the passage with their own experiences.
- **Antonym and synonyms.** Students are given a list of words and a passage. The students have to find out the antonyms of those words in the passage. Similarly, the students can also be given a list of words and can be asked to find out the synonyms of the given words from the passage.
- **Deductive application of rules.** Grammar rules are presented before the students with the all possible information that can be given to the students relating to the grammatical rules. The rules are also explained with examples. Once students understand a rule, they are asked to apply it for some different examples.
- **Fill in the blanks.** The students are given a series of sentences with some missing words. The students have to fill in the blanks with some suitable grammar items such a preposition and verbs with different tenses
- **Memorization.** The students are given a list of vocabulary to memorize them with their meaning in the native language. Students are also required to memorize the grammatical rules.
- **Use words in sentences.** In order to check the understanding of the meaning and use of vocabulary, the students are asked to use the list of typical words in their own sentences.
- **Composition.** The teacher gives a topic to the students to write about that topic in the target language. The topic is based on some aspect of the reading passage of the lesson (Freeman, 1986).

Advantages of Grammar Translation Method: Larson (1986) narrated importance of Grammar Translation Method as "in Grammar Translation Method, students are made to learn new words. Therefore, this method helps in improving vocabulary. Reading and writing are the two primary skills that are developed most so as to enable the students to read the literature in target language. Grammar is taught deductively and it makes use of students' mother language.

Disadvantages of Grammar Translation Method: Neilson (2003) stated that in Grammar Translation Method, oral skills i.e. speaking and listening skills are totally neglected while the whole attention is given to just reading and writing skills. Through this method, the students become able to read the literature of the target language by translating it into their native language but cannot communicate into the target language and even cannot understand the target language spoken by any native speaker.

In Grammar Translation Method, the authority of the classroom is totally in the hands of the teacher and teacher is at the centre of the classroom. The communication is just from teachers to students not from student to teacher and not even from students to students. The students are considered empty minded which have needed to be filled with all the possible vocabulary and grammatical structures that can be filled in their minds (ibid).

The main disadvantage of the Grammar Translation Method is that it is almost impossible to translate all the phrases and sentences into the target language because the main focus is the translation of this method so such students who have been taught through this method become fail to communicate well in the target language (ibid).

In the Grammar Translation Method, accuracy is emphasized rather than fluency and students go on thinking to accurate the grammatical rules which actually hinder their fluency. In Grammar Translation Method, the teacher abruptly interferes and stops the students wherever they make the mistakes so they become conscious while speaking and communicating in the target language and become unable to be fluent (ibid).

Communicative Language Teaching: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a widely used approach in the field of English language teaching. Since the introduction of communicative language teaching in the late 1970s, there have been different definitions and interpretations of the communicative approach which are as follows:

- Communicative Language Teaching is a teaching method for teaching a second language emphasizes on the importance of students' interactive ability to express their own ideas in the target language (Hattum, 2006).
- Communication ability is the essential goal in language learning. The communicative approach claims that learning a foreign language should not be focused on language structures (grammar and vocabulary), but also on the communicative functions that the language performs. Language learners should also learn the relations between the structures and the communicative functions in real situations and real time (Littlewood, 1981).
- Communicative language teaching began in Britain in the 1960s. It was used to replace the earlier structural method, called Situational Language Teaching (Orwig, 1999).
- The goal of communicative language teaching is to teach real-life communication skills. Students learn with a situation that they may encounter in their real life. CLT is not like the audiolingual method, which is based on repetition and drills. On the contrary, it uses the way to leave students in suspense as to the outcome of a class exercise, which will change according to the students' reactions and responses. The real-life situation change every day; therefore, the students' learning motivation comes from their desire to communicate in the ways and topics which they are interested in (Galloway, 2010). Therefore, many researchers have indicated that it is better to use CLT in ESL classrooms, rather than EFL classrooms in Asia (Liao, 2006).

Aims of Communicative Language Teaching: The aim of this approach is to enable the students to communicate in the target language like a native speaker of that language. CLT does not focus on accuracy but stresses on the semantic use of language. A student should know the different forms in meaning that can be used to perform a function and also that a single form can perform many functions. The objective of CLT is to enable the students to use the target language as a mean of expression that can meet their communicative needs. Communicative language teaching includes activities based on social interaction, such as conversation, discussion sessions, dialogues and role plays etc. CLT focuses on the proficiency of the language rather than on the mastery of structures. It can be said that CLT does enables learners to interact but it is very difficult for a teacher to introduce such activities which allows genuine interaction (Brown, 1994).

Teaching Techniques of Communicative Language Teaching: The basic objective of the communicative language teaching is the communication into the target language in authentic situation. To achieve this, the students need to know the linguistic forms, meanings and functions of language. The learning and teaching activities that are used in the communicative language teaching require the use of communication processes like:

The classroom activities are often designed to focus on the completion of tasks. In the completion of these tasks, the teacher's role is as a facilitator who motivates and facilitates the students to speak during the completion of these tasks. Teacher is an advisor who answers the questions of the students and monitors their performance. Teachers is the co-communicator who engage in the activities of the students but the learners are responsible and manager of their own learning (Richards and Rodgers, 2001)

Advantages of Communicative Language Teaching: The goal of Communicative Language Teaching is the development and improvement of knowledge and skills that will help a speaker to make his/her communication successful. The main focus of CLT is effectiveness. When we consider how native speakers of English think about the use of language, then it becomes obvious to us that our main goal is effective communication and the transfer of our ideas not just formal grammatical correctness and accuracy (Neil, 2000).

In CLT, language is taught in the way as it is used in everyday life. Students are not supposed to memorize language. Grammatical accuracy is important but our main focus should be effective communication. The attitude of students towards learning a second language can be made positive by using CLT. If we focus so much on accuracy, the students would not dare to use the language in the class because they feel hesitant and afraid that they might make grammatical errors. In this way CLT encourages the students to use both of their linguistic and communicative competences. The idea of appropriateness means that the student will not only learn the language, but they also learn about the culture and its use in social context (ibid).

According to Melrose (1995) the legacy of CLT is the realization that teaching a language involves far more than simply dealing with its syntactic, lexical and phonological components because language in use results from the ways people choose to manipulate these components in discourse. CLT adds the dimensions of different language functions such as requesting, apologizing, persuading, thanking and conveying information that are vital for communication with others. CLT makes students aware of the appropriate use of language according to the levels of formality, tone, context, topic and non verbal behavior.

Limitations of Communicative Language Teaching: Despite all the benefits of this approach that it can enable a learner to communicate in the target language in everyday life, its implementation in certain conditions has not been without problems. Apart from other factors, such as political reasons, language policy, administrative, economic considerations, probably a fundamental problem in the implementation of CLT is its conflict with local culture of learning (Tudor 1996). Culture of learning can be defined as a "framework of expectations, attitudes, values, and beliefs about what constitute good learning, about how to teach or learn, whether and how to ask questions, what textbooks are for, and how language teaching relates to broader issues of the nature and purpose of education" (Cortazzi and Jin, 1996).

References:

1. www.progressiveteachers.in
2. <https://files.eric.ed.gov>
3. Trends in English Language Teaching Today by Adrian Underhill, A 2004, April. Trends in English Language Teaching Today. MED Magazine, issue 18 retrieved September 15, 2007.
4. Trends in English Language Teaching Today by Yogesh Ramani.
5. Trends in the Education of English Language Learners by Mary Ann Zehr March 10, 2008.
6. Current Trends in ELT by Yong Kim Journal of English Teaching. A Triannual Publication on the Study of English Language Teaching Vol.1 Feb2011.
7. Nagaraj, Geetha. English Language Teaching Approaches, Methods, Techniques II edition. Orient Black Swan Hyderabad 1996.
8. Patil, Z.N. Innovations in English Language Teaching - Voices From the Indian Classroom Orient Black Swan. Hyderabad 2012. Print.
