CHAPTER - THREE

THE USE OF TRANSLATION IN ELT/ELL
CHAPTER - THREE

THE USE OF TRANSLATION IN ELT / ELL

3.0. INTRODUCTION

In the clamour for new-fashioned methodologies of foreign language teaching, one may ask: what does a method of the past, as translation, have to offer to the discipline? But the simple out-of-dating of translation is far from being the main problem. In fact, the crux of the real problem in teaching English, or any other language, is in using translation broadly in almost everyday language teaching settings, and yet denying its advantages. This is a situation which is quite commonly prevalent. Moreover, the greatest irony is that monolingual students study a great deal of major works in translations while the translated texts are treated as if they were originally written in their own language, (Bassnett, 1980, and Lefeever, 1981).

The role of the mother tongue in monolingual classes is a topic which is often ignored in discussions of methodology and in teacher training. Although the total prohibition of the students' native language is now unfashionable, its use in the classroom clearly needs further exploration. Recently, a number of publications have given evidence of a movement to reassess the potential contribution of translation to foreign language teaching and learning after it was sweepingly dismissed, (Atkinson, 1987). Holmes (1987), asserts that priority should be
given to extensive and rigorous research to assess the efficacy of translating as a technique of teaching and testing method in foreign language education.

Any discussion about the use of translation in foreign language teaching involves discussing the grammar-translation method. Hence, this chapter attempts to give a brief background of the translation method, and a descriptive account of the grammar-translation method. It will also discuss why translation is important in ELT/ELL, what is objectionable about it, and how we can make better use of translation.

3.1. GRAMMAR-TRANSLATION IN ELT/ELL

Stern (1983), states that no full and carefully documented history of the grammar-translation exists. He believes, (citing Escher, 1928 and Kelly, 1969), that there is evidence that the teaching of grammar and translation has occurred in language instruction through the ages. Richards (1986), says that five hundred years ago Latin was the dominant language of education, commerce, religion and government in the Western World. The study of classical Latin and an analysis of its grammar and rhetoric became the model for foreign language study from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century.

Dodson (1972), who calls the method the indirect method, sees that it has sprung from the study of logic during medieval times. According to him, the indirect-grammatical method was the only method available to teach language that was applied by the
modern-language teacher in the nineteenth century to the teaching of French and German. During the second half of the nineteenth century, grammar-translation was receiving wider and wider acceptance. Plotz in Germany adopted Seidenstucker's French text-book for use in schools and grammar-translation and it became the principal method of teaching modern languages in schools. In the final decades of the nineteenth century, grammar-translation was challenged by the Natural Methodologies and later still by linguists who advocated instruction based on phonetic principles (Bowen, et al., 1985). It was attacked as a "cold and lifeless" approach to language teaching (Stern, 1983). But, in spite of many attacks, grammar-translation is still widely employed today. Stern (1983 : 454), mentions that "In the language programmes in the universities in English-speaking countries, translation of texts from and into the foreign language has remained a standard procedure". He maintains that the cognitive code-learning theory has taken up again some of the features of the grammar-translation.

Gautam (1988 : 34), says that "... even today when a hundred linguistically sound methods are being propagated, the grammar-translation method seems to have its relevance." Richards (1986) also notes that the grammar-translation dominated European and foreign language teaching from 1840s to 1940s, and in a modified form it continues to be widely used in some parts of the world today. Dagut (1986), states that there surely is no denying that translation into and from the learners' first language is a strikingly persistent and prominent feature in all foreign
language learning, and not least in English as a foreign language.

Grammar-translation, as described by Stern (1983), was considered by practitioners as a necessary preliminary to the study of literary works. It was also regarded as an educationally valid mental discipline in its own right. "Appeals of Grammar-Translation included the cognitive, systemic use of grammar rules as a basis of instruction [...]. The directness of translation and the utilization of students' native-language proficiency were also appealing features", (Bown, et al., 1985: 20). Listening and speaking skills of the target language were not emphasized. Greater focus is placed on reading and writing. Lists of bilingual vocabulary along with grammatical rules for memorization, and exercises of translating words, phrases, and separated sentences or short texts, from or into the foreign language are normal features of textbooks. Richards (1986), adds to these characteristics the principle of accuracy in which the student is expected to achieve high standards of translation.

Classes could be taught in the students' native language with little teaching skills or foreign language skill needed by the instructor.

Stern (1983: 455), specifies the theoretical assumptions of the grammar-translation as follows:

"The target language is primarily interpreted as a system of rules to be observed in texts and sentences and to be related to
first language rules and meanings. Language learning is implicitly viewed as an intellectual activity involving rule learning, the memorization of rules and facts related to first language meanings by means of massive translation practice. The first language is maintained as the reference system in the acquisition of the second language. Basing itself on a faculty psychology, this method for learning modern languages was justified—like Latin and Greek had been—as a mental training. But Kripa Gautam (1988: 33-4), points out that there are three principles or assumptions on which this method is based. These are:

(i) translation interprets the words and phrases of the target language in the best possible manner and ensures comprehension of the vocabulary items, collocations, and sentences.

(ii) the foreign language psychology is best assimilated in this process of interpretation.

(iii) the structures of foreign language are best learned when compared and contrasted with those of the mother tongue.

Grammar-translation was criticized for being a tedious method which required from the learner a rigorous effort for the sake of merely memorizing endless lists of vocabulary and grammar rules. The learner had always to strive in order to translate sample or unnatural sentences which are unlikely to promote genuine language competence. Inefficiency of instruction, limitations of practice techniques and the dependency of the learner on his or her mother tongue result in limited proficiency.
of communication. This was more likely to create frustration for the learner while it made few demands on the teacher (see Richards, 1989 and Bown et al., 1985).

According to Gatford (1965) the chief defect of grammar-translation method was that "it used bad grammar and bad translation".

3.2. HOW IMPORTANT IS TRANSLATION IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM?

Translation method has sometimes been either unquestioningly rejected or, at least, received less attention.

Julian Edge (1986), makes the point that the thirty years war (still going on strongly in many countries) against grammar-translation as the basic method of language teaching seems to have made us see foreign language teaching and translation as unconnected. While Wilfram Wilss, (cited in Chellappan, 1991 : 61), admits that "Translation in ELT remains to be a pedagogically unclarified issue, a didactic grey zone, as it were. This is largely due to the fact that it cannot be really posited in modern foreign language pedagogy with its fine working hypothesis, the acquisition learning hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the Monitor hypothesis, the input hypothesis, and the Affective hypothesis (Krashen, 1982)". But according to Chellappan, Wilss shows how the translation fact can be exploited in a fourfold manner : (1) descriptively, (2) explanatively, (3) evaluatively, and (4) applicatively. Chellappan himself shows how translation can make the learner sensitive to the differences in
the two systems and also help unconscious acquisition and deployment of language.

Atkinson (1987), assumes that the gap in methodological literature is responsible for the uneasiness which many teachers, experienced or inexperienced, feel about using or permitting the use of the students' native language. One of the reasons cited for this lack of attention is the association of translation with the bad reputation of the grammar-translation method. Another one is the recent influence of Krashen (1981) which sees that transfer has only minor role to play in acquiring L2. Besides, the truism that one can only learn English by speaking English. Similarly, Duff (1989 : 5), thinks that the main reason for ignoring translation is that it "had gradually become fossilized. It became less and less associated with the excitement of new discovery, more and more with the tedium of book learning. What should have been a vital and challenging discipline had degenerated in most schools into a pointless routine exercise, a chore, and a punishment." In his opinion, translation lost its ground because teachers feel that it is text-bound and not communicative, not suitable for classroom work and time-consuming, associated to literary and scientific text and not suited to the general need of the language learner. It requires the use of mother tongue, which is not desirable, and it is boring. He, however, argues that this is not the case and that translation can be introduced purposefully and imaginatively, and that it deserves its place among other approaches. His reasons are:
(i) influence of the mother tongue which shapes our thinking and our use of the foreign language. Translation helps us to explore the potential of both languages - their strengths and weaknesses;

(ii) naturalness of the translation, it is going on all the time, why not inside the classroom?

(iii) translation is ideally suited for practising to communicate back into the mother tongue as a professional need;

(iv) the reality of language, authenticity and relevancy of all language materials to translation. Translation helps to achieve the aim found in most course descriptions, i.e. "to increase the students' power and range of expression";

(v) the usefulness of translation. The chief merits that translation has are:
* it invites speculation and discussion;
* it develops three qualities essential to all language learning; accuracy, clarity, and flexibility;
* it enables the teacher to select material to illustrate particular aspects of language and structures which suit the students' need;
* the frequent need for translators in our life makes translation a necessary activity for the students of language.

Atkinson (1986), describes a variety of applications of the learners' first language in the classroom with particular reference to the role which activities based on translation can play in fluency development. He mentions that translation techniques form a part of the preferred learning strategies of many learners in most places, the importance of which should not be underestimated.
Stern (1983) holds that the first language as a reference system is indeed very important for the second language learner, so it can play a certain part in language learning. Translation puts the learner into an active problem-solving situation. It also forms part of the "academic" learning strategy.

Widdowson (1979: 101), argues that translation, when used in English for specific purpose "can be a very useful pedagogical device" and "may provide the most effective means of learning" which "ensures the communicative relevance of the learner's language activities". Following Widdowson's approach, and Littlewood's framework (1981), Titford (1985), adds the component of what he calls "post-communicative activities". That is because he conceives of translation as being basically consolidatory and facilitative and hence an activity that is usefully engaged in after the basic L2 communicative skills have been taught. From his point of view, translation, in this case, has a high methodological face validity - the L1 is a source of "supply", and reference with L2 or reference back to the L1 (back-translation) is the source of "control". But Tudor (1987), in his article "Using Translation in ESP" explains how he designed teaching activities based on L1 for the purpose of improving the learners' ability to communicate in their area of professional specialization. He shows how precise setting of communicative goals obliged learners to acquire new L2 resources and to explore new areas of the expressive use of that language. This helped the students to develop L2 strategy usage, i.e. "risk-taking" rather than "risk-avoiding", (see also Titford, 1983, Hetai, 1989).
Dagut (1986) is convinced that the English language class-room cannot effectively be turned into an autonomous little piece of an English-speaking country for one hour a day, however, hard, gifted teachers may work to achieve this. Therefore, translation, in addition to being an inevitable part of the L2 learning process, also becomes a learner's tool of contrastive analysis that she or he uses consciously and deliberately, in the case of adult, and intuitively and spontaneously in the case of young learners. It is "an absolutely inescapable fact, since the already acquired first language sets the stage, as it were, for the formal learning of any other. This being so, it is surely only natural to assume that there must be some way in which such a central feature of the learner's mental process can be put to constructive use, instead of being ignored or repressed (ineffectively) as an unfortunate aberration" (p. 205).

There is almost a general agreement on the idea that translation presents an ideal opportunity not merely to learn translating itself, but also to investigate interlingual relationships between the two languages concerned and consequently a perfect knowledge about them. In translation, as Snell-Hornby (1985 in Titfor, 1985) points out we are concerned basically with the text, not as a chain of separated sentences, but as a complex, structured whole, whereby coherence, cohesion, focus and progressing are of primary importance. To Bryan Murphy (1988) the component of translation skills which has the most value for general language learning is probably deep-level comprehension. To be well translated, a text, and its component
parts, must be understood in its full linguistic and extra-linguistic context. And to Mukherjee (1994 : 41), translation "improves the student's understanding of the mechanics of his own language in its written form.... precision of statement, organization of thought, proper emphasis in argument, marshalling of facts; all these can become apparent to the student when he translates".

Butzkamm (in Titford, 1985), discusses natural 2nd language learning, where utterances are acquired as a whole without knowledge of meaning, bringing the point that this phenomenon is observed in the classroom, but the failure of teaching the understanding of a structure acquired in this way is going to leave the learner unproductive. He says' "Half-known material has often confused the children. Their understanding is often very vague indeed". He shows with examples how he invisions the use of literal translation as a teaching device in those cases where the internal structure of the new utterence remains unclear to the learner. By using literal translation, "the learner is not only provided with the proper meaning of the utterence, but also with transparent syntactical data. We mirror the foreign structure in the native language. The foreign language is mapped onto the native language so as to make the learner recognize the foreign pattern and identify its component parts [...] . We feel safe when we understand both the meaning and the structure" (p. 91-2). In this connection, Dagut (1986) makes the same point, that is, interlingual "lopsidedness" presents the learner with great difficulties and confusion, and "nothing in L2 teaching is harder
than that (just as nothing in L2 teaching is harder than to find some way of imparting an understanding of, and "feel" for such a new concept" (p. 206). Translation here becomes an inevitable choice in order to guide the learner to make positive use of his or her natural recourse to L1. Butzkamm's conviction is that literal translation device is not restricted to syntax, but can equally be applied to some lexical phenomena, namely, collocations, fixed idomatic expressions and compound words.

It is worth mentioning here that Mary Snell-Hornby in her article cited above has asked a group of 33 intermediate students attending her translation course to write down in five minutes the main reasons why they attended the course. She did this in order to gain some picture of what the students think of translation. The response, she says, may be viewed as highly significant. In all 33 replies there were three or four reasons in each area distributed as follows:

(i) Lexis: Vocabulary practice and insight into semantic distinctions (25),

(ii) Grammar: Insight into diverging linguistic structure (15),

(iii) Insight into the subtleties of English (9),

(iv) Improvement in the general command of English (9),

(v) Activating knowledge of English (5),

(vi) Discipline in the precise use of language (5),

(vii) Overcoming the fixation on dictionary equivalent (4),

(viii) Increase in the skill of switching from one language to another (4).
3.3. TRANSLATION: SKILL VERSUS MEANS

In 1964, Robert Lado, sees that translation as a class activity was erroneously equated with understanding, speaking, reading and writing, which are in his opinion very different skills and need to be learned as such. He holds that translation can be defended as a valuable skill in itself, but not as a substitute for language use. Catford (1965: viii) agrees with this point of view stating that "translation is not a dangerous technique in itself provided its nature is understood, and its use is carefully controlled: and translation is in itself a valuable skill to be imparted to students".

By and large, foreign language in the present time is studied either for teaching or for translating scientific and literary texts or for interpreting. Therefore, it is suggested that translation, besides being a means to learning a foreign language, should be taught for its own value. Ulrych (1984), who runs a translation course at the University of Padova, compiled a questionnaire to evaluate her students' attitude towards translation. She says the result was overwhelming in favour of translation. This confirmed the belief that translation should be taught as a skill in its own right and that it is of importance in advanced language teaching.

In relation to this, Murphy (1987-88) argues that other components of the translation skill include: "coming fully to grips with culture(s) which the foreign language expresses, using and producing various kinds of reference resource; learning to
revise and improve one's initial hypotheses/first drafts, writing well in one's own language. The development of all these components, with the possible exception of the last-named, is likely to have beneficial spin-off for foreign language learning" (p. 15). In countries where English is a foreign and not a second language, translation, according to Hetai (1989), may be an end in itself in general language courses, since advanced learners are often asked to translate either orally or in writing, for those who do not know the language. Translation exercises as home assignment (using a bilingual dictionary) proved to be helpful in demonstrating the dangers inherent in dictionary use and the pitfalls of too close a translation. Oral translation exercises can serve as a relief for those reluctant students who fail to engage themselves in role-play and other communicative exercises.

Finally, in an English language teaching/learning setting described in the first chapter, the question considered by Piter Medgyes (1992 : 346 onward), seems to be of great significance; that is "native or non-native : Who's worth more ? " His conclusion sounds undoubtedly relevant. Peter Medgyes argues that native / non-native distinction plays a key role in determining the teaching practice of all teachers. Both use English differently and, therefore, teach English differently. The concept of the "ideal teacher", however, is not one reserved for either category :

- the ideal NEST (Native English Speaking Teacher) is the one who has achieved a higher degree of proficiency in the learners' mother tongue.
the ideal non-NEST is the one who has achieved near-native proficiency in English.

both stand quite close to each other.
	here should be a good balance of NESTs and non-NESTs, who complement each other in their strengths and weaknesses. Given a favourable mix, various forms of collaboration are possible both in and outside the classroom—using each other as language consultants, or teaching in tandem.

differences between them should not be blurred or ignored. On the contrary, we should strive to highlight those divergences and place them under scrutiny. We should sensitize teachers both to their limitations and potentials, and suggest ways they could make progress within their constraints.

The key role of translation in such a situation needs no more assertion. Furthermore, if we accept the fact that language is a vital instrument of imposing ideas, culture, and norms, then, again, translation has an important role to play, that is to say, balancing the effect, or at least minimizing the damage resulted by dominant imposing. In Prema Nandakumar's words, "The aim should be that when teaching the English language (or when using the English medium), our students should not jettison their mother tongue and become foreigners in their own motherland," (P. Nandkumar, 1990: 81).

Now, surveying some of the theorists' and practitioners' writings in favour of translation, and recognizing that it is inevitable in language use, it is not our intention to give translation a bonafide as being the solver of all foreign
language learners' difficulties. Language learning is a complex process. According to Lado (1964), "It ranges from the acquisition of simple automatic skills to an understanding of abstract conceptual and aesthetic meanings, all occurring in the same sentence. And this learning must be achieved to an unbelievable degree of facility involving hundreds of articulatory changes and grammatical and lexical selection per minute. For this reason one is no longer justified in expecting any single development to solve all the problems of language learning." In addition, as we have seen in the previous chapter, there are many problems connected with translation. It also has its deficiencies as a technique of teaching English as a foreign language which, if neglected or dealt with incorrectly, could end to be a hindrance for the learner. But, errors, deficiencies, bad teaching or bad translation should not lead us to the entire exclusion of translation. Instead, following Dodson (1972) we should remove from the learning process "the drudgery and obstacles that are now considered to be unavoidable and even necessary ingredient in education."

3.4. WHAT IS OBJECTIONABLE ABOUT TRANSLATION?

Some of the reasons which have given translation a bad name were mentioned earlier. It has also come under the attack of modern language teaching methods as being responsible for interference errors, lack of communicative competence, cause boredom in the classroom and leads to learning about the language instead of learning the language itself. Some of the criticisms are justified because was either over-used,
used inefficiently, or was not integrated with other types of activities. But some of the criticisms directed to translation are, according to Urgese (1989) a kind of dogma which, if not correct, they are debatable. Saying, for example, that translation is not a basic skill, like listening, speaking, reading, writing, is not true. Beginners also need to translate in order to understand the meaning of a word to know that a word can be translated in different ways when combined with different word groups. They need also to know how to use a bilingual dictionary properly to translate contextualized items.

Below is a list of the uses of translation that should be avoided.

(i) The tendency of old grammar-translation method to teach the vocabulary and grammar rules of foreign language and the reading of texts exclusively by means of excessive translation;

(ii) The fundamental use of translation both as a basic means of conveying the semantics of foreign words and a means of testing.

(iii) Mechanical substitution of native words and expressions for foreign words and expressions, or vise-versa, without taking account of the true meanings or the features of thought typical of each language. "Difficult currency" as a substitution for the Arabic expression. "Omlah Saábah" is not an acceptable replacement to the English expression "hard currency". Nor is the Arabic translation of "He is on the wagon," by "Howa fi-ssayarah" (He is in the car) a correct translation of the American idiom which means that someone does not, or is supposedly, not to drink alcohol.
(iv) The frequent cultivation of "non-comprehending reading" and "translating comprehension" of a foreign text, or applying the rule "first translate, then understand", (Belyayeve, 1963).

(v) The tendency of students to wait for the subsequent translation made by the teacher.

(vi) Allowing translation to usurp the whole process of learning (Dagut, 1986).

(vii) Using translation as a device to only save time, make life easier for the teacher or students, or, on the contrary as a means of punishment.

(viii) Translation is not preferable when the teacher or students, in Atkinson's Words (1987 : p. 246), "fail to observe the distinctions between equivalence of forms, semantic equivalence, and pragmatic-features, and thus oversimplify to the point of using crude and inaccurate translation".

(ix) Teaching L2 by always using L1.

3.5. HOW CAN WE MAKE A BETTER USE OF TRANSLATION?

Sorhus (1975), cited Reffet's outlines of how translation may be used as an aid in second language teaching. These are:

(i) by providing a variety of texts and exercises against boredom: oral comprehension exercises where students have to find the second-language equivalents, re-translation from memory so that students compare their translations into the target language with that of the original, and even make comparisons among themselves to discover how they are developing control of the new language and how they are doing it; the auditory method by which students read in one language and listen in the other—any means by which students can develop passive understanding of their second
language and then extend this passive knowledge into active use; and by

(ii) by preparing, or finding, texts in the source language, texts that lead to translation into the target language so as to identify and practise the language items being learned both in vocabulary and structure.

(iii) using glossaries rather than lists of words so that new terms are given in context rather than absolute isolation.

Dagut (1986: 206), suggests that L1, which is always present in the learners' mind, can be constructively exploited in two main ways:

(i) to help eradicate the persistence of errors arising from the numerous syntactic and lexical incongruencies between L1 and L2, and

(ii) to provide immediately meaningful explanations of all those lexical items of L2 for which quick and clear explanation by either ostension or L2 paraphrase is not available, (i.e. abstract words, function words, and idioms).

Christopher Titford's (1983) suggestion about using translation effectively is to employ techniques which provoke the students to think about what is going on; to use a teaching strategy that will push them into finding correct versions (translation) for an L1 text for themselves, and to develop their competence in the L2 by comparison, contrast, and adjustment to the L1. This gives the students the psychological boost of having accomplished the translation themselves, and become better motivated and more confident. His two techniques for achieving this are:
1. "Spoof translation," word-for-word translation, by which the wrongness of assuming that a sequence of items (a+b+c) in L1 can be adequately translated into L2 with similar sequence (A + B + C), and

2. back-translation which involves and motivates the students by requiring them to comment on and re-construct the teacher's back-translation of the students' translation.

In 1985, Titford asks for a methodology of using translation which can realize two things: (a) to supply a context which presents and allows the learner to practise a content that has been selected for treatment in class, and (b) to provide a point of departure from which we can correct, accept, criticize or comment on what we are trying to teach.

Mary Snell-Hornby (in Titford, 1985), illustrates how translation can offer many possibilities to combine language teaching with a discussion of linguistic problems. She emphasizes careful selection of texts that adequately exemplify the specific problems under discussion. A discussion of text and errors made, and varying merits alternatives translations then forms the essential core of translation class, the aim being to pinpoint out why one translation is better than another. She admits that this procedure is demanding, but the student gains for her or his other language activities and the teacher is more than rewarded by the insight she gains into problems of interference specific to the two languages. In addition, the translations of the students can provide a fund of material for linguistic research.
Similarly, Mike Baynham (1986) stresses the selection of suitable texts in bilingual format (bilingual folk stories) that ensure the element of enjoyment (In this relation, see also, Belyayev, 1963, Widdowson, 1979, Titford, 1983, Ian Tudor, 1987, and Sudhakar Marathe, 1995). He shows how the process of writing gives the student opportunity of trying to put a story, specific to her/his language and culture, into English. The group activity enables other students to share the process of working on the story even though the original may not be in their own language. This activity helps the learner to see that the work (translation/ re-translation) he/she is doing has a particular purpose of learning English through developing story telling in the classroom.

Other translation activities can be designed, as suggested by Ian Tudor (1987), which involves the student to perform three tasks on the basis of L1 text, i.e. (a) make a rough oral translation, (b) make written summary translation, and (c) prepare for class discussion. This is apparently because these activities provide students with a greater confidence in their ability to express themselves accurately and develop their communicative competence. They should ensure the explicit recognition of the need for L2 input and create a receptive attitude for acquisition of new elements.

Based on David Atkinson's (1987) advice, activities involving translation from the mother tongue for the purpose of developing the learners' ability to use creatively the limited
corpus of the language they possess are to be devised. The aim of such activities is to promote the skills of circumlocution, paraphrase, explanation and simplification. Students are required in pairs or groups to find a way of expressing their meaning within the limit of their competence in target language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>e.g. Students wish to say</th>
<th>English used</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The building was inaugurated</td>
<td>They opened the building</td>
<td>Simplification approx.synonym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- He appeared reluctant</td>
<td>He did not want to do it</td>
<td>Circumlocution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, it is obvious from these examples how translation can be used not only to teach vocabulary and improve the learners' expressions, but also to show how they may fall under the false impression that vocabulary is of secondary importance provided that they can really get round lexical problems, (See Urgese, 1989, and Heltai, 1989).

Chellappan (1991), sees that translation exercises could be best utilized when:

(i) they aim at creation of meaning, not at duplication of meaning;

(ii) they build up a monitor system which makes the learner correct the errors arising of L1 itself, but they should be supplemented by communicative acts in L2 itself and the link between translation exercises as communicative acts and communicative tasks through L2 will be natural;
(iii) there are oral and written exercises in the form of discussion and large composition where synthesis is more important than analysis which leads to an unconscious transfer not of items but of skills. Retranslation to the source language will also help remediation.

3.6. CONCLUSION

Reviewing the literature related to the use of translation in ELT/ELL, it was found that there is a theoretical and practical support to conclude that translation in this respect has not lost its ground even though it may have lost some of its favourability due most probably to maladroit practices of translation rather than to translation itself. Thus, many writers call for reassessing the potential contribution of translation to foreign language teaching and learning.

The history of Grammar-Translation shows that the method which dominated the discipline for centuries was attacked and challenged by linguistic and natural methodologies. But, it appears that it still has its relevance and continues to be widely used in a modified form in Europe and some other parts of the world.

The rationale of grammar translation was essentially based on assumptions such as (a) a foreign language is a system of rules to be observed and related to first language, (b) translation interprets words and sentences of foreign language and ensures a better comprehension, and (c) language learning and translation are regarded as mental training.
The method was criticized for being tedious and ineffective in promoting foreign language competence. This 'war' against grammar-translation has resulted, to a large extent, in viewing translation with suspicion and ignoring the use of it as, it was believed, it allowed the learner to develop the habit of referring to the mother tongue to help him out and hence preventing him/her from immersing in the target language and its culture. It has also come under attack as being responsible for interference errors and leading to learning about the language instead of learning the language itself (3.2).

There is, however, a strong argument in favour of the use of translation. According to this argument, the importance of translation lies in the fact that the mother tongue shapes the learner's thinking and influences his/her learning of L2. Besides, it is not possible for the learner who speaks his first language all the time to suddenly be able to think in L2. So, translation exercises help the learner to explore the potential of both languages and make him sensitive to the differences in the two systems. Also, translation lends itself to a variety of classroom activities such as practising to communicate back into the mother tongue, stimulating discussions and speculation, illustrating particular aspects and structures of language and so on. It is even argued that controlled use of translation helps to weaken the learner's dependence on L1 and to bring him nearer to the required ability to exchange the forms and patterns of L1 for those of L2, (Sec. 3.3).
Apart from that, translation is viewed as a valuable skill in its own right to be imparted to learners. Through translation, the learners come to grips with the target culture and learn how the foreign language express ideas that they already know (3.4).

Some of the criticisms directed toward translation are understandable because it was either over-used or not integrated with other types of activities. On the other hand, some criticisms are believed to be incorrect or debatable. For example, translation slows the learning of a foreign language, or it does not help in gaining language competence. Therefore, it is suggested that translation is to be used carefully and properly if its potentialities are to be brought about into realization. For instance, teaching L2 by always using L1 is not allowable. The mechanical substitution of first language words and expressions, or vice-versa, without taking into consideration the peculiarities inherent in both languages and cultures could be misleading (Sec. 3.5).

To ensure fruitful and effective results of employing translation in ELT/ELL, different activities and applications of translation in the classroom are provided. Priority is given by different authorities to careful selection of texts that illustrate specific aspects and problems of the target language. Then it is advised to use techniques which involve the students and motivate them to learning and allow them to practise those aspects, correct, accept, argue, criticise and find standard versions of L1 text for themselves, improve communicative competence and develop their ability to translate (Sec. 3.6).