CHAPTER- 5

ANALYSIS of Methods
Used in Foreign Countries

Internal representations of the foreign language develop within the learner's mind.

- M. A. Omaggio
5.0 **Analysis of Methods Used in Foreign Countries:**

Various methods that are used in other countries outside India have been analyzed here to point out the place of English as a second language in secondary schools in international perspective.

5.1 **English teaching methods in Japan:**

English education is an important aspect of language teaching in Japan. English is offered in more than 99% of all junior highs and high schools (Hoshiyama, 1978) and almost all students take it, even though it is an elective subject (Kumabe, 1978). A foreign language is required for university degrees and most students take English. In addition, hundreds of thousands of Japanese study English at private English conversation schools or in English courses offered by their companies. Both radio and television offer English courses for different levels of ability and hundreds of thousands of Japanese study in English this way.

In recent years, the Japanese have felt the necessity to express themselves to the outside world to explain Japanese culture, ways of thinking and positions on various issues to non-Japanese people (Hisano, 1976). As large number of Japanese go abroad, it is useful for them to be able to express themselves to non-Japanese people. As English is practiced as an international language, it is natural that the Japanese world chooses English as the foreign language with which they can communicate with non-Japanese people. The close relationship between Japan and the US has also influenced the choice of English.

5.1.1 **History of English Education in Japan:**

English was first taught in Japan following the brief stop of a British ship at Nagasaki in 1808. Japanese found that they could not communicate with the sailors from that ship. Then Tokugawa government ordered the interpreters to study English with the study of Dutch, French and Russian. The first English teacher in Japan was a
Dutchman who probably did not know English in the best way himself (Omura, 1978).

In 1853, Japan was forced to open by the Americans and the study of English began in earnest. Two major methods were emerged at that time in the history of English teaching in Japan; one emphasized correct pronunciation as well as meaning and the other emphasized meaning and not pronunciation or syntax. It was observed that students who learned by the second method seemed to be better in comprehension, while students who had learned by the first method were compared to 'reading machines' with correct pronunciation but with little understanding of what they were reading (Omura, 1978).

In the 1890's, a system of language teaching was established. English was compulsory in the middle and higher Secondary schools. It was the main foreign language, while French and German were offered in higher schools as a second foreign language. Language study was closely associated with Westernization. English was mostly taught by native English speakers, including many Christian missionaries. English medium classes were held at institutions of higher learning and most text books came from the US. Many students developed a good command of English during that time. In the early 1900's foreign texts and teachers were gradually replaced by Japanese texts and teachers. Japanese scholars who had studied abroad became influential in the field of English education. Some of their ideas seem amazingly current. For example, Kanda Naibu advocated the use of the target language as much as possible in the classroom, exclusion or reduction of translation, extensive teaching of the target culture and inductive learning of grammar. English became primarily a subject of study, mainly learned for the purpose of reading written texts, instead of means of communication.

In 1921, Harold E. Palmer, an English linguist and specialist in language teaching, was invited to Japan and became an advisor to the ministry of education. He
advocated the Oral and the Direct methods. His methods were used in various parts of Japan and obtained good results.

Shortly before and during World War II, the study of English was discouraged, because it was the ‘enemy language’. However, this policy was reversed after the war. The school system was recognized so that there were six years of elementary school, three years of junior high school, three years of high school and four years of college. Today, education is compulsory through the third year of junior high school, but 94% of all Japanese junior high school graduates go on to high school (linkai, 1985). Foreign languages are offered as electives in the recognized junior high and high schools and the most common foreign language is English.

5.1.2 English in Junior High Schools:

Most Japanese students start studying English when they enter the first year of junior high schools at the age of twelve. The ministry of education does not require English in Japanese public Secondary schools though some individual schools require it. However, due to the fact that English is an important factor, often a decisive one, in high school and university entrance examinations, almost all Junior high school students take English (Kumabe, 1978). In addition of studying English at school, many students attend jukus. In the Tokyo area, 75% of the junior high school students attend Jukus.

Public schools offered five hours per week of English classes until 1981, when the number of hours was reduced to three. The content of the English courses offered in public Junior high schools is dictated by the ministry of education’s course of study. According to the course of study, the purpose of English education is to give students a practical command of written and spoken English and to promote understanding of the cultural and social backgrounds of English speaking people. It is also intended to help students to develop individuality and social, civic and vocational competence and to understand the democratic heritage in English-speaking countries.
The course of study prescribes sentence patterns, words and grammatical categories are to be taught in Junior high English classes each year. The course of study also dictates which aspects of culture, geography, history etc. should be included. It also supplies specific activities for developing different skills (Imura, 1978).

The text books used in Junior high English classes must be approved by the ministry according to strict guidelines set down by the ministry. There are five different junior high school text books used in public schools and one of them is used in half of all junior high schools.

English taught in Junior high school is particularly important. For most students, this is their first formal education in English and it is important that they make a good beginning. However, high school teachers are, as a rule, better qualified than junior high teachers (Kumabe, 1978). Also, classes are relatively large, about forty students in each class. Many students started studying English in junior high school with eager anticipation. Unfortunately, due to the emphasis on memorization and learning about English rather than using English for the purpose of communication, many lose interest and it gradually becomes their least favourite subject.

5.1.3 **High School English Education:**

High school English classes are also controlled by the guidelines of the ministry of education’s course of study. The goals of English classes listed in the course of study are also applicable to High school English courses. In Junior high schools, the content of courses- the vocabulary, grammatical items, etc. that are taught, are prescribed for each year. Maximum 1900 words may be introduced (Monbusho, 1979), so a High school graduate has usually learned less than three thousand words in Secondary schools. The content of High school English courses is heavily influenced by the content of university entrance examinations. Unfortunately
there is a large gap between the level of English in the third year of Junior high school and the first year of High school.

Public High schools offer four hours of English per week. English I, which students take during their first year of high school, is an extension of Junior high school English. English II (reading) is offered during the second and third years of High school. It is supplemented by English II A (speaking), English II B (advanced reading), and English II C (writing).

Some High schools also offer supplementary English lessons before or after school or during vacations to help to prepare students for university entrance exams. If their High schools do not offer supplementary lessons, students may attend classes at Jukus or may have a private tutor. In the Tokyo area, thirty three percent of the high school students attend Jukus (Kai, N, 1984).

The typical high school English class is based on a reader and a Grammar book. Like Junior high text books, high school books should also be approved by the ministry of education. In the case of high school text books, the texts are chosen by the school rather than the district. The individual teacher has little control over the textbooks. Students prepare for a class in advance by writing Japanese equivalents English words and phrases. In a class, a student reads the resulting translation. The teacher reads a model of correct translation and comments on difficult grammatical points. The teacher also reads aloud the English version of the lesson, and students repeat after the teacher (Hisano, 1976).

For grammar classes, the text is divided into grammatical categories. Each category is accompanied by examples, explanations and exercises. Composition classes consist of translation of Japanese into English. The Japanese is usually in short sentences, unconnected in content.
Private schools often have more hours of English per week than do public schools. They typically offer five to six hours of reading and one to two hours of conversation.

Oral communication courses, emphasizing listening, speech and debate etc. have become more emphasized in Secondary schools. This greater emphasis on oral-aural English may result in improved listening and speaking skills and more emphasis on using English as a means of communication, especially in college entrance exams. However, the change is still recent and the consequences remain to be seen.
5.2 Teaching English in China:

The teaching of English as a foreign language is a major focus of education-reform in the People’s Republic of China due to the country’s ‘modernization’ efforts. As the economy of China expands, English as a communication tool is seen as necessary for social and economic mobility to conduct practical, social, economic and technical interactions with other people of the world (Schnell, 1990; Zhao and Campbell, 1995). This has forced Chinese educators to address the matter in which English has traditionally been taught throughout the country (Penner, 1995).

Foreign language teaching has entered the ‘age of communication’ in which language is learned as a means of communication, rather than strictly as an academic subject, focussed only on Grammar and reading (Adamson and Morris, 1997). Foreign language instruction in China has made advances, but there is need of teachers who are trained in modern language methods (Xiuqing, 1993). The Grammar-translation method is still emphasized in English language programmes in China less emphasizing on methods based on interpersonal communication (Anderson, 1993; Campbell and Zhao, 1993; Liao, 1996; Schnell, 1992). Whereas the traditional approach of teaching English has focussed on teacher-centred, book-centred and Grammar-translation-centred methods, the Communicative Approach is characterized by focussing on –


Chinese educators have begun to investigate approaches of teaching English rather than focussing more on the communicative function of language (Li, 1984; Sun, 1999). This has lead educators to investigate approaches that eventually create student-generated learning activities at the centre of instruction (Su-ying, 1987). According to Liao (1996), the ‘Kernel’ to teaching English as a foreign language
should be Communicative Competence reflecting the basic purpose of language and the cognitive process of language learning. Liao (1996) suggests student-centred orientation, use of communicative activities, development of awareness of cross-cultural differences, extensive use of English, and an integrative development of language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing).

For a Communicative Approach to succeed in China, the issue of student's autonomy must be addressed. It related to the student-generated learning activities. Due to Chinese cultural traditions, language classes are teacher-dominated. Due to the cultural norms of 'social relations in the classroom', the teacher is viewed as the authority and source of knowledge and “Chinese students would not find autonomy very comfortable, emotionally or indeed intellectually.” (Ho & Crockall, 1995, p.237).

The Communicative Approach of teaching English as a foreign language is supported by several cognitive perspectives of learning. These include Constructivism, Situational Cognition, Reciprocal Determinism, Socio-cultural Perspectives- all of which are mutually complementary (Marshall, 1996). Constructivism is based on the principle that one learns best and remembers what one learns, when information is actively constructed by the learner based on their personal experiences (Ormrod, 2000). Constructivism is “the notion that thinking takes place in contexts and (that) cognition is largely constructed by individuals as a function of their experience in situations........(it) highlights the interaction of persons with situation in the acquisition and reinforcement of skills and knowledge......People are active learners and construct knowledge for themselves.” (Schunk, 2000)

Han Zhongliang was an English teacher in Northern China. Han has been able to reduce the complex nature of teaching English as a foreign language to the simplest of ways (Sun, 1999). ‘Han Pedagogy’ is real and practical example of positive foreign language teaching reform. The particular and universal principles contained in Han’s
communicative pedagogy are based on constructs of cognitive learning theory and contributed valuable ideas to the development of China’s foreign language teaching.

Han makes students learn and use English in practical ways from the very beginning. He improved test performances but does so within the context of improving their ability to use English. Students speak out unrehearsed dialogues about everyday experiences which are followed by question and answer in periods with classmates (Sun; 1999). Students decide, based on their personal lives, the direction in which the oral communication exercises proceed. Han’s alternative perspective of teaching shows that the Communicative Approach of teaching English as a foreign language can solve the deaf and dumb problem in which students learn to read and write English but have difficulty in developing listening comprehension and speaking skills (Sun, 1999).

A major element of Han’s pedagogy is its alternative ‘Contra-tricentric’ focus. Conventional foreign language teaching encourages instruction with a ‘Tricentric’ approach – the class, the text book, the teacher. To break away from this confinement teachers need courage and creative pedagogy. Han’s pedagogy follows Communicative Approach, breaks away from the teacher-centred convention and offers an alternative ‘Contra-centric’ student-centred approach.

Han trains students to be interested in study, to be willing to study and to be able to study, and motivates them to be self-regulatory in their learning of English. He integrates dialogues with corresponding written activities that relate to the visual/audio programmes. By employing audio-visual aids, Han makes students practice and use English in real-life contexts. Students understand English and improve their language sense without relying on structured materials.

Han’s pedagogy breaks away from the textbook centred orientation. In most Chinese classrooms text book is the foundation of a course, which in extreme, creates
many drawbacks. He thinks that foreign language teaching should not be bound by textbooks alone, for which teaching activities will be restricted and contradicted to the communicative purpose. How to make good use of text books and not to be bound by them has always been a difficulty in the reform of foreign language teaching.

Han's pedagogy also breaks away from the traditional class-centred teaching. To enable students to make a language as a communication tool, it is unrealistic to expect it to be accomplished in the limited classroom time allotted, no matter how hard students study or how well teachers plan. The communication focuses on language teaching means to free it from the class-centred restriction. Han is determined to move away from a class-centred approach to a way that unites out-of-class activities within class instruction. The entertaining and communicative character of this language method is hard to achieve within a traditional classroom with only class-centred instruction. Han and his students have engaged in discussions, read real dialogues, and perform language activities in which in-class activities enter into out-of-class language experiences and out-of-class experiences enter into in-class activities.

A Contra-tricentric teaching model summarizes the major features of Han's teaching and illustrates many principles of cognitive learning theory. Language use in Han's pedagogy is situated in meaningful contexts and extends beyond the classroom walls. The teacher, audio-visual materials and more competent peers allow students to expand their level of language and become independent learners. They become more self-regulatory in learning English by taking control over the interactive relationships between their environment, their cognitions and beliefs and their behaviours in use of English as a personal communication tool.

A major implication of this change in Communicative approach to teach English as a foreign language will be its impact on the training of English teachers in China. Linguists believe that if the reforms in instruction and methods are going to
have much impact, English departments throughout China will also need to change the manner in which they prepare English teachers in China’s schools. (Anderson, 1993; Wu and Chang, 1988; Gatbonton, 1991, Paine, 1990, Penner, 1995, Campbell and Zhao, 1993). They think that the education of English teachers will need to go beyond the ‘teacher as Virtuoso’ model which emphasizes the “transmission of knowledge, the supremacy of textbooks, and the dominance of the teachers’ direction” in a skillful, articulate performance (Paine, 1990, p.72). It requires teacher-training institutions to infuse the Contra-tricentric methods of the Han-pedagogy into the curricula.

The Communicative Approach of teaching English has made slow progress in China for many reasons, partially due to the method being ‘imported’ from Western countries rather than being initiated by Chinese teachers of English (Gabuton and Gu, 1994). However, Contra-tricentric pedagogy of Han is not an ‘imported’ model, but one developed by a ‘common’ Chinese teacher of English from a small village who has shown remarkable success in learning English and attracting national attention in China (Sun 1999). It is truly a ‘grass-root’ phenomenon and given the theoretically sound support of the pedagogy from cognitive principles of learning. It has a transforming effect in which English has been traditionally taught throughout China leading foreign language teaching back to a more natural approach.
5.3 English Teaching Methods in Vietnam:

Two main teaching approaches, popular in language education in Vietnam as well as throughout the world- are the Learner-centred Approach and the Communicative Approach.

The reason for choosing these approaches in schools is that they put learners at the centre of the teaching process. They also encourage learners to be more positive, active and creative. In Learner-centred and Communicative approaches, the teacher not only delivers language instructions but also acts as a supporter, consultant, and creator of tasks and resource of learners. From the learner’s perspective, students have to familiarize themselves with pair and group work activities and be ready to take part in tasks under the teacher’s supervision.

In Learner-centred and Communicative approaches, teachers and students are interested to learn how to use classroom equipments, for example cassettes and video tapes, CD-ROMs, pictures, computers and language labs. By efficient use of these equipments, the work-load for teachers in class is reduced. These things make the lessons more exciting because communication between the teacher and the student is increased with this. As a result, the effectiveness of teaching and learning is improved.

The teaching and learning methodology need changes, as well as the testing systems. Based on the new text book- programme, each skill has the same percentage in the test:

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<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
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<td>Listening</td>
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New text books, new content, new teaching methods and new ways of using teaching equipments are basic and important elements in the improvement of Vietnamese ELT.

With a great effort at every stage in and around the teaching-learning process, Learner-centred and Communicative approaches are creatively applied and lead more positive results in English language teaching in Vietnam in general and upper Secondary schools in particular.
5.4 Teaching English as foreign language in Latin America:

In ever growing globalized community like Mexico or in any other Latin American country, English is taught as a foreign language.

Countries like Chile, Costa Rica, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Mexico, and Colombia are more geared towards teachers who want to teach English for business purposes. However, the variety of teaching jobs in English that are available could vary from teaching in larger schools of every age group to teaching English as a foreign language in smaller schools or language centres for specific age groups. Types of classes conducted in English are also diverse. For instance, the teacher could teach English as a foreign language for purely conversational exchanges or for the development of skills, like, reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Free trade has opened up the borders between Canada, USA and Mexico. Therefore, English is in urgent demand for Mexicans in commerce and trade. The acquisition of English language can make a big difference in the salaries that Mexican businessmen are paid. Not only in commerce, but also in every field of society, the need of knowing English is growing.

The people of Latin America are amongst the warmest in terms of culture and to be able to teach English as a foreign language in such an open and communicative centre of the world makes the job of teaching English as a foreign language more interactive, exciting and rewarding that can be imagined. The students interact with each other and the teacher of English as a foreign language has to give them instructions.
5.5 **English teaching Methods in France and Spain:**

“Education today, more than ever before, must see clearly the dual objectives: Education for living and education for making a living.”

James Mason Wood

The methods that are mainly practiced in the classroom teaching of English in France and Spain are:

**Grammar-translation:** The student memorizes words, inflected words and syntactic rules and uses them to translate from native language to target language and vice versa. Most commonly used method in schools is Grammar-translation because it does not require teachers to be fluent.

**Direct method:** Here, the native language is not used at all in the classroom and the student must learn the new language without formal instruction, based on theories of first language acquisition.

**Audio-lingual:** Heavy use of dialogues and audio, based on the assumption that language learning is acquired mainly through imitation, repetition and reinforcement; influenced by behaviourist psychology.

**Natural Approach:** Emphasizes on vocabulary and not on Grammar, focuses on meaning, not on form, use of authentic materials instead of text book.

**Silent Way:** Teachers remain passive observers while students learn, which is a process of personal growth; no grammatical explanation or modeling by teacher.

**Total Physical Response:** Students play active role as listeners and performers, must response to imperative drills with physical action.
5.5.1 **Medium of Instruction:- English**

**A1:-** First course in sequential series; open to both beginners and those with some previous experiences in English; study basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Basic grammatical structure of the language emphasizes practical vocabulary in everyday situations and cultural insights through conversational exchanges. After successful completion of the course students can introduce them, describe things they have, people they know, places where they live as well as give information about their everyday life etc. By the end of the semester, students are expected to be close to the A1 (break through) level of the common framework of language learning.

General training module includes:

i. Words, consonants and pronunciation.
ii. Naming words for persons, animals, places and things,
iii. Useful words and general vocabulary,
iv. Doing and describing words,
v. The numbers – singular/plural,
vi. Uncountable things,
vii. Male and female,
viii. Everyday actions and facts,
ix. Simple commands,
x. Reading the time and calendar,
xii. Words in pictures.

**A2:-** Second course in a sequential series- Study of the basic language skills is continued. It includes strengthening of communication skills, both oral and written. At this stage, students can understand the main points clearly and standard speech on familiar subjects. Upon successful completion of the course, students can communicate in simple routine situations and handle short social exchanges about familiar and everyday topics- lifestyle, dress, daily routine,
leisure activities, directions plans, holyday topics, talking about past events and future plans etc. They can write simple and connected texts on familiar topics which are of personal interest. By the end of the semester, students are expected to be able to function at the A2 level of the common framework of language learning.

**Grammar:** Articles, noun, adjectives, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions, sentences, spelling rules, etc.

**B1:** Third course in a sequential series- More development of knowledge of the language and strengthening of communication skills, both oral and written. At this stage, students are expected to attain a certain confidence in their written and oral expression related to everyday matters. By the end of the semester, students are expected to be able to function at the B1 level of the common framework of language learning.

**English Vocabulary:** It includes words and their synonyms and antonyms, one word substitution, usage of troublesome words, foreign expressions, prefixes and suffixes, idioms, phrases and colloquialism, proverbs etc.

**B2:** Fourth course in sequential series- Development of knowledge of the language and in particular strengthening of written skills that allows students to comprehend simple authentic documents and to present them both orally and in writing. It will explore different aspects of contemporary France using audiovisual materials, films and newspaper articles in order to increase students' communication skills and to acquire cultural-information about the French speaking world. After successful completion of the course, students can understand the main points of written or oral documents dealing with familiar issues and can interact in any situation of everyday life. By the end of the
semester, students are expected to be able to function at the B2 (threshold) level of the common framework of language learning.

**English Description:** Argument and views, essay, précis and letter writing.

**5.5.2 Training for Effective Communication:** It includes interpersonal and organizational training like, interviewing, preparing for the interview, conducting the interview, closing the interview, making presentation, running meeting / leading discussions etc.

CI:- Raison D'etre- Advanced English:- English for specific purposes (offers classes specializing in classical studies )

Third course in a sequential series meets the requirements of students’ learning a foreign language. Particular attention is focussed on specialized vocabulary and scientific study of terminology. Grammatical Knowledge is expanded within the context of the texts that are read.

**Module A:-**
1. Grammar control
2. Construction of sentences
3. Words misspelled-spell them correctly
4. Perfection in pronunciation
5. Choice of words diction
6. Punctuation and its uses
7. Idioms.

**Module B:-**
1. Neutralizing the accent
2. Phonetic key
3. Language of effective communication skills

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4. It is not what you say, but how you say that really matters
5. Audience analysis.

There is no denying the fact that English exists in number of ways with no one type becomes more prominent. The reason of learning English are many in France and Spain – better career opportunities, personal development, the chance to travel a lot, enhancement of qualifications etc. The choice of location and the type of school, cultural factors, opportunities to study further and the quality of learning experiences are all significant factors for opting out English education.

In today's world, it is more probable that English is needed more to communicate with non-English speakers than the native speakers. For example, a company in Berlin is doing business with a firm on the basis of language-that is neither German, nor Portuguese but English. In many countries, English speakers share classes with non-English speakers. It gives rise not only to international contacts but also to valuable insights and issues of other nationalities.
5.6 **English Language Teaching methods in Italy:**

Teaching English in Italy is closely tied to teaching in translation methods. Translation is a useful tool to learn Grammar, syntax, and lexis in both source language and in target language.

According to Petrocchi, V. (2008), University for Foreigners at Perugia, Italy, foreign students must continuously compare English to Italian. Students came from all over the world, and their language is often written with a different alphabet. Italian is the bridge between the student’s native languages and English. It is fundamental for the Iranian, Japanese or Chinese students: they understand not only lexis, but also some specific linguistic constructions in Italian and then recreate them into English. Although English is a Germanic language, it belongs to the same Indo-European family as Italian. Moreover, due to historical influence of Latin and French, English is closer to Italian than to German.

5.6.1 **Intercultural Discourses:**

In courses of classroom translations include literary (prose, poetry, theatre), journalistic (economics, politics, current news), technical texts (urbanism, advertising, international organizations such as UN, FAO etc.), so students are able to manage different kinds of special languages. By ‘special’, means specific to any field. Translation is a two-way device because comparison between the two languages-Italian (L1) and English (L2) - allows one to introduce and deal with many subjects. Every text has its own terminology; even slang and everyday idioms characterize a text. Comparing texts of different sources, belonging to the same genre, for example an article from an Italian political magazine and an English one about the same topic (i.e. panorama ↔ Newsweek), students discover not only a different vocabulary, but also a different style.

Students can learn that English has a larger vocabulary, and some words that do not exist in Italian must be explained in order to convey their particular nuances.
Moreover, paying attention to etymology is another strategy that helps them to memorize and understand the real meaning of that word in its context and co-text.

5.6.2 The Role of Grammar:

By starting from Grammar, students can reach higher level of translation and vice-versa. By adopting translation, they acquire more competence in the knowledge of grammatical structures. Translation is a cultural mediation; therefore reading in English texts about Italian culture makes them familiar with the image of Italy such as it is perceived in the Anglo-American world. A comparison between two cultures allows the students to familiarize themselves with the linguistic elements that are unavoidably connected to their culture. Grammatical rules are the backbone of a language and cannot be ignored. During translation, working on parallel texts, it is possible to discover the role played by a grammatical rule and how it is actually applied. The discussion of an entire translated passage or even of one word in classroom, teaches the students that a word usually does not have just one possible translation. Students learn that every word assumes a different meaning according to the context.

5.6.3 Classroom Translation Exercise:

As a first approach, it is useful to translate short sentences in order to be able to build a large paragraph and deepen the structure of the single phrase later on. In Italian, the word order is free: the subject does not arise at the beginning of a sentence like in English, where word order is fixed.

Back-translation involves mainly the syntactical structure, rather than the lexical level. It is a comparison between the patterns of the two languages where individual lexical units may or may not match. It is possible to understand the sentence on a logical level and consequently convey the meaning in the L2. A short example from common signs in two languages allows one to understand the concept.
more easily: “Reduce speed now” is ‘Rallentare’ (slow down) in Italian. When comparing the words, one can see that in English there are three words, while in Italian only one, which is an infinite verb, used to express imperative. In English there is the immediacy not only in the verb but also in the adverb ‘now’, which in Italian is conveyed exclusively by the tense. The back-translation is: ‘Riduci Velocità Ora’. This translation is correct on a semantic level, but not on a formal level. Formal correspondence does not exist, while textual equivalence does. Of course, this is an example where the translation entails the knowledge of a culture, a way of life and personal/direct experience. This method (Grammar-translation) shows how an ‘oblique’ translation does not compromise the internal meaning. Besides translation, students are forced to pay attention to other elements that exclusively belong to the L2.

Parallel translation is not always possible, not only for reasons of Grammar, but also for socio-cultural reasons. A free translation becomes a useful tool to point out aspects of a culture, and consequently to master a language. In Italy, translation is a useful tool and an effective method to learn a second language like English.