CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 A brief history of English language teaching

The history of English Language Teaching (ELT) starts from the 15th Century. The first phase is from the beginning of the 15c to the end of 18th c. and second phase is from the 19th c. The Third and modern stage is from the beginning of the 20th c to the present age. In Europe, during the end of 14th century French gave way to English language and schools in Europe started teaching English. Educational institutions in Europe taught English along with other modern and classical languages. During the 19th century, due to various factors, a rapid development of ELT was made both in Europe and British colonies. During this period the English speaking population increased to several billions from the previous few millions.

English became the major language of England during the reign of King Henry IV. Later during the 15th century King Henry V proclaimed English as the official language and by the end of the 15th c law books were made available in English language. Even during this period grammar schools in England taught in Latin, though the people were communicating in English. English textbooks, including grammar text books were not available until 17th c. Following the Latin texts, Teachers used dialogue forms, related to everyday life, in question answer style, to teach English.

By the end of the 16th c pro-Reformationists from Spain and Italy and large number of French people arrived in England. This unexpected scenario encouraged educationalists in England to bring out ELT text books to teach English to non-English speaking Europeans. Among these immigrants, there were teachers who knew English and some of them started teaching English language to the immigrants from Europe. These teachers could be considered the
first non-native English language teachers. Knowledge of English helped many of the migrant community to improve their career prospects and business. Jacques Bellot prepared and published two English text books - ‘The English School master’ and ‘Familiar Dialogues’ from 1580 to 1590. These textbooks were in an everyday dialogue format. Publication of these text books encouraged many others to bring out ELT books and notable among them was ‘The French School-master’ (1972) brought out by Holly band, which was depended up on by teachers for several decades.

After the return of Italians and other Europeans to their respective countries by the end of the 16th c, ELT in England temporarily came to a standstill. English language lovers could not stop teaching of Latin and Greek in schools of England. During this period John Webbe, who gave prominence for pictures for teaching, and J.A. Comenius, who gave less importance to grammar, published ELT textbooks.

Interest in English philosophy and literature prompted people from many European countries like Germany, Denmark and Netherlands to start learning English. French revolution and Restoration also are some of the reasons for people to show interest in English language. Also plays of Shakespeare and poems of romantic poets attracted many Europeans to English language learning. By 18th c the Russians started learning the English language. In Russia, Michael Permskii brought out a translation of ‘Practical English Grammar’ to Russian language prompting others to do the same. In 1797, John Miller published ‘The Tutor or A New English and Bengalee Work’ from Bengal, India. This book can be considered as the first non-European ELT book.

In the European secondary schools, English was taught as an additional language and ELT was called TEFL (Teaching English as Foreign Language). English was a special subject and the teaching methods of Latin and Greek helped ELT teachers. With the launching of Grammar Translation method in Germany in 1780s, new ELT theories and approaches, like Berlitz schools, for meeting the
specific needs were implemented by different countries in their institutions. Too
many methods made it necessary for reforms in the ELT sector. Scientific study
of language learning, psychology of language learning, paved the way for
theoretical foundation of the language learning Pedagogy.

In British colonies English was taught and ELT was called TESL, i.e.,
Teaching English as Second Language. In these countries England wanted its
colony citizens to learn English in addition to their mother tongue. This was for
employing the native people who had good knowledge of English, to work in
government departments. In colonies like Canada, USA, Australia, and New
Zealand, English became the official language. But in countries like India,
Burma, Srilanka etc., they ruled over the natives and here the native people were
given education which included English language teaching. In addition to the
government initiative, Christian missionaries also engaged in imparting education
to the natives. European knowledge, culture, literature etc., were imparted to the
colony citizens in addition to ELT.

The next stage of ELT, i.e., from the beginning of 20th c to the present can
be divided into three phases. First phase is from 1900 to 1946 (after the Second
World War), from 1946 to 1970 and the third phase from 1970 to the present.
During the second phase of the growth of English language, the term ELT was
generally accepted. Incorporation of applied linguistics added resources and
some scientific base to ELT. New learning theories, approaches and methods of
teaching made it necessary for designing the target language learning techniques.

In the beginning of the second phase, ELT institutes along with BBC,
British Council and publishers of ELT books were located only in London city.
This scenario changed with the arrival of a large number of immigrants from
erstwhile British colonies to United Kingdom during 1960 because of its
economic prosperity. It was a great task to teach the children of these
immigrants. During this period ELT was called ‘English for Immigrants’. By
1970 it was renamed as (TESL) Teaching English as Second Language.
The acronym ELT came into being after the publication of the British Council journal, ‘English Language Teaching’ in 1946. In due course English language teachers’ training programmes were started to make the ELT more effective. Hornby’s writings on situational approaches brought ELT’s focus again on classroom which until then depended more on theory because of the influence of Applied Linguistics.

The establishment of Association of Recognized English Language School (ARELS) in 1960, made ELT a full-time profession and ARELS was a source for ELT resources. People from non-English speaking countries started learning English for going to English speaking countries for higher education. Conferences conducted by various associations including ARELS helped the EFL and ESL teachers to share their views, knowledge and experiences. The requirement of English language was different for people and this necessitated the birth of English for Special Purposes in 1970s. Audio lingual methods for teaching were introduced in France, and from 1960s film scripts and tape recorders were used to teach English. Later ELT professionals started using television also for effective teaching.

‘Communication’ is one of the primary purposes behind language teaching which greatly influenced ELT during the third phase. The preparation of curriculum and text books, evaluation was based on this premise. Initiation of new language learning theories lead to the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) which became the most acceptable language teaching method for ELT professionals. New text books became a necessity because both learners and teachers wanted activities related to real-life experiences and communication. Two categories of English language learners were identified by Van Ek (1980): the first group was general threshold level, who had a basic need of English language. The teaching materials and teaching method should help them achieve it. The second category of learners required English for special purposes (ESP). Various branches originated from ESP like, English for Academic Purposes
This development made ELT professionals to bring out large number of textbooks meeting specific requirements of different learners. Some of them were: ‘English in Physical Science’ (Allen and Widdowson, 1974), ‘Nucleus’ (M Bates and T Dudley-Evans, 1976) which had a volume in General Science. These teaching materials helped ELT to be more flexible and the focus was on language skills than grammar. In addition, British Council developed an English language proficiency test, called English Language Testing Service (ELTS) which was later changed to IELTS.


1.2 English Language Teaching In India

The East India Company, which ruled parts of India before India became a part of the British Empire, set aside certain amount for the education sector. Until the end of the 19th c, English education was given to the children of East India Company employees and Anglo-Indians. Charles Grant, who was considered the father of modern education in India, suggested that European literature and scientific knowledge could be taught to Indian students through English medium. More Indian students started attending English medium schools and later many of them became great supporters of English language and education.
During the beginning of the 19th century, Sir Richard Wellesley founded the ‘Fort William College’ at Calcutta. Later Thomas Babington Macaulay, who later became the president of the Committee of Public Instruction, was given the responsibility of implementing and spreading the English education system including English language education in India. During the beginning of the 19th c. the major discussion was regarding the language to be used for higher education. English had to compete with the classical languages, Sanskrit and Arabic. Thomas Babington Macaulay, in this famous ‘recommendations’ or ‘Minutes of Education’ (1835), suggested that if more budget allocation was given to English language teaching, Indian citizens could be taught about the modern scientific knowledge, western culture and philosophy. He said: ‘we must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions who we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect.’ (Minute on Indian Education). “The vernacular languages, that is, the languages spoken by the people, are dismissed from the discussion as ‘rude’ and completely unsuitable for the purpose… The Minute is categorical that the amount of one lakh rupees allocated in the Charter Act for education should be used for English education.” (Sailaja, Pingali, 2011: 64). Macaulay wanted certain Indians to learn English language and western culture and transfer them to other Indians and enrich Indian languages and culture. The Governor-General of the colony, William Bentick accepted this proposal and this acceptance changed Indian education sector including English language teaching. Bentick’s order was as follows: ‘His Lordship in council is of the opinion that the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India; and all the funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone.’

Sailaja Name of the book (2011: 65) writes, “The Educational Despatch of 1854, was considered to be the Magna Carta of Indian education.” It was prepared by a committee presided over by Charles Wood. This was the
prominent education policy of East India Company which was ruling India then. The recommendations of the committee considered a number of aspects including all levels of education, mass education and the use of Indian languages. The Educational Despatch insisted that English should be the language of education and not any other Indian languages like Sanskrit or Arabic. On the other hand it recommended encouraging the regional languages instead of classical languages like Sanskrit. The Missionaries founded schools and colleges and the curriculum included resources from Bible and works like Pilgrim’s Progress, Paradise Lost, etc.

India had a traditional approach of teaching languages like Sanskrit and Persian using ‘kavya’ (literature) and ‘vyakarana’ (grammar). This had many similarities with the grammar-translation method advocated by Franz Ahn and H.G. Ollendorff. Learners who wanted knowledge of another language read the texts with the help of dictionaries. English classics used as the text books for teaching English language in India, were good examples of writing and use of classical grammar.

There was no great change in the English language education system in India after independence, in 1947. Post independent India followed the legacy of the pre independent English education system. English has been the medium of instruction in colleges, universities and many schools. The growing influence of English language and the difficulty in finding an alternate language acceptable to all Indians were the main reasons for the arrival of English Language. The University Education Commission (UGC), under the chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, was of the opinion that learning English would help Indians to update themselves with the developments happening in other parts of the world. English will promote national unity and nationalism.

… The English language has been one of the potent factors in the development of unity in the country. In fact, the concept of nationality and the sentiment of nationalism are largely the gift
of the English language and literature to Indian… Besides, English is an international language and if catastrophic events do not alter the present posture of world forces it will soon be the world language. (University Grants Commission, 1951: 316).

Development of science and technology could be known to India only through the knowledge of English. The report of the commission continues as follows, “…English is the only means of preventing our isolation from the world, and we will act unwisely if we allow ourselves to be enveloped in the folds of a dark curtain of ignorance. (1951: 325)

The Secondary Education Commission in 1952 made certain recommendations regarding the method of teaching, teaching materials and evaluation system for all. The commission said that ‘the emphasis on teaching should shift from verbalism and memorization to learning through purposeful, concrete and realistic situations and for this purpose the principles of ‘activity based’ and ‘project method’ should be assimilated in school practice.’ (Aggarwal 1884: 115-6) As for textbooks also, the commission suggested that instead of single textbook a reasonable number of books should be used. For languages commission recommended ‘definite textbooks for each class to ensure proper gradation’.

‘Three language formula’ adopted by Chief Ministers of India insisted that the third compulsory language should be English or any other European language’. But nowhere in India, had the schools replaced English with any other European language. This acceptance of three language formula cemented the place of English language in the Indian school and university curriculum. The next education commission, Kothari Commission in 1966 also agreed to the ‘three language formula.’ The Commission suggested that English should continue as a library language and medium of instruction in universities and a good level of English language proficiency is required for awarding degrees. It was the Kothari Commission which recommended special units for teaching
English language skills instead of focusing more on literature. This shift is in line with the shift from grammar – translation method to Direct Method. A number of English Language Teaching Institutes (ELTIs) and Regional Institute of English (RIEs) were established in different locations of India for giving guidance, models and training to English language teachers. (Aggarwal, 1884)

During 1950s and 60s authorities sought the help of professionals from London, including British Council, for preparing structural syllabus. Madras English Language Teaching (MELT) brought experts from London School. Also English Language Teaching Institute (ELTI) was established in Allahabad in 1954 with the assistance of British Council. All India Seminar on the Teaching of English in Nagpur in (1957) suggested a revision of syllabus at schools on a national level and accepted structural approach as the basis for the new syllabus. Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) was established in Hyderabad in 1958. Study groups appointed by Ministry of Education submitted reports in 1967 and 1971 on the ‘Study of English in India’. A large number of English medium schools were started in the private sector. Promoting Hindi and local languages along with English, was the policy of central and state governments and thus in India, people as a whole opted for English.

The Acharya Rammurti commission in 1986 observed regarding teaching languages, that more importance should be given to the hours of study and the level of attainment of the language than the years of study in a school or college. It also suggested that various government educational institutes should join together to design methods for making uniformity in the acquisition of language competency at school level.

Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), set up by the University Grants Commission (UGC) in 1989 directed that the proposed curricula should shift its emphasis from teaching to learning and it should be designed as to make more meaningful to the needs and aspirations of the learners. CDC suggested post
graduate courses in British Literature, American Literature, Comparative Literature, Creative Writing in English, Modern English language, English Language Teaching, etc. Several Indian universities have started many of these courses.

1.3 Background to the study

There is great demand for English language in India now. The younger generation in India are convinced that English language will give them more opportunities for economic and career advancement. English has changed from the language of the west to language of the modern era. It is taught or is the medium of instruction in all professional arts & science colleges and Universities. English language is also used to project India’s achievements in language, literature, science, philosophy, etc. Many works of Indian writers are being translated into English every year.

English language is taught at the first and second year of the course, irrespective of the course students have taken, in both arts and science colleges and professional colleges in Kerala, as done in other states of India. Makhan L. Tickoo writes about the present scenario,

Tertiary-level ELT is being forced to respond to the fast globalizing market place. In doing so, ... it can ill-afford to ignore its other equally pressing obligations. These include:

a) The growing need to respond to students from weaker sections and first generation learners whose numbers are fortunately on the increase;

b) The real aim of higher education and especially education through English being not just the development of skills for the fast expanding job markets but also contributing to a knowledge society, adequate attention also needs to be paid to the larger aims. English today is India’s most important language of knowledge – one that
empowers graduates to be not just consumers of knowledge which techniques alone and by themselves make possible but, more importantly, participants in the production of knowledge. India of tomorrow cannot afford to remain a recipient of products produced elsewhere. It has to become the equal of the best with a workforce comparable to the very best in the world. To do this tertiary-level ELT must not allow technique to displace content but bring in technique alongside content i.e. the language in its fullness with the riches of literature of all types. (Makhan L. Tickoo, 2010: 75)

He says that education and English language have to be available as a tool for every fresh graduate student, without sidelining their vernacular. Students should be allowed to acquire English language on a basis of various regional cultures and languages.

Quoting an international consultancy, McKinsey. Graddol (2006) says that even though India produces 25 lakh university graduates every year, a majority of them are unemployable as per western standards. Indian graduates are weak in spoken English skills. He blames mediocre institutions, uneven curricula and faculty of poor quality for this situation.

Shobhaneswari and Dass in their study suggest the following measures to limit the drawbacks of the ELT in colleges and universities in India.

(i) being aware of individual areas of lacunae, (ii) using English extensively for transactional communication, (iii) interacting fluently with people who belong to predominantly ‘English’ culture, (iv) socializing with counterparts / clients outside business discussions, (v) comprehending various regional accents and flavours of expression.” (Shobhaneswari and Dass, 2007:51)

It is found that there is a problem with teaching learning process as far as the imparting of English language is concerned. Even after 12 plus 3 years of
learning English in school and college, they are not able to communicate in English.

1.4 Necessity for a rural ELT

People of educationally and economically backward regions of India believe that their backwardness is because of their lack of English language knowledge. Some of them feel that there is a planned movement to deny English language to particular sections of the society. Amol Pdwad (2010: 20) writes, “Our country is now facing a new kind of division – between the English-haves and English-have-nots.” In the present age, especially in third-world countries, accessibility to English language can endow with development and all pervading growth to underprivileged people.

Though rural students are more than urban learners, curricula, syllabuses and textbooks are prepared discarding the disparity between rural and urban students. Many educationists oppose this and suggest that there should be different educational practices for both rural and urban educational system. Amod Pdwad writes,

We (teachers) often find that the needs and interests of learners, the objectives of teaching and learning English, the content of the course materials, and even recommended methods and evaluation patterns tend to be decided with urban learners in mind. Many believe that this urban focus of our educational design is an important reason why rural learners do not benefit from education and remain poor achievers. (Amod Pdwad, 2010: 21)

Majority of rural students are first or second generation learners. This is a disadvantage for them because they will not get educational guidance from parents or relatives as their urban counterparts get. Lack of support includes finance, resources and proper environment. In addition the educational and employment needs of the rural students are different from urban students.
Learning methodologies should be changed considering these factors and considering the rural background of the students. This research work is an attempt to find a solution to the problem.

A group of 30 students of rural background doing under graduate arts and science courses of Sreekrishna College, Guruvayoor was selected for the present research work. The basic concept of Experiential Learning Method (ELM) was adopted while making the tasks for the experiments.

1.5 Hypothesis

- Students from rural background can acquire communication skill in English by using ELM
- Students, who did their schooling in regional medium but studied English as one of the subjects, can use their experience to acquire competency in English.
- Students using ELM for the learning process will show steady progress in their language acquisition.
- Experiential learning cycle can be adopted for the selected respondents.

1.6 Review of Literature

The main focus of the theory of Experiential Learning Method is experience itself. Everybody undergoes experiences everyday and in every stage of life. It is an active paradigm, which people acquire in the course of their life.

Brooksfield talks of two kinds of experiential learning,

On the one hand it is used to describe the sort of learning undertaken by students who are given a chance to acquire and apply knowledge, skills and feelings in an immediate and relevant setting. … This sort of learning is sponsored by an institution… The second type … not sponsored by some formal educational institution but by
people themselves. It is learning that is achieved through reflection upon everyday experience and is the way the most of us do our learning. (Brooksfield, S. 1983:16)

1.6.1 John Dewey’s Theory of Experiential Education

Explaining the learning theory of John Dewey, Elkjaer (2010 p. 74) writes “A theory of learning for the future, advocates the teaching of a preparedness to respond in a creative way to difference and otherness. This includes an ability to act imaginatively in situations of uncertainties”. Dewey considers that individual’s continuous meeting with environments is experimental and playful. He says that ‘experience’ is related to human beings’ lives and living.

Experience is the relation between individual and environment, ‘subject’ and ‘worlds’… The subject-worlds relation makes experience possible. Experience is both the process of experiencing and the result of the process. It is in experience, in transaction, that difficulties arise, and it is with experience that problems are resolved by inquiry. (Elkjaer, 2010 p. 75)

This inquiry, which can be defined as critical and reflective thinking, is an experimental approach, and by using it further experience can be generated through action, ideas and concepts, inquiry is not past oriented but concerned with consequences. Dewey’s ‘pragmatism’ views individuals as future-oriented. “The consequence of the orientation towards the future is that knowledge is provisional, transient and subject to change because future experience may act as a corrective to existing knowledge.” (Elkjaer. 2010. P 75)

In ‘experience’ or while experiencing, problem come up and these problems are solved by ‘enquiry’. Dewey uses the term ‘experience’ to suggest the relation of individual and the environment. He also finds relations between action and thinking, between individuals’ existence and getting to know about themselves’ and the environment to which they belong. The following is a
comparison between traditional idea of experience and Dewey’s idea of experience. (Elkjaer, 2010 p. 81)

Table 1.1 Dewey’s concept of experiential learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional concept</th>
<th>Dewey’s concept</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience as knowledge</td>
<td>Knowledge as subset of experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience as subjective</td>
<td>Experience as both subjective and objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience as oriented to the past</td>
<td>Experience as future oriented (consequence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience as isolated experience</td>
<td>Experience as united experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience as action</td>
<td>Experience as encompassing theories and concepts and as such a foundation for knowledge</td>
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</table>

When actions are obstructed by unforeseen and complex situations, development of experience occurs. This obstruction, in turn, makes the learner to look at the problematic situation closely, ‘to inquiry’, which will result in new experience and a new knowledge is generated.

Vijaya Bharathi says, (2010: 27) “John Dewey does not see any difference between knowledge and experience. According to him Knowledge is only a result of our various types of experiences.” Dewey believed that learning is doing. He focuses on activity. He says the ‘discovery of inner experience’ in the context of ‘purely personal events’, brings in a ‘sense of dignity in human individuality’. He is elevated to a place where he, who till then was, considered a part and belonging to nature, is a valuable contributor than a passive spectator. This newly acquired dignity encourages him to contribute innovative products, inventions and discoveries to various academic fields, including education. Bharathi writes,
… to him knowledge is derived from activity. Knowledge and action being intimately connected can’t stand apart from one another. Moreover, while action gives birth to knowledge which modifies further action Dewey advocated life centred education and announced that education could be integrated with life only by organizing education around adult occupations. (Bharathi, 2010: 30)

Dewey says, (1938: p.61) “The process of education is a continuous process of adjustment, having as its aim at every stage an added capacity of growth.” Dewey believed that education is the result of various activities of humans. Education is generated from these activities. Class or school gives life experiences to the learner and it is an extension of his home. Lourenco (1970: 332) considers Dewey’s method of ‘Learning by Doing’ as an educational pragmatism, where students are involved in situations with which he/she has to cope with. Close involvement with these situations will make him/her self-reliant and provide him/her with foresightedness and make him/her creative.

Dewey considers direct experience as the base for all teaching methods. Tasks and activities should be of interest to learners. Then they will involve themselves sincerely and active involvement will generate knowledge. Self education, self-learning and motivation are the basic premises of Dewey. He says (1938: 274) “The teacher must be alive to all forms of bodily expressions of mental condition... He must be aware not only of their meaning, but of their meaning as indicative of the state of mind of the pupil, his degree of observation and comprehension.”

“…there should be continuity between the schools activities and basic aspects of the out of school world. The school should also, in the pattern of its life develop, the values and qualities of human relations … and should demonstrate habits of cooperation, free communication and reflective thinking.” (G Wirth, 1969: 125)
Figure 1.1 Dewy’s experience cycle

(Dewy, 1938)

Dewy adds a cycle of experience and learning in his method. He presumes that awareness of a problem will urge one to find a solution to that problem and he will try to use it to solve the problem. He will face the result or consequence which may be anywhere between positive to negative. This result or feedback he receives will confirm or modify the knowledge he was aware of earlier.

John Dewey points to experience as the guide to moral life. His book *Experience and Education* published in 1938 can be considered as the foundation of experiential learning, even though he does not mention the word *learning*. He writes:

If one attempts to formulate the philosophy of education implicit in the practices of the new education, we may, I think, discover certain common principles... to imposition from above is opposed expression and cultivation of individuality; to external discipline is opposed free activity; to learning from texts and teachers, learning through experience; to acquisition of isolated skills and techniques
by drill is opposed acquisition of them as means of attaining ends which make direct vital appeal; to preparation for a more or less remote future is opposed making the most of the opportunities of present life; to static aims and materials is opposed acquaintance with a changing world. . . I take it that the fundamental unity of the newer philosophy is found in the idea that there is an intimate and necessary relation between the processes of actual experience and education. (1938: 18).

1.6.2 Jean Piaget

Piaget (1952) talks about the development of learner’s understanding. Children, whose minds are empty, process materials actively. Children’s increasing ability to understand their world is a major subject of interest for Piaget. According to him children are unable to undertake certain tasks until they psychologically grow up. Piaget emphasises on the discovery of learning than teacher providing knowledge. The level of readiness to learn is different for each learner.

1.6.3 Vygotsky

Vygotsky considers thought as essentially internalised speech, and speech is expressed when interacting with others. Vygotsky and Bruner are known social Constructivists who give prominence to language. They believe that meaning and understanding are generated when language is used in social situations.

“For Vygotsky , learning is a social, collaborative and interactional activity in which it is difficult to ‘teach’ specifically – the teacher sets up the learning situation and enables learning to occur, with intervention to provoke and prompt that learning through scaffolding “ (Cohen & Manion 2004:168).

Vygotsky formulated the ‘Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory. ZPD refers to child’s development without adult help and development when working in collaboration with more learned or knowledgeable adults or peers.
The adult or peer need not teach the child in performing the task but the collaboration, observation and process of interaction in addition to the enquiry generates new understandings and a betterment of the performance. Vygotsky believes that student’s current level of learning reflects the importance of his earlier knowledge.

1.6.4 Rogers, C.R.

Two types of learning styles are described by Rogers (1969). They are: cognitive (meaningless) and experiential (significant). Cognitive learning refers to academic knowledge and experiential learning corresponds to applied knowledge. Rogers says that experiential learning is what the learner can use and it meets his needs. Self-initiation, involvement and evaluation by the learner are the qualities described by Rogers, who considers personal change and growth as equivalents to experiential learning. He believes that everybody has an ability to learn and teacher’s role is only that of a facilitator. A good teacher should arrange a suitable atmosphere for learning, explain the targets of the learner, arrange learning resources, share feelings and thoughts with the learner and keep balancing intellectual and emotional content of the learning materials. Rogers expects the learner to be actively and completely involved in the learning process and it should be not be controlled or dominated by the teacher. Learner should evaluate himself and leaning activities should have practical, personal and social relevance. A learner should have readiness to correct mistakes. Rogers writes, “The only man who is educated is the man who has learned how to adapt and change; the man who has realised that no knowledge is secure; that only the process of seeking knowledge gives a basis for security.” (Rogers 1969:104)

Rogers & Frieberg (1994) discuss applications of the experiential learning framework in the classroom.

1. Significant learning takes place when the subject matter is relevant to the personal interests of the student.
2. Learning which is threatening to the self (e.g., new attitudes or perspectives) is more easily assimilated when external threats are at a minimum.
3. Learning proceeds faster when the threat to the self is low.
4. Self-initiated learning is the most lasting and pervasive.

Rogers states that humans have a natural ability for learning. Only if the subject of study is of personal relevance and when the subject of study requires the learner’s personal involvement, i.e. experiential learning, the learner will learn easily. “Learning which is self-initiated and which involves feeling as well as cognition is most likely to be lasting and pervasive.... Independence, creativity and self reliance are most likely to flourish in learning situations where external criticism is kept to a minimum and where self evaluation is encouraged.” (Williams, 2009: 35) Best possible learning method is to train learners to make them capable of meeting the demands of the modern world and this learning method should involve the knowing about the process of learning itself. A learner should always be open to experiences and should be ready to involve himself in the never ending process of change which takes all around him. Pine and Boy say, “Our best preparation for an evolving society is helping children face the future with confidence in their own abilities and with a faith that they are worthwhile and important members of whatever culture they might find themselves in.” (Pine and Boy. 1977: 47)

1.6.5 David Kolb

Kolb considers ‘learning as a process of creating knowledge’. Knowledge creation happens, whether small or big, in all spheres. Interaction between ‘social’ and ‘personal’ knowledge creates knowledge. Social knowledge is the ‘the civilized objective accumulation’ of the learners’ cultural experience. Personal knowledge is collection of each individual learner’s ‘subjective’
experience. Thus knowledge is created by the close interaction among the above objective and subjective experiences in a ‘process called learning’

Kolb connects experiential learning to a level that can create a situation where ‘everyone is a winner’ or ‘can make winning and losing irrelevant’. He says that each learner should be aware of his self and existence and integrate ‘value, facts, meaning and relevance’. This and fully remembering and acknowledging his past taking ‘choiceful responsibility of future’, only then he can experience the ‘dialectic conflict necessary for learning experience.’

**Figure 1.2 Kolb’s experiential learning cycle**

![Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle](image)

(Kolb, 1984)

Kolb talks of an experiential learning cycle and his model theory has a four-dimensional cycle. In this four-dimensional cycle, learners, a) have some form of concrete experience, b) think about this experience through which they have gone through, c) abstract general rules and construct from it d) actively experiment with application of these concepts, creating new concrete experiences through performing the cycle repeatedly.
1.6.6 David Nunan

Experience is transformed into or used to acquire knowledge. Experiential learning is a conceptual basis for task-based language teaching. Learning experience is used as a language learning content, by reliving on experience orally and/or writing. These experiences can be artificially created by asking or allowing them to do different tasks which themselves will promote language learning. ‘Learning by doing’ is the central idea and the learner’s active participation is a must and it is possible if the teacher provides them with interesting tasks, which is related to their everyday life, culture, etc. David Kolb (1984) believes that experiential learning has its roots in subjects like social psychology, humanistic education, developmental education and cognitive theory. Learners make use of what they already know and can do to acquire new knowledge and perform new skills. Learners “do this by making sense of some immediate experience, and going beyond the immediate experience through a process of reflection and transformation.” (Nunan, 2007: 12)

1.6.7 Norland, Deborah L, and Pruett-Said, Terry

Norland (2006: 26) states “that a subject is learned best if students are involved in concrete, hand-on experiences with the subject. ... Students were able to analyze and discover their own information about the topic and language use as they are involved with tasks or projects.” Main strategy for experiential language teaching is student’s involvement in tasks. Norland suggests the following strategies for experiential language teaching.

1. The teacher identifies a task or activity that will help students learn the language needed in their particular context.
2. The teacher plans how the task should be implemented including any necessary language items that may need to be introduced or reviewed for the students to perform the task or activity.
3. The teacher explains the task to the students.
4. The students discuss the task and identify their roles.
5. The students do their task or activity.
6. The students perform or demonstrate what they have learned or accomplished.

7. Norland considers the actual use of language in authentic situations by the target language learners, as the major strength of experiential language teaching. He insists that teachers should plan the experiential activities well, focusing on their goals and keeping in mind the pedagogical purposes.

1.6.8 Rod Ellis

Rod Ellis talks of the importance of previous experience or familiarity to topics for discussion in the second language learning classrooms.

Gass and Varonis (1984) investigated the effects of topic familiarity of four advanced learners of English performing the same task with different topics. As might be expected, they found that the learners’ familiarity with the topic had a clear effect on comprehensions. It also influenced the amount of negotiation work that took place, with less familiar topics lead to less negotiation... These studies suggest that topic familiarity and topic importance have an influence on the interaction that results from a task. (Ellis, 2010: 91).

Also learners become more active in participating when the topic is of a field of their expertise.

1.6.9 Caroline Brandt

Caroline in her ‘Strategy 7: See Learning as developmental and Experiential’ (2006: 173) says, “Learning occurs when your (learner’s) experience shapes and informs your future behaviour and development.” Teachers can look for signals of learner’s acquisition of the language skills. Students can learn from
a workshop or they can exhibit their acquired skill in an assignment. Caroline wants learners to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses and become able to address them. Quite naturally, learners should make mistakes but they should learn from those mistakes too. Caroline (2006: 173) expects the learners to show development that is an important sign of “growing independence; that is, the ability to research, plan …with less support from tutors and fellow participants that you (learner) might need at the start of your course… increasing independence should be the natural consequence of learning: as you acquire the resources yourself, you will become less dependent on other for support, information or ideas, for example.” Caroline wants a learner should improve his/her factual knowledge, and his/her understanding of key concepts. He/She should utilise all opportunities to practice the skills they have learned. Also a learner should fix only targets which are realistic and achievable for them.

1.6.10 Tricia Hedge

Learners’ individual cognitive style depends on their preference of gaining a global impression or to analyse its details. Learners who want to gain global impression “prefer experiential learning through classroom communication which encourages guessing and structuring.” (Hedge, 2000: 173) . Teachers who practice experiential learning believe that textbooks should supplement the needs of language learners. About experiential learning Hedge says“...in this approach the focus is not so much on what basis to create a list of items to be taught as how to create an optimal environment to facilitate the processes through which language is learned.” (Hedge, 2000: 359)

Tricia Hedge states the following criteria for preparing tasks in the ‘experiential language’ teaching classrooms.

1. The focus of the task should be on meaning and outcome and not on the language forms to be produced in completing the task. The term ‘unfocused’ usefully captures this key criterion.
2. The content of the spoken or written English should be determined by the learner and not controlled by the teacher. The learner has to formulate and produce ideas, information, opinion, etc.

3. There must be negotiation of meaning between speakers, i.e. a learner must be engaged in interpreting meaning from what another learner says and constructing what to say as a response.

4. In order for the third criterion to function, what a learner hears should not be predictable, i.e. there should be an information or opinion gap.

5. The learner will need to use all his or her existing language resources and take risks with them, e.g. ask for and provide clarification, and use the normal strategies of communication in doing this.” (Hedge, 2000: 359)

1.6.11 Peter Jarvis

Peter Jarvis writes about learning as follows:

Fundamentally, it is the person who learns and it is the changed person who is the outcome of the learning, although that changed person may cause several different social outcomes…Human learning is the combination of processes throughout a lifetime whereby the whole person – body (genetic, physical and biological) and mind (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs and senses) – experiences social situations, the perceived content of which is then transferred cognitively, emotively or practically (or through any combinations) and integrated into the individual person’s biography resulting in a continually changing (or more experienced) person. (2009: 24-25)

Following picture created by Jarvis describes his concept of experiential learning process.
1.6.12 Heron John

In ordinary usage, ‘learning refers to the acquisition of knowledge or skills from experience, study or teaching. It involves interest and commitment: we only learn what we are interested in and follow through with some degree of earnestness. Then too it supposes understanding and retention: we have learnt something if we understand it or understand how to do it (in the case of a skill) and can retain that understanding for some significant period of time. (Heron. 2010: 144)

He insists on self-directed learning. He says learning can be done by learner only and no other person can do it for him. Involvement of the learner’s whole personality is a must for learning. Learner’s “interest, commitment, understanding and retention are autonomous, self-generated and self-sustaining.” (Heron, 2010: 144)
Experiential learning is one the most important of Heron’s concepts of learning. He defines “experiential learning is acquiring knowledge of being and beings through emphatic resonance, felt participation.” (Heron, 1010: 145). Additionally he incorporates four intelligences to experiential learning. They are intrapersonal, interpersonal, intuitive and spiritual intelligences. Later in the article he adds two more intelligences, that is, empathic and emotional, to ‘experiential learning’. Heron believes that if learning is done in a co-operative atmosphere with other learners and in an orderly way, using the whole personality of the learner, ‘it is almost certain to lead to learning as inquiry’.

1.7 Proposed content of the thesis

The First chapter explores the history of English Language Teaching from 15th century to the present time, giving special emphasis on ELT in India. It also includes the background to the study, hypothesis, objective and outline of the thesis.

Second chapter investigates various English Language Teaching approaches, methods and techniques including Generation 1 - Grammar-Translation method, Structural-oral-situational approach and Direct Method. Second generation approaches and methods which are adopted to meet the requirements of the new generation learners namely activity based, communicative, competency based, task based language teaching and Experiential Learning Method are elaborated. The reason for adopting Experiential Learning Method (ELM) for the present study is also explained.

Third chapter presents how tasks were created based on the theories and practices of David Kolb, Kohonen and David Nunan. Detailed description of the tasks and the administration method is documented in the thesis. Materials used for ELM are discussed elaborately. There were ten comprehensive tasks which were suitable to the level of the students and they were arranged sequentially and progressively.
In fourth chapter detailed analysis of the tests is presented, with the help of the SPSS package. The findings showed that there was a positive difference between pre task and post task speaking and it was due to the implementation of ELM. It was followed by a chapter on conclusion.