In S L communication, it is also necessary for us to look into the perceptions the learners carry with them and the psychological orientations that sustain them. We need to understand the role of the affective factors and motivation in bringing communication and learning to meaningful levels. The selection and use of learning strategies depend a great deal on the nature and intensity of motivation the learners possess. The aspects of motivation will certainly be different in bilingual, bicultural learning environments and the teachers need to be aware of the way in which motivational variables work.

The successful learning of a second language requires total physical, intellectual and emotional involvement on the part of the learners. When the learner feels that he is at the centre of the process of learning, and finds that he is actively participating in the tasks, the learning process becomes more meaningful and rewarding. There are factors like attitude, motivation, the learners' views about the learning environment, and also their views of the target language and its speakers. Above all, the factors like the learners' desire to learn, their previous knowledge, and attitudes to acquiring new language skills significantly contribute to the learning outcomes. In a typical second language learning situation, there are many participants, the learner, the teacher, the peers, parents and other speakers of the language, whose attitudes to the T L and also to each other can be significant.
If the learner participation in the communicative activities designed to develop S
communication skills in our colleges is abysmally low, one of the reasons could be the
affective factors working against the learners’ whole-hearted involvement in such
activities. The situation then necessitates an exploration into the influence of the
affective factors in S L learning and communication. An attempt has been made to
identify and analyse various affective factors operating within the individuals, in the
sections that follow. The ensuing discussion will also look into the roles of attitudes,
motivation, the learning environment and strategies in S L communication.

5.1 Psychological Orientations

The word education comes from *educaire*, which means to look within. The
process of education remains incomplete if the learners do not get an opportunity to
look critically within themselves and review their learning styles and activities. Similarly,
teachers need to know how the learners’ perceptions of themselves and the learning
environment influence the outcome of their learning and communication skills. The
systems and practices aimed at educating people today do not consider the working of
the learner’s self; rather they go to the peripheries trying to force the learners to know
and remember details and facts without getting them fully involved in the process. In the
instructional communication aimed at second language learning, the learners are asked
to practice structures with regard to the expression of certain content items. No attempt
is made to understand the learners’ feelings about the processes of learning and
communication processes they go through.
In view of the purport of education as a process intended to look within, learners need to understand themselves and their environment before taking up learning assignments and evaluate the process. Bruner (1979) argues that learners’ desire to interact with the environment leads to language learning supported by the processes of communication in the environment. They need to develop language for making their interaction meaningful and effective in the process of discovering knowledge. Halliday (1978) corroborates this view suggesting that the learners develop a sense of self and learn how to behave in their culture by sharing experiences with those who interact with them.

There are two basic factors that influence language learning, the internal characteristics that are a part of the learner’s personality, and the relational factors, which focus on learners and teachers as participants in a cooperative venture. Among the learners’ internal attributes, the importance is on positive dispositions. Humans inevitably form an image of themselves and affect plays an important role in the creation and sustenance of it. Studies in communication, an area very relevant to language teaching, show that the perceptions one has of self significantly affect attitudes, behaviours, evaluations, and all the cognitive processes, and thus, have an overwhelming impact on language learning and communicative competence.

The development of affective factors in learners depends largely on their personality and psychological orientation that arise out of their worldview and cultural background. The processes involved in language learning such as receiving, responding, analysing and assimilating are effectively coordinated to produce positive results. This view of the affective factors also explains why the learners who share the
same social background considerably differ in their learning achievement. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the affective variables facilitate or hinder learning in various ways and their intervention leads to individual differences in second language learning.

In the learning of a second language, the learners have to tackle not only mental but also psychological tasks. They learn how to construct utterances, and how to use language for various communicative purposes. What is more important is to have the necessary psychological dispositions with a clear sense of purpose to achieve well-defined goals. To achieve this aim, the task is to render the classroom communication meaningful and result oriented. Obviously, there is a need for equipping learners with the ability to apply the rules governing the structure of utterances without letting them feel the burden of the process. In this view, rules should no longer compel the learners to associate their skills with the ability to produce speech acts within the process of communication, but they should “assist the learners in their communication without being a burden on their conscious mind” (Leontiev 1981: 24).

For this reason, attitudes and motivation deserve recognition as important psychological variables in second language learning. Of the possible motivators, the desire for integration with the culture of the native speakers of the language correlates highly with learning success (Gardner 1985). The Indian students are faced with the need to integrate to a certain extent with speakers of English particularly since their hopes for jobs and social advancement largely depend on their success in coping with the language and culture of the globally power-wielding community. Yet there are many facts and prejudices that militate against this kind of an integrative motivation and prevent the cultivation of positive dispositions.
5.1.1 Attitudes

The concept of psychological readiness warrants an understanding of the processes involving transfer and motivation, and the attitudes that support them. They are part of the psychological orientations that greatly control the learners’ cognitive operations. Transfer is the application of prior knowledge to new learning situations and new learning goals, whereas motivation is the impetus to create and sustain goal seeking acts (Ames and Ames 1989). If the learners perceive what they are learning to be relevant and transferable to other situations, they will find learning meaningful, and their motivation to acquire the skills or knowledge will increase. Similarly, for transfer to take place, the learners must have positive attitudes and willingness to make use of the opportunities in the learning environment.

In the process of transfer there are three factors that are generally getting transferred; they are identified as conceptual knowledge, strategic or procedural knowledge and appropriate dispositions for learning (Ngeow 1998). While conceptual knowledge, or the content to be learned, is acquired with the help of appropriate strategies, the dispositions for learning make the situation extremely complex. If we succeed in fostering positive dispositions, other two activities namely the cultivation of conceptual knowledge and strategic or procedural knowledge will take care of themselves. However, we often fail to recognise the importance of positive dispositions, and at the same time, we expend considerable time and effort on the development of subject knowledge and strategic procedure.
Though this kind of learner transformation seems to be logical, or perhaps, inevitable in the communication activity, it is not easily accomplished in a second language learning situation. The task before the learners is to deploy the communication acts to construct successful communication sequences in the classroom, and this necessarily presupposes linguistic skills and psychological readiness on the part of the learners. While linguistic skills are the skills involving the ability to use linguistic material and conventions for the construction of proper utterances, the concept of psychological readiness refers to the learners' positive dispositions or attitudes.

In the interaction between the self and the external environment, the role played by the affective factors is of great importance. The language that figures in communicative interactions is not only a social product but also a product of the mind. Therefore, its nature and potency are determined by the psychological states of its users as much as they are socially determined. This necessitates an exploration into the influence of various affective factors and psychological orientations on the communicative processes while designing strategies for instructional communication programmes for the S L classroom.

The study of attitudes to language learning should include not only the attitudes the learners show toward the language in question but also the attitudes towards speakers of that language and their culture. In fact, it can include all kinds of behaviour concerning language such as its status, utility, the opportunities it brings forth and the functional efficacy it provides the learners with. The status and importance of a language in society and within an individual derives largely from adopted or cultivated
attitudes. An attitude is individual, but it has its origin in the collective behaviour of the society; it is something an individual has which determines or promotes certain types of behaviour. Although an attitude is a hypothetical psychological construct, it touches the reality of language use in all spheres. Attitudes are learned predispositions, not inherited traits, have a tendency to persist, and are likely to be relatively stable. However, experience affects attitudes, and gradually results in attitude change, which is an important notion to be discussed with regard to bilingualism and second language use.

In our context, the recognition of the sense of purpose is what makes language learning effective and it can be achieved by the cultivation of favourable attitudes. In developing positive attitudes, the learners need to understand the status and role of the second language, and should have the freedom to use the language items in guided interactions. These interactions may be teacher controlled, but it has to be in a free environment of peer activities where they can use both the languages in flexible and creative ways. At every stage, the learners need to sustain the feeling that are expected to develop the ability to use the target language not necessarily for their expressive needs but to assist their own empowerment by developing the language skills necessary for their social and academic efficiency.

Affect is also an intrinsic motivator, a prompter and a personality builder (Arnold 1999). The positive affect sustains involvement and deepens interest in the subject matter. The affective factors include a variety of psychological orientations such as self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-direction. The positive manipulations of the affect can lead to more effective learning and communication activities. Therefore, in the process of
learning, success depends less on materials, techniques and linguistic analysis and more on what goes on inside and between the learners in the classroom.

The monitor model of language acquisition theory proposed by Krashen (1982) also corroborates the proactive role played by the affective factors in the learning of a second language. He puts forth the concept of an affective filter that controls the flow of 'comprehensible input' into the 'language acquisition device' considerably influencing the learning outcome. The affective filter is a component of the internal processing unit that subconsciously screens the incoming language corpus and thus controls the rate of acquisition and degree of competence. The affective filter comprises the learners' motives, needs, attitudes, emotional states, self-concept and the worldview. According to the monitor model of language acquisition, the learners whose attitudes are not conducive to accepting a new language belonging to another culture permit less input since they have a strong affective filter.

The affective factors not only control the flow of comprehensible input into the language acquisition device to determine the nature of learning (Krashen 1978), but also regulate self-directional tendencies and individual initiative of the learners. If the affective filter can be kept low by creating appropriate learning environment, it may permit more comprehensible input into the language acquisition device. The input is made comprehensible with assistance of the L1, and monitoring becomes more active with the activation of self-direction. This demonstrates the influence of the three major variables such as exposure, motivation and experience in second language learning. These variables seem to correspond to the concepts of comprehensible input, affective filter and processing in the language acquisition device that Krashen (1982) and other
psychologists propose. When we take into consideration the importance of affective factors and their influence on motivation and monitoring, the role played by the learners’ self as well as the L1 cannot be ignored.

5.1.2 Motivation

Psychologists define motivation as the process involved in arousing, directing and sustaining behaviour (Ball 1977). It is a drive oriented towards achieving certain goals. It, thus, explains why an individual prefers to be active rather than passive, and why s/he shows more interest in working at a particular task than any other. This means a person’s behaviour is determined either by his/her interests and inner needs or by some external stimuli. In any case, achievement of any sort is believed to be preceded by certain motivating factors, either external or internal.

There are two prominent views on the types of motivation; it can be either instrumental that arises from utilitarian considerations, or integrative that has its source in the learners’ desire to integrate successfully into the target language community (Gardner and Lambert 1972). In either case, motivation prompts the learners to engage in activities directed at achieving specific targets, and it can considerably reduce the functioning of the affective filters that brings down learning efficiency. Besides, the positive dispositions mentioned above influence each other in such a way that they accelerate learning by exploring the possibilities of transfer in an environment conducive to promoting the interplay between cognition and positive dispositions. Such an environment will essentially encourage the learners to take the responsibility of their own learning and thus promote internal cognition with regard to various learning
contexts and activities. Bruner reiterates this view when he says, “the best way to create interest in a subject is to render it worth knowing” (1960: 31), which means to make the learner perceive the usability and relevance of the knowledge gained.

Motivation is believed to have different manifestations in different people and situations. We cannot support the view that integrative motivation is solely responsible for second language achievement. Crookes and Schmidt (1991) identify four areas of motivation in second language learning, the micro level, the classroom level, the syllabus level, and a fourth level involving factors from outside the classroom. The micro level involves the cognitive processing of the second language input. At the micro level, learner motivation is fuelled by the amount of attention given to the input. The classroom level includes the techniques and activities leading to the expectancy of success and amount of control over activities. The syllabus level refers to the choice of content presented and the level of curiosity and interest aroused in the students. Finally, factors from outside the classroom involve peer interactions and other interactions that take place in the environment.

In addition to playing a vital role in determining the learner’s achievement, motivation further maximises learner initiative. In this way, motivation enhances achievement, and achievement, in turn, becomes a motivational base. This is called achievement motivation in which factors such as language proficiency and manipulative skills build on achievement in the case of SL learning. Although the importance of achievement motivation is widely recognized, its influence on creating positive attitudes depends on the learners’ ability to sustain achievement by constantly improving the learning outcome. In second language learning, achievement needs to be consistent,
and communication successful, in order to maintain further interest and effort. Achievement, therefore, not only refers to the high scores in the examination but also the success the learners gain in the acts of communication.

The nature and functioning of cognition also have a bearing upon the psychological factors like attitudes and motivation. The cognitive structure is believed to represent cognitive–semantic schemata, which are derived from the individual’s interactions with both the physical and cultural environment. These interactions include interpersonal communication and other social relations that influence the word-view of the individual. Most of the interaction between the individuals and the environment is essentially “informational or transactional” (Richards 1990: 56), in the sense that the principal outcome of the interaction will be cognitive development. In such interaction, both personal experience and socially mediated experience determine the development of the cognitive structure and the schematic organization of knowledge. The cognitive structure controls the modes of behaviour exhibited by individuals, but the motivational variables play a crucial role in it.

In the current views of learning, the learner is considered responsible for attending to instruction and for actively constructing the mental elaborations that make learning personally meaningful. In such situations, motivation comes from within, and it is central to the learning process that is initiated by the learner. Self-motivated learners are aware of why they are engaged in a particular activity. They are also able to plan and regulate their own skills and strategies to achieve the goal. Strategic behaviour essentially involves intentionality and self-control, and it is directed by the individual’s
strong yearning for achievement. Motivation, in this perspective, can be regarded as one of the factors that mediate learning and achievement.

Motivation may be individualistic; it cannot be promoted merely by overemphasizing the vaguely perceived importance of the target language and applying some common, generalised practices. It will also be counterproductive if we keep underplaying the role of the native language in a person's educational development. The mind of a human learner is a composite one. It is said to have two main components, the intellectual self and the emotional self. The learning activity cannot be meaningful if these two activities are at variance with each other. While the intellectual self tries to find reason in all the learning activities, the emotional self plays a supportive role which is essential for the cognition to operate efficiently. In the case of second language learning, the stand taken by the emotional self need not always be supportive. The task before the facilitator of learning is to manipulate the affective factors in such a way that they support learning instead of blocking it.

When we begin to respect the individual learners and give them more freedom to direct and control the process of learning, they will find meaning and relevance in the activity they are engaged in. This will help them further focus on the higher order cognitive abilities and discover novel ways to fully develop their potentialities. The teacher's role, in this context, is limited to kindling the learners' desire to explore their environment and discover things for themselves. Interaction plays a major role in generating effective learning. When the classroom becomes a place for meaningful interaction, learners begin to see the importance of social collaboration that influences academic accomplishments.
5.1.3 Self-esteem and Self-efficacy

The learners’ perceptions of themselves in relation to the situation decisively influence their learning styles, attitudes and approaches to learning and communication. They develop into the attributes of self-esteem and self-efficacy. Self-esteem is described as a characteristically dominant trait of the human mind in the literature of the social sciences. There are many studies that throw light on the influence of self-esteem on human behaviour. A general feeling of inadequacy, sense of unworthiness, increased anxiety, depression, mental disorders and other negative phenomena have been closely related to lack of self-esteem. A considerable amount of research has also gone into the field of educational psychology in which the study of the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement figures prominently. In this context, a probe into its role in directing the course and outcome of instructional communication becomes relevant.

Self-esteem is the disposition to experience oneself as being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and achieve success (Branden 1994). It is not only a psychological attribute but also a socially determined characteristic by which individuals evaluate their competence in relation to their social functions. Cognition has a central role in the development of self-esteem as evaluation is necessarily involved in our sense of worthiness and competence. In fact, studies in psychology have shown that cognition and affect are distinct but mutually dependent (Schumann1994), and have stressed the importance of their role in developing self-esteem. Perhaps the most difficult issue on the conceptualization of self-esteem has been its dynamicity in terms of stability. In the context of S L communication, it is relevant to make an enquiry into the
role self-esteem plays in it, and how it changes with the intervention of the factors in and outside the individual.

The connection between self-esteem and the affective domain in the language classroom has to be explored to understand the functioning of the external and internal factors that promote communication and language learning. The factors such as motivation, anxiety, information processing, and learner autonomy are linked to the degree of self-esteem within an individual. Therefore, the classroom activities that incorporate goal interdependence, resource interdependence and role interdependence can help to foster healthy self-esteem in the learners in a collective, interactive environment. This cannot be achieved if the L1 is completely kept out of action because it is an integral part of the learners’ self and a factor that controls positive dispositions.

It is necessary to discuss the ways in which self-esteem work in learners and find better ways to deal with it in the classroom to boost academic performance, particularly in the communication activities promoting language learning. Although a large number of factors influence personal development, peer involvement takes precedence over most of them. In addition to it, the family context and social settings can have an important influence on self-esteem. Developing adequate skills and competence, which lead to healthy self-esteem, is very important for children during their stages of development. It is important for the learners to develop a positive, accurate perception of themselves and their abilities because it can instil in them a sense of commitment and responsibility when they see themselves as able to achieve certain goals. Thus, taking care of self-esteem and affect relates to providing support in which the learners
can be encouraged to work hard to reach their learning potential unhindered by the negative affect.

It is also a fact that language learning is more ego involving than any other kind of learning, and to assist the creation of positive attitudes involves a little bit of ego-massage. It is necessary to discover frameworks that accommodate self-esteem in language learning and develop creative and humanistic approaches to support and encourage positive divergence. Many teachers intuitively understand the importance of supporting their students’ self-esteem, but attempts to provide this support involve resorting to unconventional language teaching methods while being aware that they have to accomplish conventional language teaching goals.

When considering the learner’s self-esteem, it is necessary to recognize how learners feel about themselves and about the language learning process. It is not necessarily the case that more advanced learners will have higher levels of self-esteem. It is entirely possible that as learners become more competent, they will also become more aware of limitations in their language ability. Many learners experience anxiety when they feel that they are unable to maintain naturalness when speaking a new language; and more advanced learners may actually be more sensitive to differences between their true identity and their acquired identity while they communicate in the new language (Horwitz and Young 1991). Thus, one of the reasons for lack of impact our S L teaching has been creating can be attributed to the absence of self-esteem in learners that hinders the work of language teachers.
Studies in psychology and the neurosciences show that the period from childhood to adolescence is a critical period for personal formation. In the psychodynamic view (White (1959), during childhood self-esteem is relatively stable, but it can fluctuate more than other stable characteristics like personality and intelligence as an individual grows. Thus, the task of the teachers who deal with the adolescent learners becomes harder, considering the effort they need to put in to maintain optimum self-esteem levels. Moreover, the hardship the learners experience with regard to communicating in the T L is not conducive to maintaining desirable levels of self-esteem.

Communication studies also show that oral communication apprehension is associated with low self-esteem (Horwitz and Young 1991), and it is plausible that in the context of second language learning the relationship would be even stronger, given the added difficulty in formulating messages in a language one is barely proficient in. However, in the language classroom, the effort to develop self-esteem should not confine to empty praise, which may create unreasonable expectations and an inaccurate perceptions of reality. Realistic concern with learner self-esteem in the language classroom does not focus on creating false beliefs of a positive nature to replace the negative ones. Rather, it is a question of providing the learners with the means to succeed in their language learning, while at the same, time reducing misconceptions about their worth and abilities that keep them from reaching the potential. Similarly, we cannot lead the learners to expect the road toward language learning to be free of obstacles. Learners need to be aware of their worthiness and capabilities, but at the same time, of the constraints that limit the scope of their learning.
In the case of language learning, students may avoid taking the necessary risks to acquire communicative competence in the target language because they may feel deeply insecure in the face of perceived failure. Considering this, we need to be concerned about the learners’ self-esteem in the language classroom. We need to generate a feeling in them that they are improving their ability to manage communicative situations and can seek the help of the L1, especially in the initial stages. However, it is not easy to design and implement activities to boost self-esteem because the strategies that work may be highly individualistic. In any case, banning the L1 use in the classroom cannot help develop self-esteem since it is closely associated with how the learners perceive themselves and the world around them.

Self-efficacy is the belief that one is capable of acting in certain ways to attain certain goals. (Bandura (1997). It is determined by the belief that one has the capabilities to execute and control the courses of action required to manage prospective situations. Efficacy is the power to produce competence that is essential for getting things executed successfully and self-efficacy is the belief one has this competence. This perception of the ability to attain specific goals in supportive environments corresponds to the levels of self-direction the learner has attained.

People tend to regulate the level and distribution of effort they expend in accordance with the effects they expect in their endeavours. This is achieved by means of the cognitive regulation of motivation in which self-efficacy plays a crucial role. It is natural for the individuals to take up tasks when they think they can succeed in them; and to maintain success, their self-efficacy needs to be optimum. The optimum level of self-efficacy corresponds to the level of their actual ability, and the equilibrium between
actual ability and self-efficacy is the factor that encourages individuals to take up challenging tasks and gain valuable experience. It is also possible that people of differing levels of self-efficacy perceive the world in different ways and those with high levels of self-efficacy seem more self-directed in their behaviour since they believe they are in control of their own actions, situations and decisions that influence their lives.

The Behaviourists talk about the importance of reward and reinforcement, which are necessary for stimulating motivation and other psychological factors in learning activities. They strongly argue that the achievement of learners, however marginal, has to be properly acknowledged and sufficiently rewarded by means of praising and complimenting in order to promote motivation and further achievement. However such praises should never sound hollow, but they should be convincingly earnest. The learners can very easily identify compliments that do not carry earnestness, and in such cases, made-up compliments can be counter productive. They not only fail to stimulate self-direction but also reduce the level of self-efficacy. Erikson has rightly pointed out the dangers inherent in it:

Children cannot be fooled by empty praise and condescending encouragement. They may have to accept artificial bolstering of their self-esteem in lieu of something better, but what I call their accruing ego identity gains real strength only from wholehearted and consistent recognition of real accomplishment, that is, achievement that has meaning in their culture. (1950: 33)

The meaning-emanating sense of achievement in S L communication means successful communication resulting in normalised meaning-transfer. One who wishes to acquire communication skills in a second language cannot accomplish this just by the
use of the S L. Since the development of self-efficacy in learners greatly depends on the appreciation of their achievements, success in communicative ventures is crucial to boosting their confidence, and developing positive psychological orientations. Therefore, emphasis should be on success in communication, even if it is achieved with the help of the L1 or any other means. Together with self-directed learning endeavours, the optimum level of self-efficacy can produce desirable learning, which is looked upon by the learners as a remarkable, and morale boosting achievement.

In formal education, not only the teachers but also the students need to evaluate the success of the classroom performance. Such evaluation is necessary for initiating strategy-change or innovations in the learning process for developing efficiency. There are many factors that adversely affect the learners’ self-esteem and determine their evaluating capabilities. Second language learning is specially a performance anxiety-provoking experience for many students. When the level of self-esteem is low, the psychological homeostasis is unbalanced, creating insecurity, fear, social distance and other negative feelings. Thus, in the process discovering knowledge, the learners’ potentials and orientations need to be manipulated, and their existing knowledge base exploited, to bring progress into their learning. Self-esteem can thus exercise a decisive influence on a person’s learning since it is directly linked to one’s performance and subsequent sense of empowerment.

5.2 Learning Styles and Strategies

In the process of language learning and communication, the learners employ a variety of strategies to boost learning efficiency and the prospects of empowerment.
Like the proverbial horse that is brought to water but must do the drinking itself, the learners are the only ones who can actually ‘learn’ in spite of the best teachers and methods. The growing awareness that learning lies with the learner has resulted in the importance of language learning strategies. The language learning strategies relate to the ‘processes employed by the learners to aid their acquisition as well as empowerment. The storage, retrieval, and use of information’ seem to correspond to the view that individuals tend to empower themselves by acquiring and honing their language skills. In this process, they might employ various learning and communication strategies involving cognitive, meta-cognitive and affective strategies (Oxford 1990). These strategies involve cognitive applications that presuppose the use of L1, and in SL communication activities, these strategies cannot be used without the help of the L1 structures, and self-directed endeavours.

There is a view that the goal of instructing second language learners in the use of strategies is “to develop self-regulated learners who can approach new learning tasks with confidence and select the most appropriate strategies for completing the task” (Chamot and O’Malley 1994: 387). This means that the focus of strategy training is on ‘how to learn’ rather than on ‘what to learn’ with two types of goals: goals concerning the product of learning and goals concerning the process of learning. In a second language situation, the processes involved include the establishment of the integration of new knowledge into existing knowledge structures, discovering any mismatch between the second language and inter-language rules, and internalization of the target language knowledge so that it is available for later spontaneous and efficient retrieval and use in communication.
An awareness of strategies is necessary for the second language learners to learn how to make full and efficient use of their available knowledge resources. They must develop the ability to solve communication problems with the help of all the resources available to them. Strategies help the learners learn how to learn in a rather self-directed manner, and it is further postulated here that in S L learning, strategy use is essentially linked to the use of the pre-existing knowledge, and the possibility of using communicative activities. In communication too, the act of discovering and employing strategies would help the learners expand the communication network as part of empowerment. Thus, the use of strategies appears to have different dimensions in a wider perspective, and the strategies employed in language learning need not have the same qualities as those strategies the learners employ in communication. This would mean that in communication, the strategies involving concept formation, assimilation of ideas, memorisation, logic and reasoning might be relatively less important than strategies involving intuition, guessing, and comparison and contrasting. This perfectly corresponds to the view that language is more a skill than knowledge.

Good language learners are characterised by distinct personal learning styles and positive learning strategies. Rubin (1975) observes that successful language learners have a strong desire to communicate, are willing to guess when unsure, and are not afraid of making mistakes or appearing foolish. This would not anyway underestimate the importance of correctness, on the contrary, these qualities indicate that such language learners practise and monitor their own language, and carefully observe the language of those around them. In addition, such characteristics indicate
that the learners are also capable of paying attention to both form and meaning in the use of language.

There is also an active approach to the learning task, a tolerant and outgoing approach to the target language in which there is less rigidity. There are strategies of experimentation and cross-linguistic applications with the objective of developing the new language into a framework formed by the structural and semantic support from the L1. This is based on the view that learners are constantly in search for meaning, are willing to practise and use the language in real communication, and are also able to effect self-monitoring in language use. All these will develop in them an ability to develop the target language more and more as a separate reference system while learning to communicate in it.

It is also evident that, in contrast to natural learners, classroom learners cannot simply learn by ‘doing’ because the foreign language classroom is not by its very nature the ideal situation for learners to engage ‘naturally’ in a variety of communicative situations that would allow the implicit development of their strategic competence. This necessitates training the learners in the use of communication strategies by means of the use of strategies that result in an enhanced metacognitive awareness in the learners. This could further facilitate the retention of strategy over time and the transferability of its use to new learning and communicative environments.

There is an argument that the S L learners have at their disposal additional problem-solving devices because in their problem solving attempts they can draw from two knowledge sources belonging to their first and second languages (Faerch & Kasper
This may be an advantage offered by the bilingual situation they are already in. In addition, individual differences exist in the range and application of strategies that the learners use. In view of this, the availability of certain employable strategies could be an encouragement to the second language users while coping with their communicative needs. Moreover, communication strategy use also raises the meta-communicative awareness of the learners and factors determining strategy selection.

There exists an inevitable gap between what learners learn and what they need to do as part of their social functioning. Communication is all about the exchange of ideas meaningfully using reasonably well-formed structures of language and appropriating social norms and conventions. In this process, the learners should be able to bridge the gap between linguistic and pragmatic knowledge in the second language, and thus acquire specific communicative means to cope with unforeseen situations. Therefore, communication strategy use becomes an integral part of their learning because it helps them become more autonomous in their learning as well as communication.

Individuals use a variety of learning styles, especially in S L learning. Many of them are reluctant to reveal their own private learning strategies fearing ridicule and disapproval. Besides, the system-bound teachers are not enthusiastic about encouraging individual learning styles, particularly in the S L classroom. However, since language itself is a manifestation of the creative mind, creativity and divergence are the major features of its learning. Many learners develop into successful S L users not only with the help of classroom inputs, but also using their own unique, unconventional learning strategies. The strategies used in the processes of S L learning and
communication include word-study by the association of ideas, structural comparisons with the L1, meaning translations and self-talk for practice and consolidation.

All this shows that the principles of learner empowerment are in harmony in with an environment where the learners can implement their own strategies. The strategy approach (Canagarajah 2006) is a realization of post-method forms of instruction, which are different from traditional methods in the sense that they are neither prescriptively defined nor rigidly applied across learning contexts. Strategies thus function as problem solving tools by which the learners access knowledge and develop their proficiency. However, there are significant differences between the way learner strategies and post-method pedagogies are put to use. While learner strategies may be individualistic and thus unsystematic, the pedagogical strategies retain the potential for systematic applications in more generalised contexts. Although the pluralism with regard to learning strategies is desirable, there should also be clear principles guiding the selection of strategies in view of varying contexts.

Thus, we can conclude that teaching should look at methods as procedures facilitating negotiated interaction in which language skills needs to be integrated by the use of L1 resources and manipulation of self-directional orientation. There should also be attempts to raise socio-cultural consciousness in the learners to ensure social relevance and sense of empowerment. In addition, there should also be enough space for comparative and contrastive applications of L1 and L2 structures. If all these processes are well integrated, S L learning becomes a constructive and holistic process that produces the most desirable outcome.
However, there are problems with regard to the implementation of such programmes. Most learners still like to rely on teacher prescriptions rather than depend on their own preferred styles and strategies. It is no mean task to bring them around to develop in them an awareness of the different potentialities the learner centred strategies offer in language learning. The learners need to understand that relating personal learning experience to larger educational and social objectives can encourage critical reflection leading to more effective learning. The methods incorporating self-direction and bilingual application strategies can initiate a significant shift away from the traditional paradigm, representing alternatives to the mechanical implementation of theory-laden methods on the one hand, and the idealistic, unrealistic application of learner-centeredness, on the other.

When the learners feel that they are at the centre of the process of learning, it is easy for them to confront the limiting factors operating from the peripheries of the learning systems. If the learners are in control of the situation, they can overcome learning difficulties with ease or discover new strategies to counter them. Each learning task is a problem solving activity giving them satisfaction, which will in turn generate achievement motivation. Finally they learn to improve performance in the sense that they develop the ability to put whatever they have learned to use.

The ideas of self-direction and the use of individual learning strategies seem to be in tune with the concept of learner participation in the teaching/learning partnership. There is also a realisation that any learning is an active process and that language learners too can take charge of their own learning and achieve self-reliance by the use of independent learning strategies. Thus, it is not hard to see that, other things being
equal, at least part of the learning success rate is attributable to the varying strategies that different learners bring to the task. In this perspective, students are capable of consciously influencing their own learning, making it a cognitive process similar in many ways to any other kind of learning. This view also contests the argument that language cannot be consciously learnt, but is acquired only through natural communication, and therefore, by implication, that conscious learning strategies are not useful in language acquisition.

Anyone who has learned a second language at a later stage in life can easily comprehend the role played by memory and cognitive strategies in the development of language, particularly with regard to the acquisition of vocabulary and grammatical structures. Cognitive strategies also play a role in the patterning of automatic responses characteristic of the communication processes. Cognitive and social strategies are incorporated into the communicative competence and learning efficiency of the individuals. The strategy use in language learning, thus, operates comfortably alongside most of the contemporary language learning and communication activities and easily lends credence to the concept of self-directed learning.

5.2.1 Learner Empowerment

The strategy-use in S L learning and communication can be seen as acts of learner-empowerment initiated by the learners themselves. In this context, an old Chinese proverb, "Give a man a fish and he eats for a day; teach him how to fish and he eats for a lifetime", makes much sense. In the case of language teaching and learning, this proverb may be interpreted to indicate that if the learners are provided with
answers, the immediate problem is solved. However, if they are taught the strategies to discover answers and acquire communication skills, they are not only able to manage their own learning but also empowered to manage their own life. This amply demonstrates the need for empowering the learners with regard to their own learning activities. In fact, learning itself is an act of empowerment that is best managed by the learners themselves.

In the case of learner empowerment, we tend to attach much value to the integrative orientation in motivation development. There is a general feeling that integrative motivation is more conducive to the process of acquisition, but it is hard to get all learners to be motivated by a desire to communicate with English speaking communities or use English for socialising purposes. The nature of preference in terms of the types of motivation needs to be probed into taking into consideration the psychological orientations of the learners. A better option would be to explore the possibility of integrating the two aspects of motivation rather than keeping them as separate entities. The learning of L2 for self-accomplishment and personal interest need not be entirely different from learning under benign external compulsion based on certain perceptions of utility. In fact, there is a strong possibility that the extrinsic motivational orientation turn into an intrinsic one as the desire for empowerment grows stronger.

It is also necessary to take into account the contextual factors influencing motivation to empower oneself. There are serious socio-cultural considerations that shape one’s motivation and the power to attain the objectives. The strategies employed by the learners to negotiate the contextual constraints on motivation will have an effect
on their mastery of the language, and they can also be seen as attempts by the individuals to empower themselves. There are also perspectives that give motivation a different dimension integrating psychological considerations with social conditions. Thus, it is possible for us to consider motivation in terms of empowerment and identity formation. In the process of learning a new language, one is engaging in the construction of a new sense of self with a view to gaining power and functional efficiency.

In his discussion of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, Bruner states that in order for the learning to be truly effective, “the learners must be freed from the system of rewards and punishments associated with conforming to what is expected of them” (1979: 88). In fact, by learning through discovery, the learners view the discovery itself as a motivating factor and convert the problem into a puzzle with which they can identify themselves. In this regard, the learners begin to develop skills of problem solving that can be transferred to other learning situations. Bruner, thus, asserts that he has “never seen anybody improving the technique of inquiry by any means other than engaging in inquiry” (1979: 94). He concludes that the best way for the learner to retrieve memory is to embed it into the pre-existing cognitive processes, which relate to L1 structures in the case of SL communication.

This means that through the discovery process, the learner tries to establish connections between pre-existing knowledge and the problems that remain to be solved. In the case of SL learning, the structure of pre-existing knowledge is closely linked to the L1 structures, and therefore, the learners cannot make progress if the circumstances force them to discard the L1 use in the process of learning. Strategic
independence is necessary here to make informed choices, self-direction, for the judicious use of strategies. The practices that are autonomous, process-oriented, and experiential are considered more learner-centred and empowering, and they reduce the passivity of the learners and encourage greater involvement. This shift is also consistent with the changes initiated by the principles of cognitive psychology that places emphasis on the linguistic creativity of the human mind.

Several studies have attempted to show that intrinsically motivating activities lead to better learning. However, it is difficult to discover and incorporate intrinsically motivating activities into the second language classrooms, particularly since the desire to learn an additional language normally arises from certain ulterior motives. In most cases, the learners are driven by some sort of external regulation, which is considered least effective since it goes against the principles of empowerment. If learning is regulated and controlled by external entities, then the learners follow the classroom regulations in order to avoid punishment or embarrassment. In such cases, they undergo superimposed regulation resulting in the curtailment of the sense of empowerment.

On the contrary, those learners who are involved in self-imposed regulation complete a task or activity because they value the outcomes it is likely to produce. If the value and the outcome of the activity have been integrated into the learners’ self-concept, values, needs, and perception of identities, they will be capable of engaging in integrated regulation (Dornyei 2001). This alone can develop in them a feeling of being empowered by means of the skill they are acquiring. The sense of being powerful has the capacity to sustain great levels of intrinsic motivation that leads to achievement.
Brown describes learner empowerment in terms of the learners’ elevation to become “critical thinkers, equipped with problem-solving strategies, poised to challenge those forces in the environment that would keep them passive” (1991: 248). The concept of critical thinking, however, has a multidimensional prospect of interpretation that also explains the learners’ self-directed leanings. This engagement fundamentally shapes the tenor of one’s thinking and provides deeper insights into experience. Through the thinking process, the learners discover problem-solving strategies, which presuppose logical reasoning and cognitive applications. The ability to employ problem-solving strategies, including newly acquired languages skills the learners are capable of using, is indicative of their status with regard to social empowerment.

At the micro level of classroom practices, communication aimed at language development fails to address the issue of empowerment along with the issues related to material and social development. The role of English in the social and educational empowerment needs further exploration before designing strategies for learner development. The learning experience in a second language environment gains a constructivist orientation when the learners try to negotiate and modify language in discourse in relation to the social context. There is a need to set aside the idealistic notions of empowerment and develop a more realistic and balanced view based on the relationship between the classroom and society as it plays a crucial role in language learning. The need of the hour is to provide learning environments that enable the learners to critically negotiate the content of interaction through the medium of language in practical ways.
We are required to do all this while approximating correctness to negotiating, modifying, and reconstructing communication in relation to different genres and contexts in our attempts to develop greater language awareness in the learners. The classroom procedure should equip itself to generate self-initiated activities that aim to build up various competencies including linguistic communication skills. Yet another hard task is to encourage T L communication with the active assistance of L1 structures. Ultimately, we need to take into consideration the fact that the progression from one academic activity to another cannot always be made linear for making the whole programme effortless and convenient for the learners. On the other hand, divergent, intersecting processes incorporating multiple possibilities will be more conducive to developing empowerment and efficiency.

Learning becomes efficient when the learners believe in their own problem solving abilities and when individual learning styles and strategies receive due recognition. It is in this context that self-directional tendencies that stimulate individual initiative and problem-solving abilities, and thereby enhance learning efficiency needs recognition. Formation of positive attitudes need not always result from the learners’ identification with the target language community, as it is generally thought of; this research has found that it can also result from their perceptions of prospective empowerment and the utility of the target language.

These findings may have the following implications. The learners test and then confirm the validity of learning outcomes by making comparisons and contrasts with the help of the processes of code switching, code mixing and ‘correlative transcoding’. Unconventional teaching methods and materials help stimulate self-direction and the
freedom to select and use communication tools gives learning an additional impetus. Therefore Instruction needs to focus on developing implicit knowledge of the second language because implicit knowledge is procedural, and it can manifest in communication when it is made explicit. It is accessed rapidly and easily and thus is available for use in rapid, fluent communication.

5.2.2 Knowledge Systems

Individuals create knowledge systems and social systems in the processes of their attempts to deal with the environment. When the knowledge systems gain social orientation, and when they develop into tools of empowerment, they become social systems influencing the social behaviour of individuals. Language is one such social system that carries with it unlimited potential for empowering people socially and intellectually. This is the reason why social and psychological orientations play a crucial role not only in language learning but also in the use of it. In the case of SL learning and use, the basic drive is the one that is directed at empowerment. Even in language learning, logical concept formations result in the creation of a series of knowledge systems in which original thinking and natural applications are a prerequisite.

Knowledge systems can be empowered by ensuring optimization of their functionality. Our attitudes about ourselves as language learners have a direct impact on our self-esteem and our feelings about the learning process. This in turn will determine our desire and motivation to acquire knowledge. As stated in the previous sections, attitudes have the capacity to influence any kind of learning experience and are important for choosing and developing the right approach. Self-esteem reinforces
the belief that the learners are capable of learning the target language and bringing their inter-language closer to the T L norm. Thus, it is imperative that we pay due attention to the self-esteem factor in language learning and communication as it can promote a sense of empowerment through the creation of knowledge systems.

Theories in psychology suggest that the highest human priority is the need for recognition. As long as the learners maintain a belief that they cannot learn languages, or it is unnecessary for them to do so, they desist from developing a useful knowledge system that is also part of the social system. In the language classroom, the only way for the learners to protect their self-concept is the satisfaction that comes from the achievement in learning and communication. Therefore, they need to understand that the knowledge system they create for themselves in their learning process is an integral part of the social system to which language and communication activities belong. In the process of creating knowledge systems aimed at development and empowerment, the learners need to confront several social and psychological systems that keep deterring them in their attempts. In language learning, its use in communication is a vital factor, but communication in the foreign language can be an anxiety-provoking factor. In such environments, the learners’ persistence and desire to overcome these problems depend largely on the prospects of empowerment the knowledge of language and communication skills provide them with.

The dichotomy between the concepts of form-focused and meaning focused communicative approaches has always been a problem for the learners and teachers. The knowledge boosting content-centred programmes, which were sidelined under the sway of communicative language teaching, made a come back with the emergence of
task-based language learning approaches (Prabhu 1987, Brown 1991). The activities involving information/knowledge gap reiterate the role meaning or content has to play in consolidating the form of language. The idea that the form gains relevance only when it presents the content logically in communication presupposes the task-based, discovery based, meaning focussed activities. From the perspective of empowerment, the relevance of knowledge-based approaches cannot be ignored.

Psychologists have been trying to apply the intrinsic versus extrinsic model of motivation and the theory of self-determination to discover the drive triggering second language learning. There is also a view that the learners’ curiosity, which translates into motivation to learn, is aroused by an optimum level of informational complexity (Deci and Rayan 1985). When the learners engage in a task or activity in order to satisfy their curiosity, the knowledge gap ensures intrinsic motivation and more effective learning. Attempts to satisfy curiosity may require discovering new tools of enquiry including the learning of an additional language that could be useful in the process.

All this refers to the relevance of content in SL learning and communication. While studies in linguistics and genre analysis still focus on objectively describing content in a methodical manner, there is also a move to understand the social and psychological positioning of the content and genres. Recent approaches consider the gap between target language and the learner-proficiency and complement needs analysis with an understanding of the learners’ self-knowledge and instructional expectations. Language loses relevance when the content is underrated, but at the same time, overrating it might lead to its structural disfigurement. Since the content has
to have its due share in second language learning too, role of the L1, the language in which the conceptualisation of the content is basically done, cannot be ignored.

5.2.3 Communication Systems

The acquisition of knowledge is empowering, and since language is a major tool used in the acquisition of knowledge, it too contributes to the process of empowering. Knowledge systems develop within communication systems, and language, an integral part of many a communication system, is a product of the human mind, a mental tool that is put to use in communication acts to enhance the power of its users in their social functioning. The acts of power gaining are part of the developmental process and it can be seen in the occurrence of inner speech, which is a natural development in the process of internalising linguistic structures. The inner speech, which manifests in the form of ego-centric speech in children, emerges in adults from the concepts formed through social interactions as they sharpen the linguistic tools with the help of social interaction in the process of empowering. These items are then recycled and manipulated in inner speech to make them sophisticated cognitive tools.

Language is built up gradually in the process of its user’s attempts at empowerment, and it gets empowered as an efficient communication system by its use in inner speech and other dialogic applications. The inner speech is a parallel communication system being built up as a support structure in the process of learning to communicate. Once it is established, the inner speech is available to serve as a basis for language production. The user needs to expand the inner speech into social utterances that can be understood by others to finally develop it into normal discourses.
of linguistic communication. Language production thus reflects the stage of the development of the inner speech, which is further expanded into self-talk and attains the status of a communication system in intra-personal interactions. Thus, inner speech takes a crucial role in “the processes of expansion and assimilation of linguistic structures” (Ohta 2000: 19). The use of inner speech in the creation of the knowledge systems of empowerment is quite common in the language learning processes. In S L communication, inner speech often turns to self-talk, which is one of the individualised strategies employed in S L learning. Inner speech is also a manifestation of thinking aloud, and many adults resort to it in situations where they need to hone their T L skills.

This conceptualisation of the processes of expansion and assimilation in language acquisition can be applied to the context of second language learning. In the adult second language learner, there exists a fully developed capacity for inner speech in the first language that can assist his interactions in the target language to some extent. The inner speech, thus, indicates progress in learning. It is a psychological process in which new vocabulary, morphology, and syntactic structures from inter-psychological plane move to the intra-psychological plane. When the target language is not incorporated into the adult learner’s inner speech, the learner may take structures of language from the inter-psychological context for further manipulation and practice (Cohen 1998). This is evident in the repetition and practices that lead to the memorisation of unprocessed chunks of language the learners put to use in their learning activities. Learners break down and build up chunks of language, piecing together the items they have learned in a trial and error mode in simulated
communicative contexts. Further practice and processing may occur through the inner speech that lends support to the learners’ cognitive operations and thought.

The concept of inner dialogue goes in harmony with the principles of learner-centredness where the inner dialogue turned communication systems are operational in the process of learning. The learning procedure is based on ‘the communicative, cooperative, learner-centred activities where we consider learners as partners in a cooperative venture’ (Brown (1991: 255). Here too, however, pragmatism demands that new approaches and practices should adjust themselves to accommodate at least some of the traditional practices. Therefore, it is a fact that teachers are forced to work within certain systemic constraints where they cannot fully relinquish certain outdated practices and conventions. In such contexts, the anomalies persist and the teachers cannot commit themselves to providing learning opportunities in such a way that students exploit them to their own advantage.

Ideally, a curriculum designed in tune with the idea of the centrality of learning should take care to include the learners’ interests as well as their personal agendas. In this approach, the teaching activities should go hand in hand with action research for consistently improving the classroom procedures in accordance with the situations and the learners’ self-directional orientation. The activities should not only offer the learners more resources for competence building but also provide them with an insightful understanding of what language learning and communication involves. The role of interpersonal as well as intrapersonal communication in the development of the cognitive processes should be recognised as they are associated with the processes of language learning.
5.3 Self-directed Learning

Self-direction is an important psychological orientation that boosts the learning efficiency of individuals. It also determines how effectively individuals interact with their environment in the processes of communication. Since instructional communication is a learning means in the language-learning context, the ways of developing self-direction are of great importance. In formal settings, sufficient interaction is not sustained because instructional communication is markedly different from other interactional experience. The activities focus more on content-based query-response which is not conducive to developing self-direction and thereby decreases the quality and effectiveness of their learning.

In the discussion on the issue of self-directed learning in the context of second language learning, it is worthwhile to consider how Brookfield describes the concept of the self:

The self in a self-directed learning programme is not an autonomous, innocent self contentedly floating free from cultural influences. It has not sprung fully formed out of a political vacuum. It is, rather, an embedded self, a self whose instincts, values, needs and beliefs have been shaped by the surrounding culture. As such, it is a self that reflects the constraints and contradictions as well as the liberatory possibilities of that culture. (1993: 236)

In this view, the self is capable of active engagement with the environment while going ahead with self-initiated processes of acquiring knowledge. In other words, individuals can be assisted to become more self-directed by providing them with appropriate learning tools, resources, experiences, and encouragement. The underlying
principle governing our interpretation of teaching and learning is facilitation by creating suitable environment. In any learner-centred learning programme, the learners need to be self-directed to maximise the transformation of their learning potential into achievement. In this process, the facilitators should help the learners participate in various activities, including the assessment of personal needs, planning subsequent learning activities, creating necessary learning resources, and assessing progress in achieving learning goals.

The concept of self-directed learning does not disregard the importance of instruction and environment, but it gives legitimacy to them by corroborating the view that cognitive interventions are crucial to the process of learning a second language. Second language learning is a complex activity that incorporates a variety of learning strategies in addition to the intentions and attitudes of the learners. In this process, self-directed learning is believed to play a constructive role particularly because learning of an additional language is a voluntary act initiated by the learners themselves. The selection and application of learning strategies owe much to the learners' attitudes and ability to be self-directed in the learning and communication processes. Therefore, teachers should be concerned with developing in the learners the ability to make informed decisions with regard to setting realistic goals for their learning than with teaching of language items. In any case, it is necessary to acknowledge the influence of the social forces in determining the nature of one's self though it would be a fallacy to assume that it is possible to reconstitute the self by means of education. However, at the same time, the awareness of the self of its own 'limits and possibilities of self-transformation' (Tennant 1997: 18), needs to be given due consideration.
The implementation of language learning strategies incorporating the principles of self-directed learning within the framework of other theories is no mean task. Methods and approaches to the teaching of a language to speakers of other languages seem to betray their apprehensions about incorporating the principles of self-directed learning. New methods or approaches have periodically sprung to be heralded as a panacea for all our teaching learning woes, and in our eagerness to welcome the new entrants, we have unceremoniously abandoned the older methods and approaches in what might be called a baby-and-bathwater type of reaction. However, as the new methods and approaches have met with the same fate as the earlier ones, we have started realising the importance of the role played by the cognitive and psychological orientations. The potentials of the processes like translation have been rediscovered. Methods and approaches have their own strengths and are valid in specific contexts; nevertheless, if the learner orientations are not properly taken care of, the methods tend to render themselves impotent.

In response to the ever-increasing demands for learning additional languages, learning how to learn, has become an important area of concern, especially in the field of adult education. Rogers (1983), for instance, states that no individual can claim to call themselves educated until they have learned how to learn, and how to adapt themselves to changing environments. He defines an educated person as the one who has realized that no knowledge is secure, and that only the process of seeking knowledge provides the basis for security. These views are corroborated by the ideas put forth by Bruner, who defines instruction as “the provisional state that has as its object to make the learner or problem solver self-sufficient” (1966:53). Dressel and
Thompson support this argument stating that “the ability to carry on independent study, alone or with peers, should be the ultimate goal of education” (1973:2). Thus, the concern for fostering the ability to learn how to learn that has greatly influenced the practices in the field of adult education finds relevance to the activities designed to develop S L learning and communication.

Therefore, along with the general movement favouring eclecticism in which methods are chosen on the basis of their suitability with regard to the students and situations, there should also be an attempt to positively exploit the psychological orientations of the learners. As Larsen-freeman puts it, it is necessary for teachers today to “practice a principled eclecticism, combining techniques and principles from various methods in a carefully reasoned manner” (1987:7). However, the techniques and strategies will work only if the issues of learner orientations are handled in a way that is conducive to creating an appropriate environment for learning and communication to take place.

5.3.1 System Independence

It is obvious that learning styles and approaches will vary with particular individuals and learning situations. In addition, when people face new learning challenges, they will find the need for personal initiative, and independent action in their learning activities. The system-independent learning styles characterise self-directed in learning and such learners are likely to be successful with self-initiated learning activities. The system-dependent learners tend to prefer more structured, formal learning environments, which is inconsistent with much of what is typically associated
with self-direction. Though it is hard to fully liberate the learners from the constraints of the system, the ultimate aim of educational programmes is to make the learners gradually system-independent as they progress in their learning.

Self-directed learning is based on a preference for taking individual responsibility. It does not mean to disregard external assistance and no activity of formal learning can be successful in the absence of external sources of assistance. Therefore, it would be a mistake to automatically associate self-directed learning with learning in isolation that takes place fully independent of teachers or facilitators. The self-directed learning does take help from external sources and facilitators; the difference, however, is that, in self-directed learning, the learner assume primary responsibility for the decisions about planning, implementing, and evaluating the learning experience. This need not happen in isolation; on the contrary, it is possible for two or more learners to share responsibilities for their learning in a collective and systematic manner. Such sharing is more relevant to language learning and communication, since they are part of a collaborative venture. Hiemstra (1994), for instance, observes that learners often view others as potential resources for their self-directed efforts. Brookfield (1985) also notes that learners, at least at some point of time, come together in a fellowship of learning where competition among learners is balanced with a degree of cooperation and sharing. In our own context, the activity that our students usually refer to as ‘combined study’ is a case in point. This is not only part of a self-directed endeavour, but also an attempt to pool in resources for maximising the outcome in a collective and responsible manner.
Self-direction in learning is an orientation that gives rise to the successful execution of independent learning styles. It is not merely a fad that propagates idealistic notions of independence and absoluteness of self-reliance. On the contrary, the idea of self-instruction relying on one’s own learning style is clearly rooted in history, and it has found greater acceptability in the field of adult education that embraces these values and incorporates them into the learning practices. The movements associated with adult and continuing education programmes and the principles of distance education are in favour of promoting self-directed learning to maximise learning output. These notions have been receiving support from research findings and thus the scope of it can be extended to the areas of S L learning and communication. The emphasis on personal responsibility and the belief in the unlimited potential of the humans are the notions that make the concept of self-directed learning a viable and sensible option.

When the learners show greater orientation towards being self-directed, they tend to try out various unconventional learning strategies in their classroom communication activities to bring about better learning. If the teacher provides them with freedom and opportunities, they can use their existing knowledge to develop communication and interpersonal skills that are critical to success in any kind of academic or professional activity. Therefore, since the structure of knowledge to be acquired itself is interwoven into a variety of factors influencing it, the act of acquiring it, and of using it in communication, cannot be totally liberated from the system encompassing it.

5.3.2 Learner Responsibility
The notion of individuals taking responsibility for their learning and the ideal of a facilitator providing guidance for self-directed efforts are central to the concept of self-directed learning. It is not a recently emerged concept; on the contrary, the history of self-direction in learning is long and enduring. It is a concept originated in the western philosophical thought; nevertheless, the practice of it was in force from time immemorial, even in the ancient Indian systems of education. In the Gurukula system of education, the disciple stayed with the guru in his own home, and learned his lessons in a rather self-directed manner, taking cues from what the guru did or said as part of his own interactions with the environment. Similarly, the ancient educational systems in China, Korea and Japan had almost identical characteristics in which the masters dispassionately watched their disciples performing tasks as part of learning endeavours. They were very keen on keeping the levels of their interventions as low as possible to provide the learners with as much first hand experience as possible. The teacher occasionally showed the pupils what they had missed out, or what they had failed to observe in the processes of learning, but never discouraged their independent leanings.

There is some scepticism about the efficacy of self-directed learning and its relevance to language learning. However, it is necessary to understand that language is an applied knowledge, a skill to be used to assist an individual’s attempts at empowerment. Hence, it is also a personal asset, a tool to be used in social interactions for gaining functional efficiency. In such interactions, promoting self-directed learning or the use of personal learning strategies appears reasonable by virtue of the individualistic nature of the learning and communication processes. In addition, since the degree of language proficiency achievable in a classroom is limited, and much of
the communicative proficiency is gained by the use of language outside the classroom, it is necessary for the learners to take the responsibility for their own learning.

Self-direction, with its emphasis on responsibility, encourages the learners to diagnose needs, secure resources, and carry out learning activities. Skager observes that self-directed learners have “the willingness to initiate and maintain systematic learning on their own initiative” (1979: 519). There are also other positive educational results that come from self-directed learning, such as increased output, greater interest in further learning, and more positive attitudes toward the language community. In the learning process, there is the individual self with a self-concept and needs; there is the assumption that the self strives for improvement and autonomy; and there is an emphasis on the uniqueness of the individual with regard to individual differences.

Therefore, it is important to motivate the learners to extend their learning enthusiasm to the situations outside the classroom where it requires greater effort to put to use what they have learned. Once the learners take the responsibility for their learning, they will be better equipped to capitalise on the learning environments both in and outside the classroom. If we can create in the learners a feeling of responsibility for their learning, and develop environments that encourage the learners to continue learning even after class hours, it will definitely improve the learning outcome. The possibilities offered by the multimedia resources can also be exploited to help the learners develop self-direction and responsibility. These resources involve the facilities offered by computer based-learning activities such as internet use, blogging, chatting and e-mail drafting that provide the learners with opportunities to learn practice and communicate outside the classroom.
When self-direction reaches its pinnacle, it transforms the learners into autonomous beings who can take the responsibility for not only their learning but also the decisions related to the learning process, setting objectives, choosing methodology, and evaluating what has been learned (Holec 1981). However, self-directed learning in formal settings, as Benson and Voller (1997) points out, is more about strategy development. When the goals of the instruction are consistent with the strategies used to teach them, then learning becomes optimal. Since communication is a strategy to learn how to learn a foreign language, instruction in the classroom should necessarily incorporate learner responsibility along with other communication strategies in and outside the classroom.

The arguments in favour of developing instructional strategies corresponding to learning styles of individuals have drawn inspiration from not only self-directed learning but also ‘multiple intelligence’ (Gardner 1983). The theory of multiple intelligence postulates that there are different kinds of intelligence and people show a range of skills and abilities depending on what kind of intelligence they possess. A person might have learning mechanisms and physical abilities that favour the content of one domain of learning over another. Each of the different types of intelligence may require the learner to acquire a concept, learn the parts of an entity, learn a procedure, or understand a process. These fundamental types of outcome determine different instructional strategies in a content-based strategy interaction.

The concepts of multiple intelligence, self-directional orientation and learning strategies stress the necessity to modify instructional strategies. However, these modifications are extensions of the fundamental components of an instructional strategy
appropriate for, and consistent with, self-directional orientations. The modification of the strategies to accommodate learners’ domain preference is secondary to the fundamental content-based strategy interaction required for effective instruction. Self-directed learning approaches also underscore the importance of starting from where the learners actually are rather than rigidly adhering to idealistic dictums and theoretical extrapolations. In S L learning, there exists the L1 in the beginning, not to suppress the L2 learning, but to assist it by providing logical back up. Then comes learner anxiety; strategies exploiting self-directional tendencies cannot be implemented in situations where learner anxiety meddles with all cognitive processes of learning. The learning capacity will be seriously weakened by a rising anxiety level that has the capacity to wreck the processes such as assimilation of input, its processing, retention, retrieval and the final communicative output.

5.3.3 Facilitation

The facilitation of self-directed learning involves activities to promote in the learners the spirit of cooperation, which Hiemstra (1994) refers to as a learning partnership that develops between participants in the teaching-learning transaction. In order for this to happen, it is necessary to move beyond the view of the facilitator as a passive observer to one who actively works to ensure a high quality learning experience including the promotion of critical thinking and independent analysis by learners. However, in formal situations, individualized instructional approach may not be practicable simply because the learners and teachers are forced to operate within an exceptionally rigid system, but the challenge lies in providing individual learning styles an opportunity to develop. Successful facilitating thus assumes a proactive role that
involves negotiation, exchange of views, securing resources, and validation of outcomes.

Facilitating self-direction involves the acts of accommodation of interests, rather than the promotion of individual autonomy in the conventional sense. There is a need for emancipating practices where the learners' individuality and world-view get due recognition. Its value lies in freeing learners of tensions resulting from slow progress and teacher apathy caused by the constraints of the system. In fact, system-bound approaches force individuals into learning modes that may not be conducive to producing optimum learning. It is less likely that the learners take advantage of a self-directed learning process rooted in a tight academic schedule and make full use of their self-directed learning potential. In addition, it will be difficult for the instructors to rely on the ability of the learners to take responsibility for their own learning. If the learners are not mature enough to make sense of its importance, the attempts to get them into the self-direction mode will not succeed. The readiness and willingness on the part of the learners coupled with their ability to make correct decisions in a responsible manner presuppose their proper positioning in the self-directed learning environment.

The language teacher who intend training the learners in using communication strategies should understand the learners, their interests, motivations, and learning styles. The teacher should understand what language learning strategies the students are using in order to suggest modifications. The strategies the learners employ include asking for clarification, communicating with their peers, strategies involving the use of inner speech or maintaining contact outside the class with proficient language users. It
is also necessary to understand the purpose of their learning a language, the classroom activities they like or dislike, and the styles or strategies they prefer.

In addition to these, there is a need to analyse the teaching materials to see whether they permit developing self-direction in the use of language learning and communication strategies. It is also possible to think of tapping the potential of unconventional teaching materials including newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, notices, brochures or any text exhibiting some kind of language use. In facilitating self-direction, it is useful to periodically review the classroom communication activities. It is important to examine whether the activities provide enough room for the learners to apply their preferred learning styles and strategies. They should allow learners to approach the task at hand in different ways and respond to the demands of strategy use. Whatever strategies the teachers suggest, their success will depend on the initiatives the learners take prompted by their psychological orientations. Self-direction is one such orientation that plays a crucial role in determining learner behaviour and resultant learning outcome.

However, the western concepts of freedom of choice and absolute learner autonomy may not be in harmony with the values associated with the Indian or Oriental ethos. For instance, Confucianism emphasises dependency and nurture rather than independence; it emphasises hierarchy rather than equality; and there is more emphasis on mutual obligation of members of a group than on individualism. Though these tenets contradict the Western ideas of learner autonomy, they seem to correspond to the Vygotskian views of social consciousness and the development of language and thought. In the Indian thought, the realisation of the self has to be attained
before we begin to pursue knowledge without which the pursuit of knowledge will be ineffective.

However, self-realisation is attained not merely by means of the learners’ independent endeavours; rather it presupposes guidance and support from gurus, and the interactive environments created by their peers. The value of learner autonomy is recognised, but it is viewed as something that develops along with the learners’ learning endeavours in collaboration with the gurus and peers. An autonomous learner thus becomes a self-actualiser, as Maslow (1954) puts it. Self-actualisation is considered the most desirable stage where the learning takes place in the most efficient manner. Thus, we can conclude that learner autonomy depends on our perspectives to the approaches to learning. The western perspective is that knowledge is based on reason, observation, critical analysis and Aristotelian logic. However, in the Indian view, knowledge is more a means for transforming the self rather than collecting discrete instances of information that are historically linear and progressive.

When the learners use a foreign language in communication and cannot express themselves meaningfully and fluently, they realise that the content and form are imperfect versions of what they actually want to express. If the classroom atmosphere is not supportive, it will be more difficult for the learners to take the necessary risks involved in their attempts to communicate. Teachers often mistake the discomfort the students experience as lack of linguistic knowledge, realising little that their inability to display the T L skills publicly has as much to do with their psychological orientations as lack of linguistic competence. In such situations, insistence by the teacher on unrealistic models of ‘natural’ T L use will increase their feelings of discomfort and inadequacy.
It is in this context that we need to give a second thought to the possibility of using the L1 in a judicious manner in facilitating self-direction. This is not to say that we should not demand the best performance of our students, but we cannot get the best from them if there is affective interference in their cognitive processing. If we can incorporate self-direction and counselling into the SL learning programmes, it will be a step towards boosting independent initiatives in the learners. The development of autonomy in learners is the ultimate objective in which realistic goal-setting and pragmatic methods are the order of the day. In such approaches, there should be no insistence on native-like competence as the goal of second language learning. The learners will see more value in their language learning when they realise that less than perfect competence can be useful, they can get things done even with the help of their not-so-perfect competence in the target language, and their L1 is good enough to support their learning endeavours.

Prior to moving on to the last section that sums up the inferences drawn out of explorations into various theoretical positions and their subsequent analysis, an admission has to be made that the mystery that shrouds the processes of classroom communication can never be fully unravelled. The processes of communication are as complex as the human mind; yet it is possible to form insights out of our reflections of experience and interactions with the learners and the learning environments. This project is a humble step that might hopefully pave way for an occasional leap for all those who have been trying to improvise their methods positioning themselves within system constraints and inadequate resources.