CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The significance of Teaching English in India

English is one of the most important languages in the world. It can even be said to be the single most important language. Other languages are important too, but not for the same reasons as English is important. English is important because it is the only language that truly links the whole world together. If not for English, the whole world may not be as united as it is today. The other languages may be important for their local values and culture. English can be used as a language in any part of the world. This is because at least a few people in each locality would know the language. Though these people might not have the same accent as others, the language at least will be understandable. There are various reasons for the importance of English Language. When a person travels to another part of the world either for the sake of business or even as a tourist, the languages may differ. In these conditions, English is the language that helps people to deal with the situation. It is like a universal language.

In countries like India, where the land is so vast with people of various cultures live, the languages of each part of the country also differ. Under the circumstances, English can be the only link as people in each place will not be able to learn all the other languages to communicate with the people. English bridges this gap and connects the people.

The presence of English as a universal language assumes importance in the fact that more and more people leave their countries not only for the sake of business and pleasure, but also for studying. Education has increased the role of English as people who go to another
country to study can only have English as their medium of study. This is because the individual will not be able to learn a subject in the local language of the country. This again reinforces the fact that English language is very important.

All correspondences between offices in different countries and also between political leaders of various countries is in English. This linking factor also tells of the importance of English language.

In spite of the growth of Internet in various languages, English is the mainstay of the Internet users. This is the language in which most of the information and websites are available. It is very difficult to translate each and every relevant webpage into the language of various countries. With Internet becoming very important in E-commerce and also in education, English language is bound to grow. Thus the importance of English as a language is emphasized.

The future of English as a language is very secure. In this era of consolidation and trying to unify various aspects of life, it will not be long before English can be made as a single language of the world like the single currency and the union of various nations.

1.2 The Place of English in India

Since the end of the colonial period, there has always existed, of course, the constitutional capability to scale down, even completely eradicate, this policy of education through English imposed by earlier British administrations. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, one of the early acts of the incoming government in 1947 was indeed to set up the Official Language Commission. But under article 343(2) of the Constitution, English remained the language for all official purposes until 26\(^{th}\) January 1965, due then to be replaced, after this generous period of transition, by
Hindi. During the years leading up to the end of this period, however, two kinds of pressure came to bear to alter this arrangement. The first came from successive committees set up to investigate future language planning for the country. In the Kunzru Committee’s report of 1957, for example, arguments were put forward for minimising - and in fact seeking to counter - any contraction in the role of English or English education in India. The arguments made by this committee were put forward in support of a general proposal to consolidate English, for the foreseeable future, as a major university and pre-university subject. At the same time, nevertheless, the Kunzru Committee proposed two important changes in approaches to English: first, the linking of the study of English literature to the study of Indian Literature, and, second, major expansion in the study, at all appropriate levels, of linguistics. Following Kunzru, the Committee of Experts under G.C.Banerjee in the early 1960s also sought to reaffirm a long – term usefulness for English, whilst arguing for modernisation in the subject that would promote it less as a colonial, cultural inheritance than as an instrument of scientific learning. This first kind of pressure, from experts and committees, may have had only limited circulation and influence, but it drew attention directly to unresolved and partly unexplored issues within English studies of the time. The second kind of pressure - far more well- known and presumably influential as regards later policy - came in riots, especially in Tamil Nadu, in 1963, in response to the imminent imposition of Hindi in (southern) territories where the language tended to be seen as a favoured regional, rather than genuinely pan-Indian, language. Largely as a result of these riots, and following the Official Languages Act of 1967, English joined Hindi as an ‘additional’ language. Subsequently, this policy of accommodation has been consolidated as the ‘three language formula’,.
combining use of Hindi, English as a ‘link’ language, and one regional language.

1.3 Current Use of English

The use of English in India is significantly great. It has recently been estimated, for example, that roughly one-fifth of Indian newspapers (accounting for well over one-fifth of circulation) and one-third of all books published in India are in English (see Kachru 1983:217-220). Besides Hindi, English is the only genuinely pan-Indian language available for use in broadcasting by All India Radio and in the rapidly developing field of television. Moreover, a considerable amount of creative writing in English has established major cultural claims for the language in the sub-continent, quite independently of further contact with the West. Perhaps the most striking indication of the continuing role of English, though, is simply the scale of its everyday use: approximately 3% of all Indian’s are English-using bilinguals, giving the language currency on a par with, say, Malayalam (4% of population) or Kannada (4% of population). And even this percentage only gains its full impact when projected as an actual number of speakers: 3% of the Indian population means about 20 million people (the equivalent of about one-third of British English speakers, and one-tenth the number of speakers of English in the United States).

The ever-growing need for good communication skills in English has created a huge demand for English teaching around the world. Millions of people today want to improve their command of English or to ensure that their children achieve a good command of English. And opportunities to learn English are provided in many different ways such as through formal instruction, travel, and study abroad, as well as through the media and the internet. The world-wide demand for English has
created an enormous demand for quality language teaching and language teaching materials and resources. Learners set themselves demanding goals. They want to be able to master English to a high level of accuracy and fluency. Employers too insist that their employees have good English language skills, and fluency in English is a prerequisite for success and advancement in many fields of employment in today’s world. In India also, the demand for an appropriate and apt teaching methodology is very strong.

1.4 Different Methods of Teaching English

1.4.1 The Grammar-Translation method

The Grammar-Translation method instructs students in grammar, and provides vocabulary with direct translations to memorize. It was the predominant method in Europe in the nineteenth century. Most instructors now acknowledge that this method is ineffective by itself. It is now most commonly used in the traditional instruction of the classical languages.

At school, the teaching of grammar consists of a process of training in the rules of a language which must make it possible to all the students to correctly express their opinion, to understand the remarks which are addressed to them and to analyze the texts which they read. The objective is that by the time they leave college, the pupil controls the tools of the language which are the vocabulary, grammar and the orthography, to be able to read, understand and write texts in various contexts. The teaching of grammar examines the texts, and develops awareness that language constitutes a system which can be analyzed. This knowledge is acquired gradually, by traversing the facts of language and the syntactic mechanisms, going from simplest to the most complex. The exercises according to the program of the course must untiringly be practised to allow the assimilation of the rules stated in the course. That supposes that
the teacher corrects the exercises. The pupil can follow his progress in practising the language by comparing his results. Thus he can adapt the grammatical rules and control little by little the internal logic of the syntactic system. The grammatical analysis of sentences constitutes the objective of the teaching of grammar at the school. Its practice makes it possible to recognize a text as a coherent whole and conditions the training of a foreign language. Grammatical terminology serves this objective. Grammar makes it possible for each one to understand how the mother tongue functions, in order to give him the capacity to communicate its thought.

The Salient features of the Grammar Translation Method are as follows:

1. Classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language.
2. Much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words.
3. Long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given.
4. Grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words.
5. Little attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis.
6. Often the only drills are exercises in translating disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother tongue.
7. Little or no attention is given to pronunciation.

Certain common /typical techniques closely associated with the Grammar Translation Method are as follows:

1. Translation of a Literary Passage (Translating target language to native language)
2. Reading Comprehension Questions (Finding information in a passage, making inferences and relating to personal experience)
3. Antonyms/Synonyms (Finding antonyms and synonyms for words or sets of words)
4. Cognates (Learning spelling/sound patterns that correspond between L₁ and the target language)
5. Deductive Application of Rule (Understanding grammar rules and their exceptions, then applying them to new examples)
6. Fill-in-the-blanks (Filling in gaps in sentences with new words or items of a particular grammar type)
7. Memorization (Memorizing vocabulary lists, grammatical rules and grammatical paradigms)
8. Use Words in Sentences (Students create sentences to illustrate they know the meaning and use of new words)
9. Composition (Students write about a topic using the target language)

Merits of the translation method are as follows:

1. The influence of the mother tongue is at a higher level. L₁ shapes the thinking, and translation helps in better understanding.
2. Translation is a natural and necessary activity that is going on all the time, and that will always be needed.
3. Language competence is a two-way system.
4. The reality of language is another important aspect.
5. Usefulness:
   a. Invites speculation and discussion.
   b. Develops qualities that are essential to all language:. accuracy, clarity and flexibility.
c. The teacher can select material to illustrate particular aspects of language, and students can see the links between language usage and grammar.

d. Lets students practise a variety of styles and registers.

Limitations of Translation method are as follows:

1. Encourages thinking in one language and transference into another with interference.
2. Deprives from learning within only one language.
3. Gives false credence of word-to-word equivalence.
4. Does not allow achievement of generally accepted teaching aims such as emphasis on spoken fluency.
5. Time – consuming activity.
6. Not desirable, since it uses the mother tongue.

1.4.2 The Direct Method

The direct method, sometimes also called natural method, is a method that refrains from using the learners’ native language and just uses the target language. It was established in Germany and France around 1900. The direct method operates on the idea that second language learning must be an imitation of first language learning, as this is the natural way humans learn any language- a child never relies on another language to learn its first language, and thus the mother tongue is not necessary to learn a foreign language. This method places great stress on correct pronunciation and the target language from outset. It advocates teaching of oral skills at the expense of every traditional aim of language teaching.

According to this method, printed language and text must be kept away from second language learner for as long as possible, just as a first
language learner does not use printed word until he has good grasp of speech.

Learning of writing and spelling should be delayed until after the printed word has been introduced, and grammar and translation should also be avoided because this would involve the application of the learner’s first language. All above items must be avoided because they hinder the acquisition of a good oral proficiency.

1.4.3 Situational Language Teaching

The Oral Approach or Situational Language Teaching is an approach developed by British applied linguists in the 1930s to the 1960s. It is little known by many language teachers although it had an impact on language courses and was still used in the design of many widely used EFL/ESL textbooks in the 1980s such as Streamline English.

The Oral Approach and Situational Language Teaching relied on the structural view of language. Both speech and structure were seen to be the basis of language and, especially, speaking ability. This was a view similar to American structuralists, such as Fries. However, the notion of the British applied linguists, such as Firth and Halliday, that structures must be presented in situations in which they could be used, gave Situational Language Teaching its distinctiveness.

One of the outstanding features of the method is its emphasis on vocabulary and reading skills learning. This led to the development of principles of vocabulary control. Frequency counts showed that a core of about 2000 words occurred frequently in written text and that a mastery of such an inventory would lead to better reading skills.

Likewise, it has been believed that an analysis of English and a classification of its principal grammatical structures into sentence patterns
could be used to assist learners to internalize the rules and sentence structures.

Situational Language Teaching held a behavioristic stand to language learning. It dealt with the processes rather than the conditions of learning. These processes englobe three stages: receiving the knowledge or material, fixing it in memory by repetition and using it in actual practice until it becomes a personal skill.

The principles of the behavioristic theory of learning can be summarized as follows:

- language learning is habit-formation
- mistakes are bad and should be avoided, as they make bad habits
- language skills are learned more effectively if they are presented orally first, then in written form.
- analogy is a better foundation for language learning than analysis
- the meanings of words can be learned only in a linguistic and cultural context.

Situational Language Teaching aims at the achievement of these objectives:

- a practical command of the four basic skills of a language, through structure
- accuracy in both pronunciation and grammar
- ability to respond quickly and accurately in speech situations
- automatic control of basic structures and sentence patterns.

Situational Language Teaching uses a structural syllabus and a word list and relied on structural activities including situational presentation of new sentence patterns and drills to practise the patterns.
Typical procedure in Situational Language Teaching include the following:

- Procedures that move from controlled to freer practice of structures
- Procedures that move from oral use of sentence patterns to their automatic use in speech, reading and writing.

A typical situational Language Teaching lesson would start with stress and intonation practice. Then the main body of the lesson might consist of four parts: (a) revision (to prepare for new work if necessary) (b) presentation of new structure or vocabulary (c) oral practice (drilling) (d) reading of material on the new structure, or written exercises.

Although Situational Language Teaching was developed during the 1930s, it still attracts the interest of many teachers. Its strong emphasis on oral practice, grammar and sentence patterns conform to the intuitions of many practically oriented classroom teachers.

The views of language and language learning underlying Situational Language Teaching were called into question. Chomsky (1957) showed that the structural and the behaviouristic approaches to language were erroneous and does not account for the fundamental characteristic of language namely the creativity and uniqueness of individual sentences. Children do not acquire their mother tongue through repetition and habit formation. There must be, however, an innate predisposition that lead them to a certain kind of linguistic competence.

1.4.4 The Audio lingual method

The language teaching theoreticians and methodologists who developed Audiolingualism not only had a convincing and powerful theory of language to draw upon but they were also working in a period when a prominent school of American psychology — known as
behavioural psychology—claimed to have tapped the secrets of all human learning, including language learning. Behaviourism, like structural linguistics, is another antimentalist, empirically based approach to the study of human behaviour. To the behaviourist, the human being is an organism capable of a wide repertoire of behaviours. The occurrence of these behaviours is dependent on three crucial elements in learning: a stimulus, which serves to elicit behaviour; a response triggered by a stimulus; and reinforcement, which serves to mark the response as being appropriate (or inappropriate) and encourages the repetition (or suppression) of the response in the future (Skinner 1957).

Reinforcement is a vital element in the learning process, because it increases the likelihood that the behaviour will occur again and eventually become a habit. To apply this theory to language learning is to identify the organism as the foreign language learner, the behaviour as verbal behaviour, the stimulus as what is taught or presented of the foreign language, the response as the learner’s reaction to the stimulus, and the reinforcement as the extrinsic approval and praise of the teacher or fellow students or the intrinsic self-satisfaction of target language use. Language mastery is represented as acquiring a set of appropriate language stimulus-response chains.

The descriptive practices of structural linguists suggested a number of hypotheses about language learning, and hence about language teaching as well. For example, since linguists normally described languages beginning with the phonological level and finishing with the sentence level, it was assumed that this was also the appropriate sequence for learning and teaching. Since speech was now held to be primary and writing secondary, it was assumed that language teaching should focus on mastery of speech and that writing or even written prompts should be
withheld until reasonably late in the language learning process. Since the structure is what is important and unique about a language, early practice should focus on mastery of phonological and grammatical structures rather than on mastery of vocabulary.

Out of these various influences emerged a number of learning principles, which became the psychological foundations of Audiolingualism and came to shape its methodological practices. Among the more central are the following:

1. Foreign language learning is basically a process of mechanical habit formation. Good habits are formed by giving correct responses rather than by making mistakes. By memorizing dialogues and performing pattern drills the chances of producing mistakes are minimized. Language is verbal behaviour— that is, the automatic production and comprehension of utterances—and can be learned by inducing the students to do likewise.

2. Language skills are learned more effectively if the items to be learned in the target language are presented in spoken form before they are seen in written form. Aural-oral training is needed to provide the foundation for the development of other language skills.

3. Analogy provides a better foundation for language learning than analysis. Analogy involves the processes of generalization and discrimination. Explanations of rules are therefore not given until students have practised a pattern in a variety of contexts and are thought to have acquired a perception of the analogies involved. Drills can enable learners to form correct analogies. Hence the approach to the teaching of grammar is essentially inductive rather than deductive.
4. The meanings that the words of a language have for the native speaker can be learned only in a linguistic and cultural context and not in isolation. Teaching a language thus involves teaching aspects of the cultural system of the people who speak the language.

1.4.5 The Silent way

Learning tasks and activities in the Silent Way have the function of encouraging and shaping student oral response without direct oral instruction from or unnecessary modeling by the teacher. Basic to the method are simple linguistic tasks in which the teacher models a word, phrase, or sentence and then elicits learner responses. Learners then go on to create their own utterances by putting together old and new information. Charts, rods, and other aids may be used to elicit learner responses. Teacher modeling is minimal, although much of the activity may be teacher-directed. Responses to commands, questions, and visual cues thus constitute the basis for classroom activities.

Learners are expected to develop independence, autonomy, and responsibility. Independent learners are those who are aware that they must depend on their own resources and realize that they can use “the knowledge of their own language to open up some things in a new language” or that they can “take their knowledge of the first few words in the new language and figure out additional words by using that knowledge” (Stevick 1980: 42). The absence of correction and repeated modeling from the teacher requires the students to develop “inner criteria” and to correct themselves. The absence of explanations requires learners to make generalizations, come to their own conclusions, and formulate whatever rules they themselves feel they need.
Learners have only themselves as individuals and the group to rely on, and so must learn to work cooperatively rather than competitively. They need to feel comfortable both correcting one another and being corrected by one another.

Teacher silence is, perhaps, the unique and, for many traditionally trained language teachers, the most demanding aspect of the Silent Way. Teachers are exhorted to resist their long-standing commitment to model, remodel, assist, and direct desired student responses. Stevick defines the Silent Way teacher’s tasks as (a) to teach, (b) to test, and (c) to get out of the way (Stevick 1980: 56). Although this may not seem to constitute a radical alternative to standard teaching practice, the details of the steps the teacher is expected to follow are unique to the Silent Way. By “teaching” is meant the presentation of an item once, typically using nonverbal clues to get across meanings. Testing follows immediately and might better be termed elicitation and shaping of student production, which, again, is done in as silent a way as possible. Finally, the teacher silently monitors learners’ interactions with each other and may even leave the room while learners struggle with their new linguistic tools.

The teacher uses gestures, charts, and manipulatives in order to elicit and shape student responses and he must be creative as a pantomimist and puppeteer. In sum, the Silent Way teacher, like the complete dramatist, writes the script, chooses the props, sets the mood, models the action, designates the players, and is critic for the performance.

Silent Way materials consist mainly of a set of coloured rods, colour-coded pronunciation and vocabulary wall charts, a pointer, and reading writing exercises, all of which are used to illustrate the relationships between sound and meaning in the target language. The
materials are designed for manipulation by the students as well as by the teacher, independently and cooperatively, in promoting language learning by direct association.

1.4.6 Community language learning

The following description attempts to capture some typical activities in community language learning classes.

The observer will see a circle of learners all facing one another. The learners are linked in some way to knowers or a single knower as teacher. The first class (and subsequent classes) may begin with a period of silence, in which learners try to determine what is supposed to happen in their language class. In later classes, learners may sit in silence while they decide what to talk about (La Forge 1983: 72). The observer may note that the awkwardness of silence becomes sufficiently agonizing for someone to volunteer to break the silence. The knower may use the volunteered comment as a way of introducing discussion of classroom contacts or as a stimulus for language interaction regarding how learners felt about the period of silence. The knower may encourage learners to address questions to one another or to the knower. These may be questions on any subject a learner is curious enough to inquire about. The questions and answers may be tape-recorded for later use, as a reminder and review of topics discussed and language used.

The teacher might then form the class into facing lines for 3-minute pair conversations. These are seen as equivalent to the brief wrestling sessions by which judo students practice. Following this, the class might be re-formed into small groups in which a single topic, chosen by the class or the group, is discussed. The summary of the group discussion may be presented to another group, who in turn try to repeat or paraphrase the summary back to the original group.
In an intermediate or advanced class, a teacher may encourage groups to prepare a paper drama for presentation to the rest of the class. A paper drama group prepares a story that is told or shown to the counselor. The counselor provides or corrects target-language statements and suggests improvements to the story sequence. Students are then given materials with which they prepare large picture cards to accompany their story. After practising the story dialogue and preparing the accompanying pictures, each group presents its paper drama to the rest of the class. The students accompany their story with music, puppets, and drums as well as with their pictures (La Forge 1983).

Finally, the teacher asks learners to reflect on the language class, as a class or in groups. Reflection provides the basis for discussion of contracts (written or oral contracts that learners and teachers have agreed upon and that specify what they agree to accomplish within the course), personal interaction, feelings toward the knower and learner, and the sense of progress and frustration.

1.4.7 Task-Based Language Teaching

Task-Based Language Teaching proposes the notion of “task” as a central unit of planning and teaching. Although definitions of task vary in TBLT, there is a commonsensical understanding that a task is an activity or goal that is carried out using language, such as finding a solution to a puzzle, reading a map and giving directions, making a telephone call, writing a letter, or reading a set of instructions and assembling a toy.

Skehan defines tasks as follows:

Tasks… are activities which have meaning as their primary focus. Success in tasks is evaluated in terms of achievement
of an outcome, and tasks generally bear some resemblance to real-life language use. So task-based instruction takes a fairly strong view of communicative language teaching.

Nunan explains the quality of communicative task as follows:

The communicative task [is] a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right.

Although advocates of TBLT have embraced the concept of task with enthusiasm and conviction, the use of tasks as a unit in curriculum planning has a much older history in education. It first appeared in the vocational training practices of the 1950s. Focus on task has been derived from training design concerns of the military regarding new military technologies and occupational quality of the period. Task analysis initially focused on solo psychomotor tasks for which little communication or collaboration was involved. In task analysis, on-the-job, largely manual tasks were translated into training tasks. The process is outlined by Smith.

The operational system is analyzed from the human factors point of view, and a mission profile or flow chart is prepared to provide a basis for developing the task inventory. The task inventory (an outline of the major duties in the job and the more specific job tasks associated with each duty) is prepared, using appropriate methods of job analysis. Decisions are made regarding tasks to be taught and the level of proficiency to be attained by the students. A detailed task description is prepared for those tasks to be taught. Each task broken down into the specific acts required
for its performance. The specific acts, or task elements, are reviewed to identify the knowledge and skill components involved in task performance. Finally, a hierarchy of objectives is organized.

Structural criteria are employed by Skehan in discussing the criteria for determining the linguistic complexity of tasks: “Language is simply seen as less-to-more complex in fairly traditional ways, since linguistic complexity is interpretable as constrained by structural syllabus considerations”.

Other researchers have proposed functional classifications of task types. For example, Berwick (qtd.in Willis, 1996) uses “task goals” as one of two distinctions in classification of task types. He notes that task goals are principally “educational goals which have clear didactic function” and “social (phatic) goals which require the use of language simply because of the activity in which the participants are engaged”. Berwick proposes a three-way functional distinction of tasks - personal, narrative, and decision-making tasks. These and other such classifications of task type borrow categories of language function from models proposed by Jakobson, Halliday, Wilkins, and others.

Finally, task classifications proposed by those coming from the SLA research tradition of interaction studies focus on interactional dimensions of tasks. For example, Pica (1994) distinguishes between interactional activity and communicative goal. Task based instruction is therefore not linked to a single model of language but rather draws on all three models of language theory.

1.4.8 Cooperative Language Learning

In second language teaching, cooperative language learning has been embraced as a way of promoting communicative interaction in the
classroom and is seen as an extension of the principles of Communicative Language Teaching. It is viewed as a learner-centered approach to teaching held to offer advantages over teacher-fronted classroom methods. In language teaching its goals are:

- to provide opportunities for naturalistic second language acquisition through the use of interactive pair and group activities
- to provide teachers with a methodology to enable them to achieve this goal and one that can be applied in a variety of curriculum settings (e.g., content-based, foreign language classrooms; mainstreaming)
- to enable focused attention to particular lexical items, language structures, and communicative functions through the use of interactive tasks
- to provide opportunities for learners to develop successful learning and communication strategies
- to enhance learner motivation and reduce learner stress and to create a positive affective classroom climate

There are three types of co-operative learning tasks:

1. Team practice from common input - skills development and mastery of facts

   - All students work on the same material.
   - Practice could follow a traditional teacher-directed presentation of new material and for that reason is a good starting point for teachers and students new to group work.
   - The task is to make sure that everyone in the group knows the answer to a question and can explain how the answer was obtained or understands the material. Because students want their team to do
well, they coach and tutor each other to make sure that any member
of the group could answer for all of them and explain their team’s
answer.

- When the teacher takes up the question or assignment, anyone in a
group may be called on to answer for the team.
- This technique is good for review and for practice tests; the group
takes the practice test together, but each student will eventually do
an assignment or take a test individually.
- This technique is effective in situations where the composition of
the groups is unstable (in adult programs, for example). Students
can form new groups every day.

2. Jigsaw: differentiated but predetermined input-evaluation and synthesis
of facts and opinions

- Each group member receives a different piece of the information.
- Students regroup in topic groups (expert groups) composed of
people with the same piece to master the material and prepare to
teach it.
- Students return to home groups (Jigsaw groups) to share their
information with each other.
- Students synthesize the information through discussion.
- Each student produces an assignment of part of a group project, or
takes a test, to demonstrate synthesis of all the information
presented by all group members.
- This method of organization may require team-building activities
for both home groups and topic groups, long-term group
involvement, and rehearsal of presentation methods.
• This method is very useful in the multilevel class, allowing for both homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping in terms of English proficiency.

• Information-gap activities in language teaching are jigsaw activities in the form of pair work. Partners have data (in the form of text, tables, charts, etc.) with missing information to be supplied during interaction with another partner.

3. Cooperative projects: topics/resources selected by students discovery learning

• Topics may be different for each group.

• Students identify subtopics for each group member.

• Steering committee may coordinate the work of the class as a whole.

• Students research the information using resources such as library reference, interviews, visual media.

• Students synthesize their information for a group presentation: oral and/or written. Each group member plays a part in the presentation.

• Each group presents to the whole class.

• This method places greater emphasis on individualization and students’ interests. Each student’s assignment is unique.

• Students need plenty of previous experience with more structured group work for this to be effective.

1.4.9 The Natural Approach

From the beginning of a class taught according to the Natural Approach, emphasis is on presenting comprehensible input in the target language. Teacher talk focuses on objects in the classroom and on the
content of pictures, as with the Direct Method. To minimize stress, learners are not required to say anything until they feel ready, but they are expected to respond to teacher commands and questions in other ways.

When learners are ready to begin talking in the new language, the teacher provides comprehensible language and simple response opportunities. The teacher talks slowly and distinctly, asking questions and eliciting one-word answers. There is a gradual progression from Yes/No questions, through either-or questions, to questions that students can answer using words they have heard used by the teacher. Students are not expected to use a word actively until they have heard it many times. Charts, pictures, advertisements, and other aids serve as the focal point for questions, and when the students’ competence permits, talk moves to class members. “Acquisition activities” — those that focus on meaningful communication rather than language form — are emphasized. Pair or group work may be employed, followed by whole-class discussion led by the teacher.

Techniques recommended by Krashen and Terrell are often borrowed from other methods and adapted to meet the requirements of Natural Approach theory. These include command-based activities from Total Physical Response; Direct Method activities in which mime, gesture, and context are used to elicit questions and answers; and even situation-based practice of structures and patterns. Group-work activities are often identical to those used in Communicative Language Teaching, where sharing information in order to complete a task is emphasized. There is nothing novel about the procedures and techniques advocated for use with the Natural Approach. A casual observer might not be aware of the philosophy underlying the classroom techniques he or she observes. What characterizes the Natural Approach is the use of familiar techniques
within the framework of a method that focuses on providing comprehensible input and a classroom environment that cues comprehension of input, minimizes learner anxiety, and maximizes learner self-confidence.

1.4.10 Competency Based Language Teaching

Competency Based Language teaching is based on a functional and interactional perspective on the nature of language. It seeks to teach language in relation to the social contexts in which it is used. Language always occurs as a medium of interaction and communication between people for the achievement of specific goals and purposes. CBLT has for this reason most often been used as a framework for language teaching in situations where learners have specific needs and are in particular roles and where the language skills they need can be fairly accurately predicted or determined. It also shares with behaviourist views of learning the notion that language form can be inferred from language function; that is, certain life encounters call for certain kinds of language. This assumes that designers of CBLT competencies can accurately predict the vocabulary and structures likely to be encountered in those particular situations that are central to the life of the learner and can state these in ways that can be used to organize teaching/learning units. Central to both language and learning theory is the view that language can be functionally analyzed into appropriate parts and subparts: that such parts and subparts can be taught (and tested) incrementally. CBLT thus takes a “mosaic” approach to language learning in that the “whole” (communicative competence) is constructed from smaller components correctly assembled. CBLT is also built around the notion of communicative competence and seeks to develop functional communication skills in learners. These skills are generally described in
only the most general terms, however, rather than being linked to the performance of specific real-world tasks. CBLT thus shares some features with Communicative Language Teaching.

1.4.11 Communicative Language Teaching

In the communicative language teaching, importance is given for communicative competence which is the combination of grammatical competence and socio linguistic competence. Grammatical competence refers to the knowledge that the learners have of a language that accounts for their ability to produce sentences in a language. It refers to knowledge of the building blocks of sentences (e.g. parts of speech, tenses, phrases, clauses, sentence patterns) and how sentences are formed. Grammatical competence is the focus of many grammar practise books, which typically present a rule of grammar on one page, and provide exercises to practise using the rule on the other page. The unit of analysis and practice is typically the sentence. While grammatical competence is an important dimension of language learning it is clearly not all that is involved in learning a language since one can master the rules of sentence formation in a language and still not be very successful at being able to use the language for meaningful communication. It is the latter capacity which is understood by the term communicative competence.

Communicative competence includes the following aspects of language knowledge:

- Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions
- Knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g. knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication).
• Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g. narratives, reports, interviews, conversations).
• Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one’s language knowledge (e.g. through using different kinds of communication strategies).

The processes of second language learning have changed considerably in the last thirty years and communicative language teaching is partly a response to these changes in understanding. Earlier views of language learning focused primarily on the mastery of grammatical competence. Language learning was viewed as a process of mechanical habit formation. Good habits are formed by having students produce correct sentences and not through making mistakes. Errors were to be avoided through controlled opportunities for production (either written or spoken). By memorizing dialogues and performing drills the chances of making mistakes were minimized. Learning was very much seen as under the control of the teacher.

In recent years language learning has been viewed from a very different perspective.

It is seen as resulting from processes of the following kind:

• Interaction between the learner and users of the language
• Collaborative creation of meaning
• Creating meaningful and purposeful interaction through language
• Negotiation of meaning as the learner and his or her interlocutor arrive at understanding
• Learning through attending to the feedback learners get when they use the language
• Paying attention to the language one hears and trying to incorporate new forms into one’s developing communicative competence.
• Trying out and experimenting with different ways of saying things.

1.4.12 Importance of Interactive Language Learning

Interactive language learning is a movement different from traditional lesson formats where the focus was on mastery of different items of grammar and practice through controlled activities such as memorization of dialogues and drills, towards the use of pair work activities, role plays, group work activities and project work.

The type of classroom activities proposed in interactive Language learning also implied new roles in the classroom for teachers and learners. Learners now had to participate in classroom activities that were based on a cooperative rather than individualistic approach to learning. Students had to become comfortable with listening to their peers in group work or pair work tasks, rather than relying on the teacher for a model. They were expected to take on a greater degree of responsibility for their own learning. And teachers now had to assume the role of facilitator and monitor. Rather than being a model for correct speech and writing and one with the primary responsibility of making students produce plenty of error free sentences, the teacher had to develop a different view of learners’ errors and of her/his own role in facilitating language learning.

1.4.13 Activities followed in Interactive Language Learning

As well as rethinking the nature of a syllabus, the new interactive approach prompted a rethinking of classroom teaching methodology. It was argued that learners learn a language through the process of communicating in it, and that communication that is meaningful to the learner provides a better opportunity for learning than through a
grammar-based approach. The salient principles of interactive language teaching methodology at this time can be summarized as

- Make real communication the focus of language learning
- Provide opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know
- Be tolerant of learners’ errors as they indicate that the learner is building up his or her communicative competence
- Provide opportunities for learners to develop both accuracy, and fluency
- Link the different skills such as speaking, reading and listening, together, since they usually occur together in the real world
- Let students induce or discover grammar rules

In applying these principles in the classroom, new classroom techniques and activities were needed. Therefore new roles for teachers and learners have been created in the classroom. Instead of making use of activities that demanded accurate repetition and memorization of sentences and grammatical patterns, activities that required learners to negotiate meaning and to interact meaningfully were required.

Fluency is natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence. Fluency is developed by creating classroom activities in which students must negotiate meaning, use communication strategies, correct misunderstandings and work to avoid communication breakdowns.

Fluency practice can be contrasted with accuracy practice, which focuses on creating correct examples of language use. Differences
between activities that focus on fluency and those that focus on accuracy can be summarized as follows:

**Activities focusing on fluency**

- Reflect natural use of language
- Focus on achieving communication
- Require meaningful use of language
- Require the use of communication strategies
- Produce language that may not be predictable
- Seek to link language use to context

**Activities focusing on accuracy**

- Reflect classroom use of language
- Focus on the formation of correct examples of language
- Practice language out of context
- Practice small samples of language
- Do not require meaningful communication
- Choice of language is controlled

The following are examples of fluency activities and accuracy activities. Both make use of group work, reminding the fact that group work is not necessarily a fluency task.

**Fluency tasks**

A group of students of mixed language ability carry out a role play in which they have to adopt specified roles and personalities provided for them on cue cards. These roles involve the drivers, witnesses, and the police at a collision between two cars. The language is entirely improvised by the students, though they are heavily constrained by the specified situation and characters.
The teacher and a student act out a dialogue in which a customer returns a faulty object she has purchased to a department store. The clerk asks what the problem is and promises to get a refund for the customer or to replace the item. In groups students now try to recreate the dialogue using language items of their choice. They are asked to recreate what happened preserving the meaning but not necessarily the exact language. They later act out their dialogues in front of the class.

**Accuracy tasks**

Students are practising dialogues. The dialogues contain examples of falling intonation in Wh-questions. The class is organized in groups of three, two students practising the dialogue, and the third playing the role of monitor. The monitor checks that the others are using the correct intonation pattern and correct them where necessary. The students rotate their roles between those reading the dialogue and those monitoring. The teacher moves around listening to the groups and correcting their language where necessary.

Students in groups of three or four complete an exercise on a grammatical item, such as choosing between the past tense and the present perfect, an item which the teacher has previously presented and practised as a whole class activity. Together students decide which grammatical form is correct and they complete the exercise. Groups take turns reading out their answers.

Teachers were recommended to use a balance of fluency activities and accuracy and to use accuracy activities to support fluency activities. Accuracy work could either come before or after fluency work. For example, based on students’ performance on a fluency task, the teacher could assign accuracy work to deal with grammatical or pronunciation problems the teacher observed while students were carrying out the task.
An issue that arises with fluency work, however, is whether fluency work develops fluency at the expense of accuracy. In doing fluency tasks, the focus is on getting meanings across using any available communicative resources. This often involves a heavy dependence on vocabulary and communication strategies and there is little motivation to use accurate grammar or pronunciation. Fluency work thus requires extra attention on the part of the teacher in terms of preparing students for a fluency task, or follow up activities that provide feedback on language use.

While dialogues, grammar, and pronunciation drills did not usually disappear from textbooks and classroom materials at this time, they now appeared as part of a sequence of activities that moved back and forth between accuracy activities and fluency activities.

And the dynamics of classrooms also changed. Instead of a predominance of teacher-fronted teaching, teachers were encouraged to make greater use of small-group work. Pair and group activities gave learners greater opportunities to use the language and to develop fluency.

**Information-gap activities**

An important aspect of communication in interactive language learning is the notion of information gap. This refers to the fact that in real communication people normally communicate in order to get information they do not possess. This is known as an information-gap. More authentic communication is likely to occur in the classroom if students go beyond practice of language forms for their own sake and use their linguistic and communicative resources in order to obtain information. In so doing they will draw available vocabulary, grammar, and communication strategies to complete a task. The following exercises make use of the information-gap principle:
Students are divided into A-B pairs. The teacher has copied two sets of pictures. One set (for A students) contains a picture of a group of people. The other set (for B students) contains a similar picture but it contains a number of slight differences from the A-picture. Students must sit back to back and ask questions to try to find out how many differences there are between the two pictures.

Students practise a role-play in pairs. One student is given the information she/he needs to play the part of a clerk in the railway station information booth and has information on train departure, prices etc. The other need to obtain information on departure times, prices etc. They role play the interaction without looking at each other’s cue cards.

**Jig-saw activities**

These are also based on the information-gap principle. Typically the class is divided into groups and each group has part of the information needed to complete an activity. The class must fit the pieces together to complete the whole. While doing the activity, they must use their language resources to communicate meaningfully and to take part in meaningful communication practice.

In a Jigsaw activity, the teacher plays a recording in which three people with different points of view discuss their opinions on a topic of interest. The teacher prepares three different listening tasks, one focusing on each of the three speaker’s points of view. Students are divided into three groups and each group listens and takes notes on one of the three speaker’s opinions. Students are then rearranged into groups containing a student from groups A, B and C. They now role-play the discussion using the information they obtained. In another Jigsaw activity, the teacher takes a narrative and divides it into twenty sections. Each student gets one section of the story. Students must then move around the class, and by
listening to each section read aloud, decide where in the story their
section belongs. Eventually the students have to put the entire story
together in the correct sequence.

Many other activity types have been used in Interactive Language
learning among which are the following: (a) task-completion activities:
puzzles, games, map-reading and other kinds of classroom tasks in which
the focus was on using one’s language resources to complete a task. (b)
Information gathering activities: student conducted surveys, interviews
and searches in which students were required to use their linguistic
resources to collect information. (c) Opinion-sharing activities: activities
where students compare values, opinions, beliefs, such as a ranking task
in which students list six qualities in order of importance which they
might consider in choosing a date or spouse. (d) Information-transfer
activities: these require learners to take information that is presented in
one form, and represent it in a different form. For example they may read
instructions on how to get from A to B, and then draw a map showing the
sequence, or they may read information about a subject and then
represent it as a graph. (e) Reasoning gap-activities: these involve
deriving some new information from given information through the
process of inference, practical reasoning etc. For example, working out a
teacher’s timetable on the basis of given class timetables. (f) role-plays:
activities in which students are assigned roles and improvise a scene or
exchange based on given information or clues. Most of the activities
discussed above reflect an important aspect of classroom tasks in
Interactive Language learning, namely that they are designed to be
carried out in pairs or small groups. Through completing activities in this
way, it is argued, learners will obtain several benefits:
They can learn from hearing the language used by members of the group.

They will produce a greater amount of language than they would use in teacher fronted activities.

Their motivational level is likely to increase.

They will have the chance to develop fluency.

1.5 Statement of the problem

Effectiveness of interactive language learning in improving the communication skills of secondary school students in Tamilnadu.

Meaning of certain key terms used in the study along with their operational definitions are given here under:

**Effectiveness**

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English* (1986), effectiveness is ‘ability to bring about the result intended’.

According to *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1986), effectiveness is ‘ability to have a desired effect’.

As far as this study is concerned, effectiveness refers to the impressive result produced in acquiring communication skills by the secondary school students consequent to the use of interactive language learning.

**Communication**

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English* (1986), communication is ‘ready and willing to talk and give information’.
Communication English is the kind of English which aims to improve and extend the learner’s range of skills in spoken and written aspects of English.

**Secondary School Students**

Secondary school students are those who are studying IX and X standards after completing their upper primary education i.e. after passing VIII standard examination.

In this study, secondary school students are referred to as the students studying IX standard after passing VIII standard examination.

The students for this study have been selected based on simple random method. As the study attempts to analyze teaching approaches followed in Tamilnadu, it has been limited to two schools. One school (Government Higher Secondary School, Kuruvikarambai) represents the northern Tamil Nadu and Alagappa Model Higher Secondary School represents southern Tamilnadu.

**1.6 Objectives of the study**

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To teach communication skills through interactive way (spoken skills and written skills) for ninth standard students.
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control group and experimental group students’ communication skills in English.
3. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of control group students’ communication skills in English.
4. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of control group students in
different components of spoken English skills (Accent, Grammar, Vocabulary, fluency and Comprehension)

5. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of control group students in different components of written English skills (communicative quality, organization, relevance, Linguistic accuracy and linguistic appropriacy).

6. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of Experimental group students’ communication skills in English.

7. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of Experimental group students in different components of speaking skills in English.

8. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of Experimental group students in different components of writing skills in English.

9. To see whether there is any significant difference between the post-test mean scores of the Control group and Experimental group students’ communication skills in English.

10. To see whether there is any significant difference between the post-test mean scores of the Control group and Experimental group students in different components of speaking skills in English.

11. To see whether there is any significant difference between the post-test mean scores of the control group and Experimental group students in different components of writing skills in English.

12. To assess whether there is any significant difference between the post-test mean scores of Control group boys and girls in communication skills (speaking and writing skills) in English.
13. To assess whether there is any significant difference between the post-test mean scores of Experimental group boys and girls in communication skills (speaking and writing skills) in English.

14. To assess whether there is any significant difference between the post-test mean scores of the Control group rural and urban students’ communication skills in English.

15. To assess whether there is any significant difference between the post-test mean scores of the Experimental group rural and Urban students communication skills in English.

1.7 Assumptions of the study

1. Interactive way can be used in the English Classroom in an interesting manner.

2. Teaching through interactive way is more effective than traditional method of teaching English to develop communication skills in English.

3. Teaching the skills of speaking and writing in English by interactive way enables the students to learn communication skills more effectively.

4. Teaching communication skills by using interactive way enables the average and below average students to narrow down the gap between them and above average students in developing communication skills.

1.8 Hypotheses of the study

Keeping the above objectives of the study in mind, the following hypotheses are formulated for testing.
1. There exists no significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of control group and experimental group students’ communication skills in English.

2. There exists no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of control group students’ communication skills in English.

3. There exists no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of control group students in different components of speaking skills in English (Accent, Grammar, Vocabulary, Fluency and Comprehension).

4. There exists no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of control group students in different components of writing skills in English (Communicative quality, organization, Relevance, Linguistic accuracy and linguistic appropriacy).

5. There is significant difference between the pre-test and post–test mean scores of experimental group students’ communication skills in English.

6. There is significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of experimental group students’ in different components of speaking skills in English.

7. There is significant difference between the pre-test post-test mean scores of experimental group students’ in different components of writing skills in English.

8. There exists significant difference between post-test mean scores of control group and experimental group students’ communication skills in English.
9. There exists significant difference in the post-test mean scores of control group and experimental group students in different components of speaking skills in English.

10. There exists significant difference in the post-test mean scores of control group and experimental group students in different components of writing skills in English.

11. There is no significant difference in the post-test mean scores of control group boys and girls in communication skills (spoken and written) in English.

12. There is no significant difference in the post-test mean scores of experimental group boys and girls in communication skills (spoken and written) in English.

13. There is significant difference in the post-test mean scores of control group rural and urban students’ communication skills in English.

14. There is significant difference in the post-test mean scores of experimental group rural and urban students’ communication skills in English.

1.9 Limitations of the study

The limitations of the study are as follows:

This study is confined to the students studying in IX standard of Alagappa Model Higher Secondary School, Karaikudi and Government Higher Secondary School, Kuruvi Karambai.

The sample consists of only eighty students (40 control group and 40 experimental group) grouped on the basis of their previous year VIII standard annual examination English marks and also on the basis of their performance in the spoken and written communication skills in English (Assessed through the pre-test developed for the purpose).
For assessing speaking skills in English, five components (accent, grammar, Vocabulary, Fluency and Comprehension) are considered in this study.

For assessing writing skills in English only five components (Communicative Quality, organization, Relevance, Linguistic accuracy and linguistic appropriacy) are considered in this study.

The lessons in prose, poetry, grammar and composition were taught through interactive way for the experimental group students and through Grammar Translation method for the control group students.

The experiment was conducted for a period of forty-five working days (one and a half-hours a day) in each school.

The performance of the students was assessed using the scale provide in the book entitled Testing for language Teachers by Arthur Hughes.

1.10 Need and Importance of the Study

After completing middle school education, the students join the high schools. Most of the schools are situated in urban areas. The students hailing from rural areas find it difficult to learn English and cope-up with the urban students. As they had been taught through translation method at the elementary and higher elementary levels, they would find it difficult to comprehend English speech and also struggle to speak and write good English. Even the students belonging to urban areas find it difficult to speak and write English fluently.

Even though, the English teachers serving in different schools in Tamilnadu try to teach communication skills through different methods and techniques to the secondary school students, most of them lack communication skills. Hence the researcher wanted to find a solution for
this problem. She tried to establish the effectiveness of interactive language learning in improving the communication skills of the secondary school students in Tamilnadu.

The interactive language learning makes the students active, whereas the traditional methods make the students passive. Because of interactive language learning, the students can improve their speaking skills and writing skills.

In order to develop the communication skills of the students in English, different researchers have taken up researches at different levels. Krishnaswamy (1986), Ramani (1985) and Ramachandran (1985) were against the use of communicative approach at school level. However, the studies conducted by Prabu (1984), Julusen (1986), Sadhana Guha (1988) and Sasikala (1997) have obviously pointed out the effectiveness of the communicative approach in teaching English which gives importance for interaction in the class room at the secondary school level.

1.11 Scope of the Study

The main focus of the study is to measure the effectiveness and advantage of interactive way of teaching English over the traditional method in promoting the spoken and written skills of students in English. For this, students studying ninth standard at Alagappa Model Higher Secondary School, Karaikudi and Government Higher Secondary School, Kuruvi Karambai are selected for the study. Eighty students were selected from both the schools and they were divided into two groups. One group was considered to be the control group and the other was experimental group. These two groups were matched on the basis of their previous performance in English and also based on their skills of speaking and writing tested through a pre-test developed for the purpose. The control group was given the treatment of traditional method of
teaching English and the experimental group was given a method of teaching English by using interactive way.

Finally, the study attempts to find out the significant difference if any in the performance of boys and girls, rural and urban students when they were taught through traditional method of teaching English and by using interactive way.

In the succeeding chapter, Review of Related Literature has been discussed in detail.