CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 RATIONALE AND NEED OF THE STUDY:

'Equality of educational opportunities' that is enshrined in the constitution of India, as also in those of most nations of the world, merely guarantees a fair chance for each individual to compete for a place in the system and thereby puts all the burden on the individual. However, 'optimal diversity of educational opportunity', says Jensen (1969), points to the need for an active effort on the part of the authorities that be to design conditions in society that will help everybody to run his strongest race.

The deficiencies of teaching and learning in the education system at all levels of the educational ladder, perpetually occupying the attention of educationists, intellectuals and administrators of our country, have primarily been sought to be remedied and resolved by reorganizing the overall formal structure of the education system and by making changes in the prevalent system of examination. However, organizational and structural changes neither are nor can be very successful in terms of more effective and more appropriate learning unless accompanied by alternative instructional designs and more efficacious teaching-learning strategies. Modifications in teaching methodology have been suggested at times but for Education to be able to keep pace with societal needs in today's era of unprecedented and rapid changes, the methods of education, its content and objectives require constant redefinition. In fact, instructional strategies are the inbuilt aspect of curriculum to be continuously updated. With rapid strides of development in Educational psychology, Educational sociology and other related disciplines, an increasingly
urgent need to refer and improve the teaching strategies and instructional techniques with a view to realizing the fullest potentialities of the individual learner has been felt.

Most of instruction at all levels has involved presentation of information and thus teacher's role most commonly has been conceived as that of 'a giver of information.' That is why most traditional textbooks on teaching methods describe learning strategy in classrooms in terms of a relationship between the teacher, the content and the taught, reflecting a teacher-oriented approach to instruction since the process begins with the teacher who has been regarded as the prime source of wisdom and ends with the student who, more often than not, is a passive receiver. The teacher's role, as also methodology and techniques of teaching, are however undergoing a discernible change and thus continuous research efforts in this direction are needed. The roles of teachers and students, of learning processes, under the broad spectrum of instructional strategies, therefore, essentially needs to be reassessed and reevaluated and adaptations in methodology of teaching have to be carefully thought out, researched and implemented so that the gap between the content of education and the living experience of its pupils is reduced and education is able to keep pace with the requirements of succeeding generations.

The present era can easily be termed as an age of experimentation wherein old values are either being gradually discarded or altered in various life styles. The learner of today is not totally unjustified in feeling disillusioned and alienated. Many of them do not see a role in society with which they care to identify. They demand a voice in the creation of the future. Commenting on the perceptions of modern-day youth, Rivers (1986) says - "They see the need for responsible individuals independent of the system, willing to stand out and
live by values other than those of the corporate ‘yes’-man on the make-self-directed individuals who can work and think with others - They wish to be able to choose. They need an education that will help them develop their ability to think, to weigh alternatives, to work without compulsion and to accept responsibility for their choices'. Thus the need is not merely to acquire a body of knowledge. What is required is for young people to learn how to learn, how to assess facts, how to evaluate new knowledge, and how to put knowledge to use. This throws up the need for the introduction of such instructional strategies as will encourage unorthodox curiosity about many of the phenomenon of man and society and the ability to function autonomously and efficiently as required by any set of changed circumstances.

Another reason for the introduction of extensively researched innovative instructional strategies is that the learner today is faced with new challenges on account of the accumulation of factual knowledge at an explosive, mind-boggling rate in the post Second World War era. He has to learn how to process the information more efficiently and economically, how to be a continuing learner, how to integrate and synthesize new knowledge. It also throws up the need for the acceptance of seemingly transitory nature of subject matter understandings on the part of academicians and planners and necessitates the continuous deletion and revision of what is to be taught as also a re-evaluation of the aims of teaching various subject matters. Likewise, the increasing importance of conceptual knowledge is encouraging a new set of processes in curricular development and in instructional strategies. Here it is worthwhile to mention that eminent scholars like Grambs, Carr and Fitch (1970) who have conducted research on secondary education argue for the introduction of discovery learning. They say that the rapid
obsolescence of facts in the twentieth century makes discovery learning obligatory if students are to learn 'how to continue to learn'.

Besides these, there emerges another very important reason to research and implement modified and innovative instructional strategies. Futurists are of the opinion that the ends of Education in the near-future will be measured not by 'What knowledge is of most worth'? but rather by 'What kinds of human beings do we want to produce'? Human beings will become the criteria for evaluating technologies as educational instruments. New technologies will be used only if their use contributes to more educationally rational persons. Efficiency will be less significant than the quality of the human being who enters adult citizenship. The accelerating rate of social change requires that we develop people who are capable of managing change, rather than simply turning out more technicians, engineers and scientists.

It is perhaps in keeping with anticipated futuristic trends that the present times have witnessed a resurgence of emphasis on the individual and on developing educational procedures that maximize opportunities for participation by learners in learning and on acquisition of not only knowledge, but also skills and abilities. Educators are increasingly becoming sensitive to the learning environment and dominant thinking is against attributing the major role to the organisation of explicit teaching.

Efforts are already underway to reassess not only the goals of education but also the validity of current curriculum and of teaching methodologies. Various modifications are being suggested and introduced so as to make them more responsive to current and projected societal needs. Education must provide individuals with the kinds of opportunities for development that will enable
them to create worthwhile lives for themselves and not prepare them merely to fit into a pattern or slot. What the world of tomorrow will demand of education systems is not probably the production of quiz-program champions or of walking encyclopaedias but the development of independent thinking abilities in the individuals.

Therefore, experts are unanimous in suggesting that education must seek to bring about the optimal development of the whole individual. He must be equipped with generalized intellectual and other skills - skills that enable him to cope effectively with whatever the state of the world is as he will later encounter it. Central among these generalized skills and abilities are reflective thinking skills That is why in recent decades, there has been an increasing emphasis on teaching of thinking skills. Well developed thinking skills can transfer positively to almost every life-situation. One way to teach thinking skills could be to use special programs designed to teach them (Costa, 1985) and another could be to emphasize thinking as part of regular lessons. Beyer (1985) describes two ways of doing this. One is an inductive approach, much like guided discovery learning which aims to make the pupil a reasoner, not a recipe follower and the other is a deductive lesson, similar to expository teaching. The rationale for the changing emphasis is simple. It cannot be predicted specifically as to what will be needed by the turn of the century. It follows then that if education can help to develop the skills and abilities for continuing self-education, those citizens will be able to adjust as required to changed conditions.

The goal of maximizing the inherent potential of each individual points strongly towards such teaching methods and strategies, wherein the individual becomes the focus of attention and the specific background, capabilities, intelligence, personality
traits and distinctive style of the individual are assessed and kept in mind. This does not, however, imply that individuals must be taught singly, with different methods designed for each one. It does require that the common instructional methods and materials should have such scope and flexibility as reasonably to fit the diverse requirements of different individuals. One major challenge that Education faces today is to make instruction in schools and colleges sufficiently individualized while still maintaining it within the feasible limits of large scale or mass education and therein arises the increasing urgency of developing appropriate instructional strategies.

Cognitive psychologists continue to unravel the mysteries of learning and memory through the use of research focusing on information-processing strategies of learners. The growing evidence in the field of cognitive psychology, major advances in problem-solving, schema theory and generative learning have all provided new insights into student's thinking and learning indicating thereby that direct conscious efforts by teachers are needed to improve learning. Education, therefore, needs to be continually redefined in terms of increasing knowledge of humans as a species and increasing understanding of the nature of individual mental growth. A clearer understanding of how to tailor the process of education to the mode of representation of the student will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of education.

Research has identified a number of links between effective teaching and improved learning (Eggen and Kauchak, 1988). The importance of the teacher in producing learning in the classroom is continually verified, (Brophy, 1979; Good, 1983; Gage, 1985; Brophy and Good, 1986); the need for variety and a repertoire of skills and abilities is now thoroughly documented; and the importance of student's active involvement in the learning process is increasingly apparent. Effective learning,
suggest Eggen and Kauchak 1988 occurs when students are actively involved, in organizing and finding relationships in the information they encounter rather than being the passive recipients of teaches - delivered bodies of knowledge. This activity results not only in increased learning and retention of content but also in improved thinking skills”.

As new resources of learning become available, new options for instruction are offered. New concepts such as team teaching, individually - prescribed instruction and automated learning compel educators in various nations across the world to experiment by varying the grouping of students. Newer facilities such as electronic learning laboratories computer terminals and dial access retrieval systems are being built and accepted. In the days of the one room school house, students relied mainly on blackboards and primers. But today, in parts of U.S.A and certain other developed countries, history and geography come to life through the advanced technology of video - discs. The number of alternatives that the teacher has in the choice of learning spaces in which to accomplish the defined learning outcomes, has increased manifold, necessitating him to call upon the spectrum of resources available to provide the conditions which will help pupils to reach their objectives.

Accordingly, the teacher is rapidly becoming a facilitator of learning experiences who seeks to establish conditions that make effective learning possible within a reasonable period of time and who seeks to discover the one optimum condition that exists for a given task and a given learner. Active participant approaches like discovery learning, inquiry-training etc. are being offered as more effective options for instruction wherein the learner becomes a progressively active participant in the learning process. Therefore, a plan that directs all learners in reasonably flexible intellectual procedures designed to
fit each one's characteristics is what is needed. Hence the consideration that takes priority over various others to maximize learning for each individual is with new ways of presenting information and new concerns for the individual learner. Since learners develop and mature at different rates, uneven in pattern and pace which is made even more individual by the personal route of their interests, goals, styles and potentialities, questions about interactions need specially to be researched in relation to instruction. Variations in learners entrance behavior and characteristics are expected to cause variations by way of interactions with instructional strategies.

Innovative instructional treatments are continually being devised and applied by educationists in the hope of maximizing learning and bettering performance achievement. The search is on for the best method of instruction for a given purpose. The instructional strategy that is best on the average is not best for all persons. Research is called upon to locate interactions of individual differences among learners with instructional treatments i.e. aptitude - x treatment interactions (ATI). Therefore, the search for generally superior methods (as discovery or expository, inductive or deductive) has to be supplemented by a search for ways to fit the instruction to each kind of learner. The discussion in the preceding paragraphs serves to show that the instructional strategy adopted by a teacher to teach specific domain within a subject is perhaps one of the most important variables contributing to improved learning.

**Importance of Language Teaching in School Curriculum:** Language is probably the single most necessary subject our students will ever learn and through its teaching, we are preparing the student for survival in every other area of his life. Rightly do Mamchak and Mamchak (1977) remark, "If out of a class of twenty five students, three kids don't remember who succeeded Henry VII as king of England, it will not
prove tremendously detrimental to them twenty years from now. If, however, out of that same class of twenty five, there is even one student who does not know how to read, that will be detrimental, twenty hours, twenty months and twenty years from now - Language arts is the skeleton upon which is fashioned the muscle and flesh of a complete education. Thus language teaching has a centrality in education, particularly in a multi-lingual country like India. Since all of education is based on the understanding of and facility with the reading, writing and speech tools of language arts, general academic achievement not only in mathematics but in most other subject areas too, is correlated with language skill. And therefore, the need to take that extra time to work with the language learner, to make solid the foundation in language arts and to search for such strategies and techniques as are suited for particular individuals and classes in specific situations cannot be overemphasized.

Ever since independence of India, much concern is being shown with regard to the falling standard of language teaching and learning in the schools. Language teaching standards are divergent in different regions of the country. One thing common to all is the consistently low standard of achievement in languages. However, research on language use in Education in our country lacks breadth and depth, most of the research reported is fragmentary and ad-hoc and the research on the spoken skill, the oral tradition and linkages between the oral and the written is conspicuous by its absence (Pattanayak, 1983). He notes that there is little research available on oral and written comprehension, though some work in the field of reading is visible. Despite the widespread recognition in literature of the importance of approaching language teaching as skills, it hardly seems to have reached the classroom teacher. Further, he observes that there is little appreciation of the difference in teaching a language, teaching about a language and teaching through a language. Also, the confusion about the difference
of first-language (L1), second-language (L2) and foreign-language (L2) teaching, though well recognised in literature, is colossal. Pattanayak (1983) notes that L1 is taken to be not the language first acquired by the child but from the viewpoint of primacy of introduction in the school. As a result, for some Indian-language speaking children never exposed to English outside the school, English becomes L1 while L2 is interpreted as a language introduced next to L1 in the schools, which sometimes is hindi and sometimes, another regional language. Because of these confusions, clear methodological development based on these distinctions have failed to appear. Thus the need to examine the status of English in India as also to analyze the causes of falling standard of English language proficiency before addressing ourselves to the problem of locating and identifying better and newer ways of teaching the English language cannot be overemphasized.

1.2 STATUS OF ENGLISH IN INDIA :

The terms 'foreign language' and 'second language' are commonly used to refer to any language that is not a native language in a country. Linguists, however, distinguish between the two, recognizing major differences in the learning aims, teaching methods and achievement levels involved.

A foreign language (FL) as conceived in Cambridge Encyclopaedia of languages (1987), is a non-native language taught in schools that has no status as a routine medium of communication in that country while second language is a non-native language that is widely used for purposes of communication, usually as a medium of education, government or business. English, for example, has a foreign language status in Japan and second-language status in Nigeria.
The strategy for learning second-languages is different from that adopted for learning foreign languages. Firstly, second languages have to be taught on a more extensive scale to much larger numbers while a foreign language needs to be learnt and taught only on a limited scale. Secondly, the learners of a foreign language are seldom, if at all, required or expected to use it as well as they can use a first language; they rarely require all the four skills. A scientist working in a theoretical field may need to be able to read in that language; a technician deputed to a foreign country to work with semi-skilled labour may require the speech skills much more than other skills. So in teaching the foreign language, the scale of priorities may be varied according to the requirements of the learners.

On the other hand, a second language learner ideally should be able to use it as effectively for communication as he uses his first language. It is accepted by linguists that the aim of second language teaching is to produce bilinguals who are almost ambilinguals—i.e. persons who command two languages equally well. Since all the four skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing are required to be learnt, a multiskill approach has to be adopted in teaching it. Thus second-language teaching is much more highly intensive than foreign-language teaching.

Views regarding the place of English as a language in India range widely. On the one extreme are those who feel that English should be treated just as a language like French or Russian and further advocate a quick and immediate replacement of English with regional languages at all levels and in all spheres of activity. On the other extreme are those who feel that India's progress is forever linked to the English language and still others proclaim English to be as much a language
of the Indian people as Hindi or Marathi and should accordingly be treated at par with them. These are invariably extreme views. The fact is that presently English in India is much more than a foreign language with many more users than any other foreign language, although the predominant role that English had in many areas of communication is gradually being taken over by regional languages.

The constitutional status of English is that of an 'associate official language' in a highly multi lingual national context. Examinations in English at school leaving and first degree stages are compulsory in a majority of states, though optional in others. English still enjoys the status of a language of intellection, of national and international language and of administration in the Union as in a few states also. There is a widespread desire to learn the language because it is regarded as the language of opportunity, opening the door to higher education, a better job and upward social mobility and because English language qualification is frequently essential for jobs which in turn provide rank, status and wealth in society. Although it is spoken as mother tongue by a negligible minority of Indians and even as second-language, is accessible to hardly two percent of the population, the latter group forms a very large proportion of those in the leadership roles and in the bureaucracy. Therefore, by providing better job opportunities, English creates a psychological setting for ‘development,’ for ‘modernization’ and is responsible for better achievement.

At schools, the age at which English teaching begins in India varies from seven to twelve years. Traditionally second language has been introduced at a relatively late stage of development (around 10 or 11 years). After an in-depth study, Education Commission (1964-66) reported that the stage at which English or Hindi should be introduced on a compulsory basis
as a second language and the period for which it will be taught will depend on local motivation and need. It further stated the fact that English will be for an overwhelming majority of pupils only a second or third language makes it all the more necessary to ensure adoption of effective, dynamic methods of teaching the language.

Barring a few gifted learners and some who arrive at fluency only due to hard work, expended over a considerable period of time, there is great deal of educational failure and lack of achievement in the second language learning field in India which requires close and careful scrutiny.

The many factors that govern success or failure in the field need to be studied—such as the soundness of teaching strategies, the attitudes and motivations of the learners, availability of time and opportunities to learn, adequacy of resources and the chance to put language to active use. Quite often, teachers of English in India admit regretfully that students cannot understand them or the lessons since they are hopelessly below the minimum standards expected of them and that there are too many of them in the class. And so the English class becomes a monologue, with the teacher as the sole performer and the students as the bored observers. This phenomenon in turn is attributed to the reduced number of years given to the teaching of English in many states, the adoption of regional languages as the media of instruction at both the primary and secondary stages, the great increase in the number of pupils in each class and the traditional methods of teaching the language.

The relation of language and so also of English in this country to the expanding and increasingly complex life of man today is so close and intimate that it would be foolhardy to
drop the systematic practice of speaking, writing and reading it at any point in the school program.

However, there is growing recognition in the field of second language teaching that not all language learners will have the capacity or the need to become expert users of English. The functional use to which they will need to put the English they are learning ought to be considered in planning a course/programme. The implication of this is not that we will lower our expectations but that we will be aware that while some of our learners may become great writers, others will learn only enough to function satisfactorily in school and to participate meaningfully as members of their communities. Individual differences with relation to the mastery of English will exist in second language learners as they do in native English speakers (Finocchiaro, 1969).

1.3 ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING:

There has thus been an increasing concern over a mismatch between the practical aims of language learning and the actual achievement of language teaching. The traditional methods of language teaching involving exposition of grammatical rules supported by translation and other forms of exercise have not proved effective in developing practical language skills in a second language. Language is essentially a vehicle for the communication of ideas, emotions and experiences, whether in the oral or graphic medium and is likely to be termed dead when it no longer functions thus. If our students’ second language is not to be stillborn, it needs at all stages to be used for some form of real communication. However, only a small proportion of students learning English at school come into contact with the language outside the language classroom. It is worthwhile to note here the observations of Pattanayak (1983) that schools
in India have made little effort to build bridges between the home language and the school language on the one hand and L1, L2 and FL on the other. By ignoring to build on the existing linguistic wealth of the child, the school has not only curbed the creativity and innovativeness of the child but has also been responsible for the large percentage of drop outs.

Only recently curriculum designers in India have begun to talk about communicative approaches to language teaching and to refer to communication as the eventual aim of language teaching. It has been commonly observed that while students are hardly able to make the subject and verb in their own sentences agree, passages of great lyrical beauty from Shakespeare, Milton and Keats have often been included in English textbooks. However, it is being increasingly realized that the primary objective in the teaching of English is and should be learning the skills of the language for purposes of effective communication.

The essence of language, according to Rivers (1986) is "macro-language use: listening to something someone wants to share (ideas, songs, news etc.); telling something we want others to hear; writing something we intend to be read (by ourselves at a later date or by others), reading what others want to communicate (to inform ourselves or enjoy) and then sharing with others what we have read. Students don't easily move from isolated micro-language learning (learning about facts of language and how smaller elements combine into larger segments) to normal uses of language. Facts we learn about language are 'inert' ideas until they are tossed about, recombined in original ways and tested for their communicative potential in the natural give and take of interaction between individuals or in the dynamic interchange within groups". River's (1986) observations are as true of one's native language as one's second language, yet the teaching of English as a second
language to speakers of other languages is now recognized as an important discipline with a philosophy and set of principles of its own which are drawn from linguistics, psychology, anthropology and sociology. The teaching of English as a second language rests on several underlying premises (Finocchiaro, 1969), some of which are (i) TESL (teaching English as a second language) in not the same as teaching English to native English speakers; (ii) TESL in a community that is peopled predominantly by non-English speakers is not the same as TESL to language learners who live in a predominantly English-speaking neighborhood; (iii) Language, by anyone over the age of eight, is not learned 'incidentally even in a predominantly English-speaking community. Language learning involves skill development and habit formation. Skills have to be practiced consciously before they can be used unconsciously or without constant and conscious effort; (iv) Learning a second language is not the same as learning one's native language as a child. Not only are factors of time and exposure to the language completely different but, depending on the learner's age, features of the first language (sounds, word forms, word order) generally cause interference with the learning of the second language; (v) While mastery is a much desired goal, we should not require complete mastery of any feature of English before proceeding to another one. Since language learning is cumulative, the same feature of sound, structure or vocabulary will be met hundreds of times in the course of a well planned English programme. Our aim should be to give our students progressively better control of any language feature.

It is in keeping with the recent developments in linguistics around the world that in India, English as a second language is being sought to be taught primarily to help students in developing competence in certain communication needs. The
English syllabus recommended by N.C.E.R.T. stipulates that the characteristic feature of the +2 stage is diversification and that the English component of the curriculum should meet the linguistic needs of both vocational and academic streams.

The recent emphasis on a higher degree of competency in language skills at the school leaving stage has, therefore, resulted in the inclusion of writing skills as an important, integral unit of the English teaching programmes in the schools. Moreover, the realization is dawning that development of language skills requires long periods of carefully planned sequential instruction.

Another phenomenon needs to be pointed out here and that is the perennial tension in language teaching between those who subscribe to a subject-centered view and those who subscribe to a learner centered view of language learning and teaching.

The subject centered view sees learning a language as essentially the mastering of a body of knowledge but the learner - centered view tends to see language acquisition as a process of acquiring skills rather than a body of knowledge. Proponents of learner-centered curricula are less interested in learners acquiring the totality of the language than in assisting them gain the communicative and linguistic skills they need to carry out real world tasks. This view implicitly recognizes that not even native speakers master every aspect of the language (Nunan, 1988)

The modern movement in language-teaching methods variously referred to as oral, structural, active, audio-visual, situational, audio-lingual (whatever the differences between them) are all in some degree a reaction against the traditional grammar - translation methods, and are directed to achieve greater success in the practical use of language. Communicative language teaching (CLT) is a cluster
of approaches more than a single methodology which also grew out of dissatisfaction with the traditional methods, structuralism and the situational methods of the 1960s. The basic principle of CLT is that learners must learn not only to make grammatically correct, prepositional statements about the experiential world, but must also develop the ability to use language to get things done. Quinn (1984) has outlined certain basic differences between traditional and communicative approaches to language teaching (ref. table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Comparative Picture Of Traditional And Communicative Approaches To Language Teaching (Adapted from Quinn, T. (1984))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of traditional approaches to language teaching</th>
<th>Characteristics of communicative approaches to language teaching</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Focus in learning</strong> : is on the language as a structured system of grammatical patterns.</td>
<td><strong>focus in learning</strong> is on communication.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Type of language used</strong> : tends to be formal, bookish.</td>
<td><strong>tends to be genuine, everyday language.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Criteria of success</strong> : aim is to have students produce formally correct sentences</td>
<td><strong>aim is to have students communicate effectively and in a manner appropriate to the context they are working in.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language skills emphasized</strong> : skill of reading and writing.</td>
<td><strong>spoken interactions are as important as reading and writing.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher-student roles</strong> : teacher-centered.</td>
<td><strong>student centered.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitude to errors</strong> : incorrect utterances are seen as deviations from the norms of standard grammar.</td>
<td><strong>partially incorrect and incomplete utterances are seen as such rather than as being just wrong.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Similarity /dissimilarity to natural language learning</strong> : reverses the natural language learning process by concentrating on the forms of utterances rather than on the content.</td>
<td><strong>resembles the natural language learning process in that the content of the utterance is emphasized rather than its form.</strong></td>
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</table>
A comparison of the traditional methods with the CLT approaches shows that the latter have many features inherent in them that represent an important advance on the former. Even then the degree of success in meeting the ultimate goal has been disappointing. There remains a considerable gap between the language repertoire that is mastered and that which becomes usable in communication or in performance. Even where learners have an ability to construct sentences in a second language, their language lacks fluency, spontaneity and appropriateness when they attempt to use the language system (Wilkins, 1984).

Language learning should ideally be based on a pedagogically motivated organization of learning and by proposing a substantial change of priorities, an attempt is being made to identify the uses of language and to provide the learning conditions necessary to master them. Rivers (1986) wants the language teachers to be much more sensitive to the learning environment they create and to the qualities of relationships within it. He would not want the teachers to attribute the major role in student learning to their organization of explicit teaching. Implicit in the observation of Rivers (1986) is the conviction that students have their own inner needs, they come with an individual perception of what is meaningful and valuable; they mature at an individual rate so that they have their own preferred pace, mode and style of learning, which may vary at any particular stage. They have individual goals and expectations and therefore, their motivation is intensely personal but purposeful. As a result, they learn better through active experiences particularly as they interact with others.

To conclude, it may be said that the final word in language research is not available and it should not even be expected. Those still sticking to the traditional approach to teaching the English language point to the controversies that
exist among linguists and within the research. However, the need to identify more meaningful approaches to teaching the English language should be directed towards trying to locate areas of research consensus, in order to translate them into meaningful classroom practices and relevant classroom learning situations.

1.4 INTERRELATIONSHIPS AMONG LANGUAGE SKILLS:

Language learning, a major aspect of schooling, can be subdivided into oral and written language, and each of these can be sub-divided into receptive and expressive language. Oral language skills—listening and speaking—are involved in decoding and encoding verbal communication whereas written language skills—reading and writing—are involved in decoding and encoding written communications. Further, while listening and reading are receptive language skills, reading and writing are expressive or productive language skills. Expressive language skills involve not only receptive understanding, but the ability to use language skills in active ways for purposes of communication. In both oral and written language, receptive understanding precedes and is much broader than expressive use. Learners generally understand much more language than they use themselves, and they can read with comprehension many more words than they use in their own written work. Thus expressive language skills are much more dependent on how effectively the linguistic resources of the language are used.

Linguists emphasize that English language should be taught so that specific skills reinforce each other while stress on aural-oral skills in the early stages is not out of place, use of writing as part of an integrated skills approach to language learning is recommended. Relationships between written language and oral language are of special importance for the school
teacher because the speech patterns of children are the foundation upon which teachers develop the writing skill. National Council of Teachers of English (1952) took the position so far back that "the curriculum in the language arts should be so organised as to provide experiences which involve all facets of language in their normal relations". Communicative approach to language teaching has brought about a redefinition of the four basic language skills, a reappraisal of the students' status, role and needs, along with the rediscovery of the classroom as a place for communicative interaction. Besides the integration of skills in language teaching the teaching of literature is being related to the teaching of the language system and to what the learner already knows of the English language as for example, Ranzoli (1984) states that in analyzing characters and plots in fiction, two basic language functions are involved - how to describe people and how to report past events. Also, a reconsideration of basic issues in the teaching of English referred to the absolute impossibility of divorcing the consideration of writing from reading. Since reading seems to be an essential pre-condition in the development of writing ability, the two skills can and should be developed in close collaboration and good measures of reading ability have turned out to be the most trustworthy indicators of writing ability (Diederich, 1957).

However, without in any way detracting from the importance the vital interrelationship among language skills, it is appropriate to point out that language learning is not simply or solely the integrated mastery of four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It involves highest reasoning and entails correspondence between sound and meaning, expression and content.
1.5 WRITING SKILLS IN ENGLISH:

Among the various language skills, writing is the most complex but it is also the most enduring. Since it creates its own context, it has to be fully explicit. In written expression the writer must create the situation and represent it to himself. Oral language has no detachment from the actual situation since the speaker is part of the situation. So writing skill is a separate linguistic function; differing from oral speech in both structure and mode of functioning.

Writing is difficult for children to acquire. At certain periods there is a lag of as much as six to eight years between the 'linguistic age' in speaking and in writing (Uygotsky, 1962). The basic goal of an instructional programme in writing skills is to help learners develop effective communication skills so that they can write about their feelings and knowledge to others. Moreover, writing skills permit them to reach out to seek information and expression from others. The procedures to reach this goal in ones mother tongue follow a developmental sequence that begins at birth. "An infant becomes aware of sounds in the environment (listening) and soon begins to put those sounds together in association with an experience, reproducing a sound pattern (speaking). Next comes the association and interpretation of symbols with experiences (reading) and finally the development of skills in creating a written product. This process of language acquisition does not happen without structure. Guided instruction is planned based on some developmental sequence of the skills involved in writing" (Stephens et al; 1982).

In the case of second language as for native language, research results in linguistics and psychology as well as empirical observation of learning situations, indicate the necessity for
developing the learners understanding and speaking skills before introducing them to reading and writing. English should ideally be presented and practiced in the following sequence listening with understanding, speaking, reading and writing. Except for very young children, language is not learned merely by imitation and repetition. Specific guidance in every facet of language cognition, imitation, reception and production is needed for most learners.

Writing is learned through a process of instruction. Learners who are denied direct instruction and extensive opportunities to practice writing tend to have poorer writing skills; their writing very often is limited to single topics and is full of overused general words to describe thought patterns. Writing that is clearly and consistently organised is a learned behaviour that is dependent on systematic instruction. Instruction in the writing process has been considered a vital part of schooling since the written form of the language has to be mastered by the learner; certain structures that are less used in speech but are vital for effective communication in writing have to be learnt; organisation of ideas and synthesis of material has to be done in such a way that they can be understood by the reader. If the teacher can identify and teach many of these skills explicitly, more effective learning would result. Endeavour should be to find simple, sequential steps to follow that will unlock for the learners the skills used in effective writing. Language teachers are bridge builders in helping their students to cross from listening, to speaking, to reading and to writing.

Writing is a complex process and involves so many skills of thinking, organizing and structuring sentences and paragraphs as also the correct usage of grammatical rules, handwriting and spelling that it is difficult to arrive at any single index of development. It is by the organisation of sentences into a
text, into a coherent whole which is as explicit as possible and complete in itself, that effective communication through the medium of writing is possible. Arranging and sequencing written words, sentences and paragraphs into an ordered product is composition. Composition is regarded as the highest level of language achievement and draws freely on the skills of listening, speaking, reading and organized thinking. The term composition has sometimes been equated with English or Grammar and composition has been categorised into creative writing and practical writing (Braddock, 1969). The growing tendency presently is to restrict the meaning of grammar to syntax and morphology, to expand the meaning of composition to include any writing that is not copying someone else’s creation and to define usage as vocabulary choice. Squire and Applebee (Braddock 1969) made a study of the English programm in 168 high schools and gave the most completes picture of high school composition and grammar instructions in USA, recommending specifically that more should be done to teach writing, to teach composing, rather than to provide writing activities alone and to assume that students will learn from practice.

Looking at the current scene in Indian schools and colleges, it is observed that in many courses of English at various levels, writing skills are relatively neglected, objectives are rarely spelt out clearly and there is an overall lack of guidance for the systematic development of writing ability in the English language classroom. More often than not, the writing class or composition class as it is more commonly called, is a lackluster, dull teaching learning situation wherein the teacher merely provides a topic for the students to write on. At the most, a few motivated English teachers discuss the topic before asking the class to compose. It is also observed that a large number of English language teachers teach writing skills
exclusively through grammatical analysis, application of rules and
text book assignments. Teaching of grammar as an aid in
improving composition is still justified and practiced despite
research evidence from 1906 onwards that showed no more
correlation between knowledge of traditional grammar and quality
of composition than would be found between grammar and
geography" (Braddock, 1969).

This scenario throws up the need for English teachers to
explore various strategies and techniques as are appropriate to
specific goals and needs so that students become proficient in
writing skills. English language teachers in Indian schools are
time and again plagued by the typical reaction of the average
student to a writing assignment, "I find writing so difficult. I
am at a loss for words and ideas". In view of the many
difficulties with which our students are beset in learning how
to write/compose in English, the fundamental principle of guiding
them in various ways towards a mastery of writing skills,
besides making writing tasks more realistic and relating practice
to a specific purpose instead of asking them to write simply
for the sake of writing, needs to be duly emphasized. English
must be regarded as social in both content and method of
acquirement. "The chief function of language is communication.
Hence the activities of the English programme must provide
for actual communication. The pupil must speak or write
to or for somebody with a consciously conceived purpose to
inform, convince, inspire or entertain ........." (Braddock, 1969).

Mamchak and Mamchak (1977) have continuously emphasized
that discovery techniques are purposeful - that is, they are
pinpointed and tailor - made for particular individuals and
classes in specific situations and this need for precision is
particularly felt in the field of language arts. All of the
language arts are based on the development of skills in communication and the use of these skills to communicate experiences.

1.6 APPROACHES TO THE TEACHING OF WRITING SKILLS IN ENGLISH (Traditional and Current):

It was not long back that learners of English as a second language (ESL) spent their writing lessons planning and composing free essays, which were then marked by the teacher and later corrected by the learners. 'Structuralists' discredited the procedure because of the profusion of errors it produced. Functionalists criticised it saying it was an artificial task that failed to give the learners practice in relating the manner of expression in writing to the purpose, topic and intended readers, and therefore failed to help the learners to use writing as a means of interaction. It is now increasingly being accepted that writing is learnt by writing, by reading and by perceiving oneself as a writer. What teachers require is an understanding of the task a learner faces in learning to write so that a suitable environment can be provided in which he/she will want to write and can learn about writing. 'The writing teacher who teaches least usually teaches most if his students work in an environment which allows them to teach themselves'.

Writing skills have been taught through either of the two distinct methods - Reductive approach or Holistic approach (Hartwell, 1985). Reductive approach is one wherein writing is taught by focussing on discrete, often isolated mechanical skills, including punctuation, syntactical rules and so forth. Holistic approach concentrates attention on the process of writing as opposed to specific mechanics. Its basic assumption is that mechanical skills develop naturally as learners concentrate on meaning and on composition as a whole and writing process has three
distinct steps: pre-writing or planning, writing and revising. This approach to teaching writing is now widely accepted since research has shown that the holistic approach may be effective in improving the writings skills of low achieving learners (Rose, 1983).

The influence of modern linguistic scholarship is clearly discernible in the teaching of writing skills at present. Since language is no longer regarded as a fixed and absolute thing, teachers do not set up a rigid standard of grammatical and rhetorical propriety but are willing to allow a considerable latitude in the choice of words and expressions. The conviction is firmly taking root that it is often impossible to say, as between two expressions, that one is right and the other wrong. Moreover, in teaching writing skills, theory has given place to practice; it is now fully realized that one can learn to speak and write only by speaking and writing under stimulus and guidance and that rhetorical rules are worth nothing except as applied. The earlier teaching of writing skills aimed at a sort of lifeless accuracy. Verbal and grammatical correctness, propriety in spelling and punctuation were sufficient. The present day teaching of the better sort judges the child’s efforts not only for these elements but for the interest and general effectiveness of the whole composition. The criteria used to judge and evaluate is-Does his composition show that he has remembered and thought; that he has ordered and arranged? In accordance with these standards, the training is not in the lesser units of words and sentences so much as in paragraphs and whole compositions.

Classroom methodology, even in teaching of writing skills, is being heavily influenced by the Communicative approach, with its emphasis on task-oriented activities which involve the exchange of information and the free use of language, without undue
concern for mistakes. Receptive skills are also being given more importance and students are being exposed to a wide range of spoken and written language and a good deal of writing practice is recommended. The tendency is increasingly evident to have the student write of the familiar and the concrete; of the things within his own experience, instead of the abstract and the remote. It is being realized that he can learn to write and speak best when dealing with simple and familiar things. Writing text books based on the functional/notional approach emphasize the importance of relating what the learner is taught to why and what the learner needs to write and who he/she needs to write to. Writing activities are in the form of realistic tasks as report and letter writing.

Although certain differences, particularly in the learning situation, do exist between writing in first language and writing in a second language in the earlier stages of schooling, such distinctions are not noticed at the higher stages - secondary stage. However, it would be erroneous to assume that learners are proficient at writing in the first language or that they already possess the necessary organisational skills for writing effectively or that the ability to write in the first language can be transferred to the second language, although some global transfer does take place. It seems worthwhile to point out here that in the teaching of second language writing, there is an emerging emphasis on the notion that ideas develop as part of the writing process (Spack, 1984). Thus writing lessons should not be confined to studying how to transfer already existing ideas from the head to the page but also, students should become aware that while they are writing, new ideas can emerge and old ones can grow or change and sentences may be discarded. "Invention is one term for this conception and development of ideas. Unlike students working in their
native language, the second language student faces the problem not only of coming up with ideas but also of coming up with them in a second language.

Theoretical perspectives on the purpose and process of written composition in the last twenty years have shifted dramatically. Writing is not viewed any more as a means to an end—the end being to inform, persuade or entertain a reader. It is viewed now as a cognitive exercise which stimulates the writer into discovering what he or she thinks about a given subject and as a social transaction, influenced by the context within which the act of writing takes place. Moreover, the writing process is no longer viewed as a linear, step by step activity but as a recursive, interactive process. As a result of this shift in emphasis away from the product to the process approach to writing, two distinct approaches to teaching writing skills can be discerned—traditional approach still current, that makes use of exercises in language skills, formal outlines, imitation of models and teacher-generated academic expository assignments; and the New Rhetorical approach that favours group work, heuristics and student-centered assignments to improve students' ability to communicate through writing.