CHAPTER III

METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE

AND THE CHANGING ROLE OF ENGLISH TEACHER

3.1. Objectives of Teaching English at School Level

The three language formula suggested by the National Integration Commission of 1962 advocated the compulsory study of English either as second language (L2) or as third language (L3). The regional language or the first language (L1) is to be taught right from the beginning, while the second and the third languages are to be taught from class V and class VIII respectively. Following this instruction, English is adopted as compulsory subject up to the graduate level. English has been decided to be considered as:

i) a national link language

ii) an international link language

iii) a library language

On the basis of this, the Government of India has decided a clear-cut objective of teaching of English. English should be taught as a “language of comprehension” rather than as a “literary language”. Ability to comprehend English is considered to be more important than enjoying the aesthetic beauty of the works of Shelley, Keats or Shakespeare. Students who want to go for specialized study of English literature can do so in the universities where they are free enough to choose their subject of interest. But at this lower level, English is non-specialized and compulsory. Teaching of English should target at the development of the four basic language skills namely-listening, speaking, reading, and writing in our students. The ability to appreciate simple stories, poems or other creative writings is also important because they help in
creating a favourable attitude towards the language in the mind of the students. More language practices may be considered as tiresome.

Some objectives of teaching English at the school stage are-

i) To understand English with ease when spoken at normal conversational speed.

ii) To speak English correctly and fluently.

iii) To read English with comprehension and at a reasonable speed so as to use it as a library language for gathering information and for enjoying reading.

iv) To write neatly and correctly at a reasonable speed.

v) To enjoy simple poems in English.

vi) To translate common English words, phrases and sentences into their functional equivalents in mother tongue and vice-versa.

vii) To develop interest in English.

(Baruah 10)

Moreover at the school stage, a student should be able to use English in ordinary day-to-day life situations, such as carrying an ordinary conversation, enjoying televisions and radio programmes, reading newspapers, notices, enjoying simple works of literature, writing letters, applications, reports etc. The linguists are of the opinion that for this much of English a secondary school student need to master 275 structures and about 3,000 words.

K. K. Bhatia (55-58) mentions some principles of teaching and learning of a second or foreign language:

1. *Give priority to sounds:* The sounds should be pronounced accurately and they should not be presented in isolation. Proper stress and information should be maintained.
2. *Present language in basic sentence patterns:* Students should be encouraged to memorize the basic sentence patterns used in day-to-day conversation. From small utterances they can easily pass on to long sentences.

3. *Language patterns as habits:* A language can be learned by habitual use of the most frequently used patterns and items of language.

4. *Imitation:* No learner by himself ever invented a new language. Imitation followed by intensive practice helps in mastering a language system.

5. *Controlled vocabulary:* Vocabulary should be taught and practised only in the context of real situation.

6. *Selection and gradation:* Selection and gradation of the language material should be done on the basis of frequency (how often an item is used), range (in what different contexts an item can be used), coverage (what are the different meanings it may possess), availability (is it convenient to teach), learnability (is it easy to learn), teachability (is it easy to teach in normal social context).

7. *The oral way should be preferred:* Learning to speak should get priority over learning to read and write.

8. *Priorities of language skills:* Primary skills, viz. listening and speaking should get priority over the secondary skills, viz. reading and writing. The order should be followed as listening, speaking, reading and writing.

9. *Language habit through language using:* A language is best learned through use in different contexts and situations. The focus should be on language in actual use.

10. *Use mother tongue sparingly:* The mother tongue should be used sparingly and judiciously in teaching. Especially at the lower level, some explanations
may be given in the mother tongue. But students must not be encouraged to use their mother tongue in the classroom.

3.2. Some Important Methods of Teaching Second Language and the Role of Teacher

E. M. Anthony, the American applied linguist defines method in language teaching as- "an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which based upon, the selected approach. An approach is axiomatic, a method is procedural" (65).

For Richards and Rodgers method is an umbrella term to capture approaches, designs and procedures. "It contains detailed specifications of content, roles of teachers and learners, and teaching procedures and techniques" (245). Prabhu in his article entitled "There is No Best Method- Why?" thinks of method as both classroom activities and the theory that informs them (163).

Larsen-Freeman (ix-x) points out that a study of methods is invaluable in teacher education in at least five ways:

1. Methods serve as a foil for reflection that can aid teachers in bringing to conscious awareness the thinking that underlies their actions. . . . When teachers are exposed to methods and asked to reflect on their principle and actively engage with their techniques, they can become clearer about why they do what they do.

2. By becoming clear on where they stand, teachers can choose to teach differently from the way they were taught.

3. A knowledge of methods is part of the knowledge base of teaching. With it, teachers join a community of practice. Being part of a discourse
community confers a professional identity and connects teachers with others so they are not so isolated in their practice.

4. A professional discourse community may also challenge teachers' conceptions of how teaching leads to learning. Interacting with others' conceptions of practice helps keep teachers' teaching alive.

5. A knowledge of methods helps expand a teacher's repertoire of techniques.

Richards and Rodgers feel that despite the changing status of approaches and methods in language teaching, the study of past and present teaching methods continues to form a significant component of teacher preparation programmes, because-

- The study of approaches and methods provides teachers with a view of how the field of language teaching has evolved.

- Approaches and methods can be studied not as prescriptions for how to teach but as a source of well-used practices, which teachers can adapt or implement based on their needs.

- Experience in using different teaching approaches and methods can provide teachers with basic teaching skills that they can later add to or supplement as they develop teaching experience.

(Richards and Rodgers 16)

Some popular methods of second language teaching are discussed below:

i) The Grammar Translation Method

The Grammar Translation Method was also called Classical Method since it was first used to teach the classical languages like Latin and Greek. In this method the
target language is first approached by doing a detail study of the rules of its grammar in order to use this knowledge to translate into and out of the target language. Later, this method is used to help students to read and appreciate foreign language and literature. Some main features of this method are mentioned below:

1. The Grammar Translation Method is based on the belief that “the goal of foreign language study is to learn a language in order to read its literature or in order to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that result from the foreign language study.” (Richards and Rogers 5)

2. The main focus is on reading and writing; no systematic attention is paid to develop listening and speaking the target language. Almost no attention is paid to pronunciation.

3. The ability to communicate in the target language is not considered to be goal of language learning. If learners can translate from one language into and out of the target language, then they will be considered as successful language learners. “The first language is maintained as the reference system in the acquisition of the second language” (Stern 455).

4. Student’s mother tongue is treated as the medium of instruction. Words are taught in isolation with the help of bilingual word list, dictionary and memorization.

5. Instead of being discourse-based, this method is sentence based.

6. It is important for student to learn about the form of the target language.

7. Accuracy is emphasized.

8. Grammar is taught deductively.
9. Literary language is considered to be superior to the spoken language. The texts the students have to follow may be culturally alienated.

10. Mostly writing or comprehension is tested in this method.

The Role of Teacher

In this method of teaching, the teacher is the authority in the classroom. The basic goal of teaching the target language is to learn about the language, not the language itself. For this, the students have to learn the grammatical rules and vocabulary of the target language. Learning foreign language is considered to be a good mental exercise. The teacher controls the language use in the classroom. The students' duty is to follow the teacher, so that they can learn what the teacher teaches. The teaching takes place as a one-sided interaction from teacher to students. There is little student to teacher or student to student interaction. Getting the correct answer from the student is considered to be very important. If the students make error, the teacher supplies them with the correct answer.

Grammar Translation Method dominated the foreign language teaching scenario almost for a century since 1840s. It is still used for teaching foreign language where understanding the literary text of the target language is considered to be the primary focus of language learning. Again, in such situations where the foreign language teachers are not much familiar with the other methods of teaching, they make their task easy by translating the foreign language texts in to the mother tongue of the learners. But memorizing endless list of unusable grammar rules and attempting to produce perfect translation of the literary text sometimes becomes a very tedious and frustrating experience for the learners. "The texts (followed in Grammar Translation Method) are frequently the products of people trained in literature rather than in language teaching or applied linguistics. Consequently, though it may be true
to say that Grammar Translation Method is still widely practised, it has no advocates. It is the method for which there is no theory. There is no literature that offers a rationale or justification for it or that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology, or educational theory.” (Richards and Rodgers 7)

ii) The Direct Method

Since the Grammar Translation Method was not found to be effective in developing the communicative competence in the learners, language teaching experts were searching for a natural method of teaching a foreign language. Many of them believed that a foreign language could be taught without the help of mother tongue of the learner, if meaning could be conveyed directly through demonstration and visual aids. They believed that a language could be taught by using it actively in the classroom. The main features of this method are-

1. Language is primarily speech, therefore the basic goal of teaching in Direct Method is to make student learn how to communicate in the target language. In order to communicate in the target language successfully, the students should learn to think in the target language.

2. The lessons should be consisted of some conversational activities, so that the students get opportunity to use the target language in real contexts.

3. The Direct Method is a monolingual method. All classroom instructions are to be given only in the target language.

4. Only those vocabulary and sentences are to be taught which are used in day-to-day conversation. Concrete vocabulary should be taught through demonstration, while abstract vocabulary should be taught by relating to ideas. New teaching points should be introduced orally.
5. Grammar is taught inductively. Speech and oral communications are emphasized.

6. Speaking and listening skills are also taught. Pronunciation gets importance.

7. The syllabus is based on situations or topics, not merely on linguistic structures.

8. Both spoken skills and writing skills are tested.

The Role of Teacher

In Direct Method, the teacher directs the class. This method is largely dependent on the teacher skill. For successful implementation of this method, the teacher must be highly competent in the target language. Unlike Grammar Translation method, it is a bi-directional method, where both teacher and students have to participate. As the lessons contain some conversational activities based on real life situations, the teacher has to encourage the students to speak the target language as much as possible. Apart from conversing with the teacher, the students should be encouraged to converse among themselves as well. The emphasis should be given on vocabulary, rather than grammar. Although attention should be paid on all four language skills, oral communication is considered as basic. The teacher should ask the students to use the target language, not to show their knowledge about the language. If the students make mistake in using the target language, instead of supplying with the correct answer, the teacher should facilitate self correction by the learners by employing various techniques.
iii) The Audio-lingual Method

The Audio-lingual Method is an oral based approach. The salient features of the Audio-lingual Method are-

1. Foreign language learning is basically a process of habit formation. The more often something is repeated, the stronger the habit and greater the learning.

2. Good habits are formed by giving correct responses rather than by making mistakes. Therefore, preventing the learners from making mistake is considered to be important. Errors lead to formation of bad habits. Errors should be immediately corrected by the teacher. Positive reinforcement helps the students to develop correct habit.

3. Analogy provides a better foundation for language than analysis. The similarities and differences between the native language and the target language should be systematically studied.

4. The medium of instruction is always the target language.

5. The purpose of language learning is to learn how to communicate in that language. Speech is more basic than the writing form. The natural order of skill development, viz. listening, speaking reading, and writing should be followed in the target language.

6. The vocabulary should be taught in linguistic and cultural context, not in isolation.

7. Pattern practice helps the students to form habits which enable the students to use the patterns.

8. For learning a foreign language, we do not have to memorize the rules of grammar. The rules necessary to use the target language will be figured
out or induced from examples. In other words, grammar is taught inductively.

**The Role of Teacher**

In Audio-lingual Method, the teacher’s role is central and active. This method is a teacher dominated method. The teacher apart from being the role model for language imitation; controls the direction and pace of target language learning and also monitors the correctness of learners’ performance. Learners are not encouraged to initiate interaction, because this may lead to mistake. For effective learning of the target language there must be active verbal interaction between the teacher and the students. The teacher must be able to draw the students’ attention by bringing variety to the drilling pattern and at the same time, he/she should be careful in choosing relevant situations to practice the structures of the target language. In this method, it is believed that failure to learn results only from improper application of the method, the method itself is never to blame. Brooks mentions that in Audio-lingual Method, a teacher must be trained to do the following- “Introduce, sustain, and harmonize the learning of the four skills in this order: hearing, speaking, reading and writing. Use- and not use- English in the language classroom. Model the various types of language. Model the various types of language behavior that the student is to learn.” (143)

iv) **The Bilingual Method**

Advocating in favour of Bilingual Method, C. J. Dodson said that a method should be simple and balanced between the spoken and the written forms and at the same time the method should be within the capability of all teachers. He also asserted that a method must overcome the conflict between accuracy and fluency and speed up the interpersonal communication between the teacher and the taught (34-36). In this
method, the target language is taught with the help of the learners’ mother tongue. In the initial stage, the teacher uses the mother tongue more liberally even in asking questions and in giving explanations and instructions. But in the later stages, the use of mother tongue is reduced gradually, and the teacher and the learners communicate only in the target language.

The Role of Teacher

In this method, the teacher need not have to waste time in recreating original situation. The teacher uses the learners’ mother tongue to explain differences of phonetics, grammar and vocabulary of the target language. Again, it is the teacher who uses the mother tongue; the students should be encouraged only to use English. The teacher can use both languages to show the similarities and dissimilarities between them. The teacher should take care not to degenerate the Bilingual Method to Translation Method.

v) Situational Language Teaching or Oral Approach

The main features of the Situational Language Teaching are-

1. Speech is regarded as the basis of language and structure is viewed as being at the heart of speaking ability.

2. This method primarily addresses the processes rather than the conditions of language learning.

3. Grammar is taught inductively. Grammatical items are graded and taught.

4. The meaning of words or structures is not to be given through explanation in either the native language or the target language, but is to be induced from the way in which the forms are used in situations. New language points are introduced and practiced in different situations.
5. The target language is the language of the classroom. The learners are expected to use the language learned in a classroom in situations outside the classroom.

6. The Situational Language Teaching aims at overall development of all four language skills, but the skills are approached through structure.

7. Accuracy in both pronunciation and grammar is regarded as crucial, and errors are to be avoided at all costs.

8. Language teaching begins with the oral form. Written form is presented only after the oral form.

The Role of Teacher

Mentioning the role of teacher in the Situational Language Teaching Method, Richards and Rodgers say- "In the presentation stage of the lesson, the teacher serves as a model; setting up situations in which the need for the target structure is created and then modelling the new structure for the students to repeat" (43).

In this method the teacher "becomes more like the skillful conductor of an orchestra, drawing the music out of the performer" (Byrne 2). The teacher is required to be "a skillful manipulator using questions, commands, and other cues to elicit correct sentences from the learners. Lessons are hence teacher-directed, and the teacher sets the pace" (Richards and Rodgers 43).

Initially, the Situational Language Teaching is a teacher directed method. Later more active participation by the learner is encouraged. The teacher is considered as the role model and the individual students are asked to repeat the teacher's model. The teacher creates the situation to present a new item and encourages the students to ask and answer questions using the language pattern they already know.
Community Language Learning (CLL) was developed by C. A. Curran and his associates. CLL techniques belong to a larger set of foreign language teaching practices popularly described as humanistic techniques. "Humanistic techniques engage the whole person, including emotions and feelings (the affective realm) as well as linguistic knowledge and behavioral skills" (Richards and Rodgers 90).

CLL interactions are of two types- interactions between learners, and interactions between learners and knowers. Initially, the learner tells the knower what he/she wishes to say in the target language and the knower tells the learner how to say it. Richards and Rodgers say that the process of learning a new language is like being reborn and developing a new persona. They explain the process as- "In the first ‘birth’ stage, feelings of security and belonging are established. In the second, as the learner’s ability improve, the learner, as child, begins to achieve a measure of independence from the parent. By the third, the learner ‘speaks independently’ and may need to assert his or her own identity, often rejecting unasked-for advice. The fourth stage sees the learner as secure enough to take criticism, and by the last stage, the learner merely works on improving style and knowledge of linguistic appropriateness. By the end of the process, the child has become adult. The learner knows everything the teacher does and can become knower for a new learner.” (Richards and Rodgers 92)

CLL does not use conventional language syllabus, a CLL syllabus emerges from the interaction between the learners’ expressed communicative intentions and the teacher’s reformulations of these into suitable target language utterances. CLL combines innovative learning tasks and activities with the conventional ones. It includes activities like translation, group work, recording, transcription, listening, free
conversation etc. In CLL, building relationship with and among students is very important. In CLL, initially students’ native language is used to provide bridge from the familiar to the unfamiliar. Where possible, native language equivalents are given to the target language to make the meaning clear and it also allows the students to combine the target language words in different ways to create new sentences. In later stages, more and more of the target language can be used. Culture is viewed as an integral part of language learning.

The Role of Teacher

“Community Language Learning places unusual demands on language teachers. They must be highly proficient and sensitive to nuance in both $L_1$ and $L_2$. They must be familiar with and sympathetic to the role of counsellor in psychological counselling. They must resist the pressure ‘to teach’ in the traditional senses. The teacher must also be relatively nondirective and must be prepared to accept and even encourage the ‘adolescent’ aggression of the learner as he or she strives for independence. The teacher must operate without conventional materials, depending on student topics to shape and motivate the class. Special training in Community Language Learning is usually required.” (Richards and Rodgers 97)

In CLL, initially the learners are very dependent upon the teacher, but gradually they become independent. As it has already been mentioned that the CLL is divided into five stages and in the first three stages, the teacher focuses not only on language but also on being supportive to learners in their learning process. In the first three stages, the focus should be on fluency, while in the last two stages, the teacher can focus more on accuracy. CLL asserts on non-defensive relationship between teacher and students. According to Curran, six elements are necessary for non-defensive learning, they are- security, aggression (by which Curran means that
Students should be given an opportunity to assert themselves and involve actively, attention, reflection, retention and discrimination (217). The CLL method is neither student-centred, nor teacher-centred, but rather teacher-student-centred, with both being decision makers in the class. In this method, building a trusting relationship between teacher and students as well as among the students is very essential, so that the students can learn openly from their interaction with each other as well as their interaction with their teacher. In CLL, learning takes place in a spirit of co-operation, not competition.

vii) Suggestopedia or Desuggestopedia

Suggestopedia, also known as Desuggestopedia is a humanistic approach developed by the Bulgarian psychiatrist-educator Georgi Lozanov. Lozanov claimed—“Memorization in learning by the suggestopedic method seems to be accelerated 25 times over that in learning by conventional methods” (27). Suggestopedia was found to be influenced by both Indian Raja Yoga and Soviet psychology. “From raja-yoga Lozanov has borrowed the techniques for altering states of consciousness and concentration, and the use of rhythmic breathing. From Soviet psychology Lozanov has taken the notion that all students can be taught a given subject matter at the same level of skill.” (Richards and Rodgers 100)

Bancroft suggests a 4-hour language class and divides it into three distinct parts. The first part is an oral review section, where previously learned material is used as the basis for discussion by teacher and students. All the participants sit in circle in their specially designed chairs and the discussion proceeds like a seminar. In this session, special attention will be given to grammar, vocabulary, precise questions, and answers. In the second part of the class, new material is presented and discussed.
This consists of looking over a new dialogue and its native language translation and discussing the issues of grammar, vocabulary or content that the teacher feels important or that the students are curious about. The third part is termed as concert session, for which Suggestopedia is best known. (Bancroft 16-19)

1. Suggestopedia makes use of the decoration, furniture and the arrangement of the classroom. Music plays an important role in this method of learning. Bright and colourful classrooms are considered to be ideal for Suggestopedia as the method believes that learning is facilitated in a cheerful environment.

2. Students can learn from what is present in the environment, even if their attention is not directed to it. Lozanov believes- “There is no sector of public life where suggestology would not be useful” (2).

3. It is believed that learners can learn best if the information comes from an authoritative source. Therefore the teacher speaks confidently and behaves authoritatively. The students trust and respect the teacher’s authority.

4. An impression is given to the student that learning the target language is easy and enjoyable.

5. Music is the heart of Suggestopedia. “At the beginning of the session, all conversation stops for a minute or two, the teacher listens to the music coming from a tape-recorder. He waits and listens to several passages in order to enter into the mood of the music and then begins to read or recite the new text, his voice modulated in a harmony with musical phrases. The students follow the text in their textbooks where each lesson is translated into the mother tongue. Between the first and the second part of the concert, there are several minutes of solemn silence. In some cases, even
longer pauses can be given to permit the students to stir a little. Before the beginning of the second part of the concert, there are again several minutes of silence and some phrases of the music are heard again before the teacher begins to read the text. Now the students close their textbooks and listen to the teacher’s reading. At the end, the students silently leave the room. They are not told to do any homework on the lesson they have just had except for reading it cursorily once before going to bed and again before getting up in the morning.” (Lozanov 272)

6. In Suggestopedia, both conscious and subconscious processes are mixed up to enhance learning. Sometime, the distinction between the conscious and the subconscious is blurred.

7. Errors are corrected gently; not in a direct, confrontational manner.

8. Vocabulary is emphasized. Grammar is dealt with explicitly but minimally.

9. Native language translation is used to make meaning clear. But as the course proceeds, the teacher uses the native language less and less.

**The Role of Teacher**

As it has already been mentioned, in Suggestopedia method, the teacher is the authority in the classroom. For the success of the method, the students must trust and respect their teacher. The teacher must be able to make the students feel secure, because if they feel secure, they will be more spontaneous. Though the teacher is the authority of the classroom, yet instead of creating a heavy and serious atmosphere he/she assures the students that whatever they are going to learn will be easy and enjoyable. The posters, charts, music etc. of the classroom should be keep changing from time to time in order to create a sense of novelty in the classroom environment.
The teacher should be well skilled to match his/her voice to the rhythm and pitch of music, so that the "whole brain" (both right and left hemispheres) of the students become activated, which will help in learning both consciously as well as subconsciously. In this method, the psychological barriers that the students bring with them have to be desugested and indirect suggestions are made to enhance the students' confidence and to convince them that the success is obtainable.

viii) The Total Physical Response

The Total Physical Response (TPR) method developed by James Asher, a professor of psychology at San Jose State University, California. This method attempts to teach language through physical activity.

1. TPR reflects a grammar-based view of language. Yet it pays initial attention to meaning, rather than to the form of items. Therefore grammar is taught inductively.

2. TPR is a natural process, where first and second language learning are considered as parallel processes.

3. The students' understanding of the target language should be developed before speaking.

4. The target language learning starts with listening practices, so that the learner can internalize a cognitive map of the target language. Listening should be accompanied by physical movement. Speech and other productive skills come later. Thus the learners are primarily listener and performer. They listen attentively and respond physically to the commands given by the teacher.
5. “Asher sees Total Physical Response as directed to right-brain learning, whereas most second language teaching methods are directed to left-brain learning. Drawing on work by Jean Piaget, Asher holds that the child language learner acquires language through motor movement- a right-hemisphere activity. Right-hemisphere activities must occur before the left hemisphere can process language for production.

Similarly, the adult should proceed to language mastery through right-hemisphere motor activities, while the left-hemisphere watches and learns. When a sufficient amount of right hemisphere learning has taken place, the left hemisphere will be triggered to produce language and to initiate other, more abstract language processes.” (Richards and Rodgers 75)

6. Absence of stress is considered as an important condition for successful learning and according to Asher, the key to stress-free learning is to tap bio-program for language development and thus to recapture the relaxed and pleasurable experiences that accompany first language learning.

7. TPR aims at oral proficiency in the learners at a very beginning level, who can communicate in a way that is intelligible to a native speaker.

8. A fixed number of lexical items are introduced at a time. “In an hour, it is possible for students to assimilate 12 to 36 new lexical items depending upon the size of the group and the stage of training” (Asher 42).

9. The teacher should refrain from too much correction in the early stages and should not interrupt to correct errors, since this may inhibit learners. At the later stages, however more teacher intervention is expected.
The Role of Teacher

The teacher plays an active and direct role in the TPR method. Initially the teacher is the director of all classroom behaviour of the students. The students are only the nonverbal respondents. The teacher encourages the students to speak only when they feel ready to speak. It is the teacher who decides what to teach and he/she also models and presents the materials for classroom use. Asher however believes that the teacher’s role is not so much to teach as to provide opportunity for learning. One primary duty of the teacher is to provide best kind of exposure for the internalization of the basic rules of the target language. Thus the teacher controls the language input the learners receive. The teacher should be careful to create a stress-free learning environment for the students and he/she should allow speaking abilities to develop in learners at the learners’ own natural pace.

ix) Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was developed in 1960s and it focuses on communicative proficiency rather than mere mastery of the structures. CLT is often considered as an approach rather than a method.

1. The goal of learning the target language is to communicate in that language. That means instead of linguistic competence, communicative competence is considered as the desired goal of language learning in CLT. For this, the students should have the knowledge of the linguistic forms, meanings and functions. They need to know that many different forms can be used to perform a single function; similarly a single form may be used in various functions.
2. The linguistic system of the target language is best learned through the process of struggling to communicate. In order to be communicative, an activity must have the following features—information gap, choice and feedback. Communication gap exists when one person in an exchange knows something that the other person does not know. In communication, the speaker has a choice of what he/she will say and how he/she will say it. Again, true communication is always purposeful. A speaker can evaluate whether or not his/her purpose has been achieved on the basis of the information he/she receives from the listener.

3. The target language is the language of the classroom. Yet judicious use of the learners' mother tongue is accepted.

4. CLT makes use of authentic materials so that the students can learn the target language as it is used in real life situations.

5. The teacher cannot know exactly what language the students will use in the classroom.

6. The emphasis is not on accuracy, but on fluency and acceptability.

7. Language items are contextualized. Students should work with language at the discourse level. They must learn about cohesion and coherence, and how to use the language for day-to-day communication.

8. Drilling may occur, but only peripherically. Memorization is not encouraged.

9. Instead of native-speaker like fluency, only comprehensible pronunciation is sought.

10. Language is created by individual often through trial and error. Therefore, errors are tolerated and seen as a natural outcome of the development of
communication skills. Since the basic goal is not accuracy but fluency, the teacher did not correct the errors immediately as this inhibit the learning process. The teacher simply notes the errors, which he/she will return to at a later point.

11. The grammar and vocabulary that the students learn follow from the function, situational context, and the roles of the interlocutors. Grammar is not taught in isolation, at the same time any device that helps the learners is accepted- varying according to their age, interest etc.

The Role of Teacher

This approach to language brings a great paradigm shift in teaching English as second language. CLT advocates for a learner-centred classroom, where the teacher will act as a counsellor. “The counsellor’s role is to respond calmly and nonjudgementally, in a supportive manner and help the client to understand his or her problems better by applying order and analysis to them” (Richards and Rodgers 95). In CLT, the teacher has to play various roles. In the words of Breen and Candlin:

The teacher has two main roles: the first role is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the classroom, and between these participants and various activities and texts. The second role is to act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group. The latter role is closely related to the objectives of the first role and arises from it. These roles implies a set of secondary roles for the teacher; first as an organizer of procedures and as a resource himself, second as a guide within the classroom procedures and activities. . . . A third role for the teacher is that of researcher and learner, with much to contribute in terms of appropriate knowledge and
abilities, actual and observed experience of the nature of learning and organizational capacities. (99)

In CLT, teachers are encouraged to develop learning materials on the basis of the needs of the learners. As a learner-centred method, in CLT the role of teacher in the language classroom is less dominant than the traditional teacher-centred methods. Though sometimes the teacher acts as a co-communicator, but more often he creates situations that prompt communication between and among the students. “Often there is no text, grammar rules are not presented, classroom arrangement is nonstandard, students are expected to interact primarily with each other rather than with the teacher, and the correction of errors may be absent or infrequent” (Richards and Rodgers 166).

Apart from facilitating communication and being an independent participant within the teaching-learning group, according to Richards and Rodgers, the CLT teacher has to perform the roles of needs analyst, counsellor, and group process manager. Describing the role of needs analyst they say- “The CLT teacher assumes a responsibility for determining and responding to the learner needs. This may be done informally and personally through one-to-one session with students, in which the teacher talks through such issues as the student’s perception of his or her learning style, learning assets, and learning goals. It may be done formally through administering a needs assessment instrument. . . . Typically, such formal assessments contain items that attempt to determine an individual’s motivation for studying the language.” (167)

Defining the role of a teacher as a counsellor Richards and Rodgers say- “In this role, the teacher counsellor is expected to exemplify an effective communicator
seeking to maximize the meshing of speaker intention and hearer interpretation, through the use of paraphrase, confirmation, and feedback” (168).

Again describing the teacher’s role as a group procedure manager, Richards and Rodgers mention that CLT requires teachers to acquire less teacher-centred classroom management skills. The teacher’s responsibility is to organize the classroom as a setting for communication and communicative activities. During the activity the teacher monitors, encourages and suppresses the inclination to supply gaps in lexis, grammar and strategy and also notes such gaps for later commentary and communicative practice. At the end of the activities, the teacher helps in the debriefing of the activity, pointing out alternatives and extensions and also assists the groups in self correction discussion. (168)

CLT makes use of wider variety of language teaching materials than the traditional methods. The CLT materials can be mainly divided into three groups, viz. text-based materials, task-based materials and realia. The task-based materials include different language games (such as cards, pair communication practice materials, etc.) and role plays; while realia refers to the authentic materials which are believed to be helpful in developing communicative competence in the learners. The realia may include different language-based realia such as newspapers, magazines, advertisements and different graphic and visual sources like maps, pictures, graphs and charts. For successful application of all these materials, it is needless to say that the teacher must be well trained.

x) The Natural Approach

The Natural Approach was developed by Tracy Terrell, a teacher of Spanish in California and Stephen Krashen, an applied linguist at the University of Southern
Although the tradition is a common one, there are important differences between the Natural Approach and the older Natural Method . . . The term *natural*, used in reference to the Direct Method, merely emphasized that the principles underlying the method were delivered to conform to the principles of naturalistic language learning in young children. Similarly, the Natural Approach, as defined by Krashen and Terrell, is believed to conform to the naturalistic principles found in successful second language acquisition. Unlike the Direct Method, however, it places less emphasis on teacher monologues, direct repetition, and formal questions and answers, and less focus on accurate production of target-language sentences. In the Natural Approach, there is an emphasis on exposure, or input, rather than practice; optimizing emotional preparedness for learning; a prolonged period of attention to what the language learners hear before they try to produce language; and a willingness to use written and other materials as a source of comprehensible input. (179)

The basic assumption in the Natural Approach is that the learners should not try to learn the target language in the usual sense, because learning cannot lead to acquisition. The extent to which they can lose themselves in activities involving meaningful communication will determine the amount and kind of acquisition they will experience and the fluency they will ultimately demonstrate. Some important characteristics of the Natural Approach are-

1. Communication is the primary function of language; hence emphasis is given on teaching communicative abilities.
2. Meaning is paramount. Language is viewed as a vehicle for communicating meanings and messages. Acquisition can take place only when the message of the target language is understood.

3. Emphasis is given on vocabulary, not on grammar. Though the lexical items in messages are necessarily grammatically structured, the grammatical structures do not require any explicit analysis.

4. The goals of the Natural Approach are based on an assessment of student needs.

5. "As well as fitting the needs and interests of the students, content selection should aim to create low affective filter by being interesting and fostering a friendly, relaxed atmosphere, should provide a wide exposure to vocabulary that may be useful to basic personal communication, and should resist any focus on grammatical structures" (Richards and Rodgers 185) since the necessary grammatical structures are automatically provided in the input.

6. Initially the teacher speaks, the learners are not required to say anything until they feel ready. Learners are not expected to use a word actively until they have heard it for many times. The learners' role will be changed according to their stage of linguistic development.

7. The language acquirer is considered as a processor of comprehensible input. The acquirer is challenged by input that is slightly beyond his/her current level of competence and is able to assign meaning to this input through active use of context and extra-linguistic information.
8. Activities that focus on meaningful communication rather than language form are emphasized. Pair work, group work, followed by whole class discussion led by the teacher, may be employed.

9. The learners' anxiety should be minimized and their self-confidence should be maximized.

The Role of Teacher

Richards and Rodgers find out three central roles for the teachers in the Natural Approach: “First, the teacher is the primary source of comprehensible input in the target language. ‘Class time is devoted primarily to providing input for acquisition,’ and the teacher is the primary generator of that input. . . . Second, the Natural Approach teacher creates a classroom atmosphere that is interesting, friendly, and in which there is a low affective filter for learning. . . . Finally, the teacher must choose and orchestrate a rich mix of classroom activities, involving a variety of group sizes, content, and contexts. The teacher is seen as responsible for collecting materials and designing their use.” (188)

Unlike many contemporary methods, the Natural Approach demands a much more central role for the teacher yet the teacher’s role is not as much orthodox as it is in case of many traditional methods. The Natural Approach makes use of different instructional materials to make the classroom as meaningful as possible by supplying “the extra linguistic context that helps the acquirer to understand and thereby to acquire” (Krashen and Terrell 55). Different instructional materials like pictures, brochures, advertisements, maps, books, games and different audio-visual aids are used in the classroom in order to promote comprehension and communication. “The selection, reproduction, and collection of materials place a considerable burden on the Natural Approach teacher” (Richards and Rodgers 188).
Cooperative Language Learning essentially involves students learning from each other in groups. In this method, the teacher teaches student collaborative or social skills so that the students can work together more effectively.

1. In Cooperative Language Learning, instead of thinking competitively and individualistically, the students are taught to think cooperatively.

2. The teacher usually mixed up both male female and students of different proficiency level in a group.

3. Unlike the traditional methods, the teacher assumes the role of the facilitator.

4. It provides opportunities for naturalistic second language acquisition through the use of interactive pair and group works.

5. Cooperative Language Learning supports both structural and functional models as well as interactional models of language, since its activities focus on language form as well as language functions.

6. “A central premise of Cooperative Language Learning is that learners develop communicative competence in a language by conversing in socially or pedagogically structured situations” (Richards and Rodgers 194).

7. The students get opportunities to act as resources for each other, thus assuming a more active role in their learning.

8. “Cooperative Language Learning does not assume any particular form of language syllabus, since activities from a wide variety of curriculum orientations can be taught via cooperative learning. Thus we find Cooperative Language Learning is used in teaching content classes, ESP,
the four skills, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. What defines Cooperative Language Learning is the systematic and carefully planned use of group-based procedures in teaching as an alternative to teacher-fronted teaching.” (Richards and Rodgers 195-196)

9. The success of Cooperative Language Learning greatly depends upon the nature and organization of group work. Johnson et al. (4-5) find out the possibility of three types of groups-

i) Formal cooperative learning groups

ii) Informal cooperative learning groups

iii) Cooperative base groups.

The “formal groups” may last for several weeks, the “informal groups” last from a few minutes to a class period, while the base groups last for a long time, at least a year.

Olsen and Kagan (35) find out some key elements for successful group learning, those are

- Positive interdependence
- Group formation
- Social skills
- Structuring and structures

10. A learner is basically viewed as a member of his own group who must work collaboratively with his the other members of his own group. At the same time the learner is also director of his/her own learning and he/she has to plan, monitor and evaluate his/her own learning.
The Role of Teacher

The role of teacher in Cooperative Language Learning is somehow different from many other traditional methods. Pointing out the teacher’s role in Cooperative Language Learning method, Johnson et al. say that the teacher has to create a highly structured and well organized learning environment in the classroom, setting goals, planning and structuring tasks, establishing physical arrangement of the classroom, assigning students to groups and roles, and selecting materials and time.

In his/her role as a facilitator, the teacher has to move around the class helping the students. "During this time the teacher interacts, teaches, refocuses, questions, clarifies, supports, expands, celebrates, emphasizes. Depending on what problems evolve, the following supportive behaviours are utilized. Facilitators are giving feedback, redirecting the group with questions, encouraging the group to solve its own problems, extending activity, encouraging thinking, managing conflict, observing students and supplying resources.” (Harel 169)

In the Cooperative Language Teaching, the teacher speaks less than in teacher-fronted classes, he/she gives less commands, imposing less disciplinary control.

xiii) Task-Based Language Teaching

In Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), tasks are the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching. Here “Tasks are believed to foster processes of negotiation, modification, rephrasing, and experimentation that are the heart of second language learning” (Richards and Rodgers 228). In language teaching, task refers to an activity that is carried out using language, such as finding solution to puzzle, reading a map, making telephone call, writing letter, etc. According to Skehan “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.” (20)

Nunan defines tasks as- “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.”(Nunan Designing 10)

The main features of TLBT are-

1. In TLBT it is believed that real communicative activities are essential for learning a language.

2. The focus is on process, rather than product. Therefore TLBT is motivated primarily by the theory of learning rather than the theory of language.

3. “In common with other realizations of communicative language teaching, TBLT emphasizes the central role of meaning in language use” (Richards and Rodgers 226).

4. Language that is meaningful to learner supports the learning process.

5. Learners learn language by interacting communicatively and purposefully while engaged in the activities and tasks.
   i) Language learning is believed to depend on immersing learners not merely in “comprehensible input” but in tasks that require them to negotiate meaning and engage in naturalistic and meaningful communication.
   ii) Tasks are sequenced according to the difficulty. Initially comparatively easier tasks are given; thereafter gradually difficulty level is increased.
The difficulty of a task depends on a range of factors including the previous experience of the learner, the complexity of the task, the language required to undertake the task, the degree of support available.

6. Vocabulary is considered to be more important than the structure.

7. Conversation is the central focus of language and the keystone of language acquisition.

The Role of Teacher

Breen and Candlin say that language learning should be seen as a process which grows out of communicative interaction. Students and teachers decide together upon which task to do. Such teacher-student negotiation ensures that as many students as possible in a mixed-ability class grasp the nature of the activity. (87). Whereas in Prabhu’s approach, the teacher designs which tasks are to be worked on. The teacher breaks down the tasks into smaller steps, which is necessary for the logical thinking process. He/she should have an idea of the students’ involvement in the task and their readiness to learn. The teacher does not consciously simplify his/her language; he/she uses whatever language is necessary for the students to comprehend the different steps of pre-task. At the completion of the task, the students receive feedbacks from their teacher on their level of success and in doing so, the focus is on meaning.

Describing the learner and teacher’s task in TBLT, Richards and Rodgers say that a central role of the teacher is in selecting, adapting, and/or creating the tasks themselves and then forming these into an instructional sequence in keeping with learner needs, interests and language skill level (236). In TBLT, as some sort of pre-task preparation is considered to be important, the teacher has to carry out an additional duty of preparing the learners for tasks. This may be done inductively and
implicitly, or deductively and explicitly. Again the teacher has to act as a consciousness raiser of the students. The instructional materials play an important role in TBLT because this method is dependent on a sufficient supply of appropriate classroom tasks, some of which may require considerable time, ingenuity and resources to develop. As the success of the tasks greatly depends on the role of the teacher, it can be said that the teacher in fact plays the central role in TBLT.

xiv) The Post Method Era

In the post-method era, it is expected that the teacher should be able to use approaches and methods flexibly and creatively on the basis of his/her own judgement and experience. An approach or predetermined method, with its associated activities, principles and techniques may be an essential starting point for an inexperienced teacher, but as the teacher gains experience and knowledge, he/she should begin to develop an individual approach or personal method of teaching on the basis of the established approach or method.

The language teaching philosophy determines the method of teaching and the method in turn, defines the role of the language teacher. Describing the rise and fall of different methods, Richards and Rodgers say:

The commonest solution to the “language learning problem” was seen to lie in the adoption of a new teaching approach or method . . . the Direct Method was enthusiastically embraced in the early part of the twentieth century as an improvement over Grammar Translation. In the 1950s the Audio-lingual Method was thought to provide a way forward, incorporating the latest insights from the sciences of linguistics and psychology. As the Audio-lingual Method began to fade in the 1970s, particularly in the United States, a variety
of guru-led methods emerged to fill the vacuum created by discrediting of Audio-lingualism, such as the Silent Way, Total Physical Response, and Suggestopedia. While these had declined substantially by the 1990s, the new “breakthroughs” continue to be announced from time to time, such as Task-Based Instruction, Neurolinguistic programming, and Multiple Intelligences, and these attract varying levels of support. (244)

Though methods are believed to be the systematic way of presenting the teaching materials, they at the same time, marginalise the teacher’s role. Success of a method depends upon the strict adherence to its rules. For that, the teacher must have to accept the claims and theory underlying the method. Accordingly, the students have to submit themselves to the regime of exercises and activities. In a method, there is often little room for the teacher’s own personal initiative and teaching style, as he/she has to submit himself/herself to the prescribed method. At the same time, a method which may be found suitable for a place may not be suitable for another place. “Both approaches and methods are often promoted as all-purpose solutions to teaching problems that can be applied in any part of the world and under any circumstance. In trying to apply approaches or methods, teachers sometimes ignore what is the starting point in language programme design, namely, a careful consideration of the context, in which teaching and learning occurs, including cultural context, the political context, the local institutional context, and the context constituted by the teachers and learners in their classrooms.” (Richards and Rodgers 248)

Methods are often full of claims and assertions by the method gurus about how a language is learned and thereby how a language should be taught. Many of them are empirically tested and therefore, may not be that much scientific, as they are claimed to be. “Generally, methods are quite distinctive at the early, beginning stages
of a language course, and rather indistinguishable from each other at a later stage. In first few days of a Community Language Learning class, for example, the students witness a unique set of experiences in their small circles of translated language whispered in their ears. But within a matter of weeks, such classrooms can look like any other learner-centred curriculum.” (Brown Teaching 3)

H. D. Brown, in his article- “English Language Teaching in the ‘Post-Method’ Era” mentions that our requiem for the methods might list four possible causes of demise:

1. Methods are too prescriptive, assuming too much about a context before the context has been identified. They are therefore over-generalized in their potential application to practical situations.

2. Generally, methods are quite distinctive at the early, beginning stages of a language course and rather indistinguishable from each other at the later stages.

3. It was once thought that methods could be empirically tested by scientific qualification to determine which one is the “best”. We have now discovered that something as artful and intuitive as language pedagogy cannot ever be so clearly verified by empirical validation.

4. Methods are laden with “interested knowledge”- the quasi-political or mercenary agendas of their proponents. Recent work in the power and politics of English language teaching has demonstrated that methods, often the creations of the powerful “centre,” become vehicles of a “linguistic imperialism” targeting the disempowered periphery.

(Brown “English Language Teaching” 10)
David Nunan in his work *Language Teaching Methodology* says, "It has been realized that there never was and probably never will be a method for all, and the focus in recent years has been on the development of classroom tasks and activities which are consonant with what we know about second language acquisition, and which are also in keeping with the dynamics of the classroom itself" (228).

An individual teacher may adopt different strategies at different times, depending on the type of class he/she teaches. In fact, the classroom teaching practices reflect the teacher's belief those are shaped by different factors. Clark and Peterson say that the most resilient teacher's belief is formed on the basis of teacher's own schooling as young student while observing teachers who taught him/her. The post method era envisages the belief that instead of adhering to a particular method, the teacher should derive his/her own method on the basis of his/her knowledge of the existing methods. "Therefore, there is much more to teacher development than learning how to use different approaches and methods of teaching. Experience with different approaches and methods, however, can provide teachers with an initial practical knowledge base in teaching and can also be used to explore and develop teachers' own beliefs, principles, and practices."(Richards and Rodgers 252)

Advocating for a "principled approach", in his article "English Language Teaching" H. D. Brown claims that one's approach to language teaching is the theoretical rationale that underlies everything that happens in the classroom. It is the cumulative body of knowledge and principles that enables teachers, as technicians in the classroom, to diagnose the needs of the students, to treat students with successful pedagogical techniques, and to assess the outcome of those treatments. "I would like to suggest that viable current approaches to language teaching are 'principled,' in that there is perhaps a finite number of general research-based principles on which
classroom practice is grounded” (12), Brown says, “a principled approach to language teaching encourages the language teacher to engage in a carefully crafted process of diagnosis, treatment, and assessment. It enables us initially to account for communicative and situational needs anticipated among designed learners, and to diagnose appropriate curricular treatment for those specific learners in their distinctive context and for their particular goals. It helps to devise effective pedagogical objectives which have taken into account all the contextual variables in a classroom.”(13). Brown further says, “In so doing, they will be less likely to bring a pre-packaged and possibly ineffective method to bear, and more likely to be directly responsive to their students’ purposes and goals” (17).

3.3. Methods of Teaching Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing Skills

In order to achieve the communicative competence in the second language learners an overall development of all four language skills, viz. listening, speaking, reading and writing is required. Skill development needs good deal of practice. The four language skills are divided into two groups- speaking and writing skills are known as productive or active skill, while listening and reading skills are known as receptive or passive skills.

i) Methods of Teaching Listening Skill

In his paper- “Listening in Language Learning”, stating the importance of listening David Nunan says- “Listening is assuming greater and greater importance in foreign language classrooms. There are several reasons for this growth in popularity. By emphasising the role of comprehensible input, second language acquisition research has given a major boost to listening . . . listening is vital in the language
classroom because it provides input for the learner. Without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin. Listening is thus fundamental to speaking.” (239)

Unfortunately, in most of the second teaching programmes listening gets the least attention. “Studies done over many years suggest, however, that poor listening habits and skills can cause as many failures as ineffective expression of ideas. They may cause greater problems because in real-life communication listeners have no control over what is said to them by different speakers or by voices on the radio and television. What adds further complexity is that speakers differ on how fast or slowly they speak, their accents, as also the way they organize their speech. Besides, what gets said varies greatly from situation to situation. Training in listening must therefore equip learners with all the abilities required for effective comprehension.” (Tickoo 120)

Field remarks- “There was time when listening in language classes was perceived chiefly as a means of presenting new grammar. Dialogue on tape provided examples of structures to be learned, and this was the only type of listening practice most learners received. Ironically, much effort was spent on training learners to express themselves orally. Sight was lost of the fact that one is (to say the least) rather handicapped in conversation unless one can follow what is being said, as well as speak. From the late 1960s, practitioners recognised the importance of listening and began to set aside time for practising the skill.” (242)

At the earlier stage, in order to develop the listening skill in the learners, the second language teacher may read out or tell a story or any other thing at a moderate speed and then asks them what they have understood. Audio-visuals aids also can be used fruitfully for teaching listening skills. Apart from specially prepared audio/
audio-visual programmes, the news, movies and other entertainment programmes can be used for practising listening skill. The students may be asked to watch such programmes and then interpret its meaning. Radio is particularly useful and less costly aid for teaching listening skill to the learners of any age group, as it does not have the visualization which makes interpretation easy.

T. C. Baruah mentions two types of listening skill practices- intensive listening practice and extensive listening practice. In intensive listening, the students are trained in detailed comprehension of meaning and identification of particular features of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, while in extensive listening, the students are trained in gathering information or enjoying stories, plays, poems, etc. Dictation exercise can also be used for listening practice. A special type of dictation exercise where pupils are required to fill up gaps may be used to attract students' attention to particular features of language. (201)

In *Teaching Listening*, Mary Underwood recognizes three stages of teaching-

i) *Pre-listening*, where the students activate their vocabulary and their background knowledge,

ii) *While-listening*, where the students develop the skill of eliciting messages,

iii) *Post-listening*, which consists of extensions and developments of listening task.

While teaching listening, the teacher must take care to play a less interventionist role, encouraging the learners to listen and re-listen and to do as much of work as possible for themselves. “Resist the temptation to tell them who is right and who is wrong” (Field 247).
ii) Methods of Teaching Speaking Skill

In case of the majority of the languages of the world, knowing a language means ability to understand and speak the language because only a minority of the world languages have written forms. Again, written language normally comes only after the child is able to speak it. In natural language learning process, the children become capable of speaking the language even before they go to school to learn the written form. In that case, they listen and they speak. This process of language learning shows that listening paves the way of speaking. "It is important to remember that the four skills grow best when they work together, each providing support and sustenance to the others. Good listening skills not only lay the foundations of good speech, but they also grow best through effective communication. A good speaker is a good listener in the same way as a good listener often makes a good speaker." (Tickoo 144)

Shumin says- "Learning to speak foreign language requires more than knowing its grammatical and semantic rules. Learners must also acquire the knowledge of how native speakers use the language in the context of structured interpersonal exchange, in which many factors interact." (204). Mentioning the difficulties faced in developing the speaking skill in foreign or second language learners, she says- "Speaking a language is especially difficult for foreign language learners because effective communication requires the ability to use the language appropriately in social interactions. Diversity of interactions involves not only verbal communication but also paralinguistic elements of speech such as pitch, stress and intonation. In addition, non-linguistic elements such as gestures and body language/posture, facial expression, and so on, may accompany speech or convey messages directly without any accompanying speech." (204)
The speaking proficiency depends on four types of competences, those are- grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence (Shumin 206-208). Therefore, the teaching of speaking skill should aim at developing all these four types of competences. "Grammatical competence is an umbrella concept that includes increasing expertise in grammar (morphology, syntax), vocabulary and mechanics. With regards to speaking, the term mechanics refers to basic sounds, of letters and syllables, pronunciation of words, intonation and stress" (Scarcella and Oxford 141). The grammatical competence enables the speaker to use and understand the target language sentence structure accurately and unhesitantly. In addition to the grammatical competence, the English language learners must develop discourse competence, which is concerned with intersentential relationships. In discourse, the rules of cohesion and coherence apply, which help in connecting the communication together in a meaningful way. In order to achieve sociolinguistic competence, the learner must have an idea, what is expected socially and culturally by the users of the target language and understanding this sociolinguistic side of language helps learners know what comments are appropriate, how to ask questions during interaction, and how to respond according to the talk, etc. Strategic competence on the other hand, deals with "the way learners manipulate language in order to meet communicative goals" (Brown Principles 228).

For teaching the speaking skill, both guided and open discussion practices can be used. In guided discussion, the learners receive the content input just before the discussion. They are then given roles to play and follow predetermined steps till the end of the discussion. Appropriate words also can be provided. At the end of the discussion the teacher will give the feedback on the whole performance. Green et al. mention:
Although the guided approach provides some security for learners, and may help prevent communication breakdown, there is little direct learner involvement in the discussion process. Learners do not choose the topic, or decide on specific lines of enquiry to pursue; nor are they engaged in observing or evaluating their peers or themselves. The learner's perception may be that there is no real reason to participate actively in the discussion. As a result, learner cognitive engagement with the task, and motivation to develop the topic to any significant degree, are likely to be poor. Since the topic for discussion is imposed, defined and structured, we might call this approach objective and non-heuristic. The critical factors of personal involvement and unpredictability are mostly absent in this approach. It provides oral practice of a more or less controlled nature, based on role-play, but largely ignores the experiences, values and existing knowledge that individual learners might bring to bear on a discussion topic. The approach is overly concerned with linguistic factors, and downplays the cognitive and interpersonal factors which must be present in any meaningful discussion. (225)

A learner-centred approach is more preferable to encourage the learners to become increasingly independent and self-directed in their learning. Haswell describes how self-evaluation, in particular, helps the learners to "learn in their own voice" (90). Green et al. further mention- "active engagement between students and their learning allows them to integrate mentally the various stages in the learning process in a holistic way. As a result, learners develop a metacognitive awareness of the recursive nature of the learning process, which, in turn, is likely to help them to evolve into effective lifelong learners" (226).
For both guided and open discussions, large classrooms should to be divided into small groups. Success of teaching of the speaking skill primarily depends on the willingness of all the students to make substantial and coherent contributions in the process. Individual contributions depend on knowledge or experience of the topic under discussion, willingness to express oneself in the target language and personality type. Krasen claims that extroverts are more likely to communicate effectively than introverts, at least in the early stages of the second language learning programme (23). Therefore, if heterogeneous groups are formed, introvert learners may feel crushed by the more expressive learners, and may lose the little confidence they possess. While the confident learners may feel that no satisfactory progress is being made, so become bored and discouraged. Therefore, Green et al. suggest that groups should be as homogeneous as possible in terms of both linguistic ability and personality type (227).

For teaching speaking skill, the teacher should be the role model for the students. Instead of pointing out what is right and what is wrong in students' speech, he/she should be able to lead the students by his/her own instances. For that, the teacher must be a fluent speaker of the target language. He/she should take special care to use proper pronunciation as well as the speech pattern of the target language. Minimal pairs like beet-bit; feel-fill; fool-full and multiple contrasts like fill/fail/fool; course/cause/curse can be used for aural discrimination and production. Recorded materials produced by the BBC, EFLU or other institutions are also available for teaching speaking skill. Recitation of poetry may be useful for improving pronunciation. Apart from long discussions, language games, short talks, and mock interviews can be arranged. As successful communication can take place even without using complete grammatical sentences, therefore at the beginning the teacher need not insist the students to produce complete sentence. At the earlier stages, if the students
can communicate properly only by using some isolated words or phrases, even that will be well and good for them. The teacher may suggest some better words or sentences, but must not discourage the students by saying that what they have told is wrong. Instead, he/she should try to create such classroom atmosphere, where the students do not hesitate even to make mistake. Above all, the teacher should try his best to create communication gap, so that the students feel an urge open up their mouth.

iii) Methods of Teaching Reading Skill

Reading skill gets good deal of importance, because one major goal of learning second or foreign language is to read in that language. The readers want to be able to read for information and pleasure, for their career, or for study purposes.

Reading implies reading with comprehension. From that point of view, though both listening and reading are considered as passive skills, actually both of these two skills need active mental participation of the participants. Therefore, even reading and listening are also not passive skills. Reading implies different things at different levels. For the beginners, it is recognition of the script and alphabet, and understanding the relationship between sound and symbols, recognition of the vocabulary. Gradually it means reading aloud and silent reading. While reading aloud, the teacher should mind that the students are able to pronounce each word and sentence correctly and also able to read by dividing a sentence into some meaningful sense groups. While reading, the students should be encouraged to consult the dictionary for the meaning of difficult words, which will help in building vocabulary. The students should be taught how to pick out the key or the important words and understand the meaning of the words in context. The students should be gradually
taught to increase their reading speed. The students should be trained to make local as well as global interpretation while reading a text.

Reading can be both intensive and extensive. In intensive reading, students normally read a short text with close guidance from the teacher. The aim of intensive reading is to obtain detailed meaning from the text. It is also used to enhance vocabulary and grammar knowledge. Extensive reading, on the other hand, "generally involves rapid reading of large quantities of material or longer readings for general understanding, with the focus generally on the meaning of what is being read than on the language" (Renandya and Jacobs 295-296).

Contemporary researches on reading skill argue strongly for including extensive reading in the second language curriculum. There is now compelling evidence that extensive reading can have a significant impact on learners’ second language development. Not only can extensive reading improve reading ability, it can also enhance learners’ overall proficiency (e.g. spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and writing). The extensive reading may be followed by post-reading activities to measure the progress of the learners. Experts like Day and Bamford, Krashen and Nation point out the many advantages of extensive reading, some of those are:

1. Enhances language learning in such areas as spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and text structure.
2. Increases knowledge of the world.
3. Improves reading and writing skills.
4. Gives greater enjoyment of reading, as the reader can choose the books of his/her interest.
5. Create more positive attitude towards reading.
6. Higher possibility of developing a reading habit.
According to Renandya and Jacobs, the effective teaching of reading must aim at the development of three important components, viz. a large sight vocabulary, a sizeable general vocabulary, and knowledge of the target language and the knowledge of the world. Sight vocabulary refers to words that readers can recognize quickly and effortlessly. This rapid and automatic process of word recognition is extremely crucial for reading. Similarly those who do not possess a large stock of vocabulary, reading becomes a frustrating dictionary-thumbing exercise that disrupts smooth processing of textual information. Although these two components are necessary, they do not themselves make comprehension happen, as comprehension largely depends on reader’s prior knowledge of syntax, text structures, and the subject of reading. And extended reading is believed to help readers to develop all these three components. (299). In extensive reading, the role of teacher is just to “guide students and participate with them as members of a reading community” (Day and Bamford 47). But in a traditional second language classroom, “Many teachers are perhaps still uncomfortable with the idea of playing a ‘less’ central role in classroom. In intensive reading, instruction is more teacher-centred in that, teachers are more centre stage in what is happening in the classroom. They do lots of talking and decide what skills or strategies to teach, how these are taught, and what passages to use.” (Renandya and Jacobs 300). Eskey claims, “Reading must be developed, and can only be developed, by means of extensive and continual practice. People learn to read, and to read better, by reading.” (23)

iv) Methods of Teaching Writing Skill

Writing is understood in two ways- (a) the mechanics of writing and (b) composition, the art of composing (Krishnaswamy and Krishnaswami 139). The
teaching of writing skill starts with the teaching of the mechanics of writing, which includes handwriting and spelling. Thereafter, the teacher should gradually move towards the teaching of composition. Drawings, photographs, posters, cartoons diagrams, charts, maps etc. can be used fruitfully for teaching writing skill to the young learners. Giving dictation also can be helpful in teaching spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and handwriting. At an early stage of teaching second language writing, the teacher can give some sentence structures to the students and then ask them to write some sentences following that particular structure. The teacher also can give some outlines, points, hints or ideas on a topic and encourage the students to write a few lines on that particular topic. Gradually, the students should be asked to write a paragraph or paragraphs on a particular topic, without providing any hint on it. They should be encouraged to use more and more new words in their writing; in this case, the teacher may help them in finding out the proper words. The students should be taught how to write something coherently by using different cohesive devices. The teacher can write some jumble sentences on the blackboard and may ask the students to re-arrange them into a coherent writing. The students should be taught to maintain unity of idea throughout their writing. The students should be encouraged to practise different types of writings and the distinction in the use of language in various types of writings should be made clear to them. As they grow up, the students should be taught to write arguing for or against something, predict and imagine something, and so on.

Writing is considered as the most difficult language skill for the second language learners to master. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing the ideas, but also in translating the ideas into readable text. The second language writers have to pay attention to higher level skills like planning and organising as well
as lower level skills such as spelling, punctuation, word choice, and so on. Process of writing as a classroom activity incorporates the four basic writing stages—planning, drafting (writing), revising (redrafting), and editing and the three other stages externally imposed on students by the teacher, namely responding (sharing), evaluating and post-writing. Planning is a pre-writing activity that encourages the students to write. In this stage, the writers can form some groups and discuss among themselves about the topic on which they have to write and also what to write. Within a limited time of 1 or 2 minutes, each member of the groups may be asked to write down the key words and phrases about the topic. After gathering sufficient idea about the topic, at the second stage, the students attempt to write draft. At the drafting stage, the writers are focused on the fluency of writing and are not preoccupied with grammatical accuracy. After making the first draft and before revising that draft, the teacher may examine and comment on the first draft. The comments should be specific, rather than vague. On the basis of the teacher’s remark, in the next stage, the students will revise their writings and make necessary corrections. They re-examine what was written to see how effectively they have communicated their meanings to the readers. In case of groups, the students may also be asked to read each other’s script. As the students listen intently to their own writing, they are brought to more conscious level of rethinking what they have written. At the editing stage, the students are engaged in tidying up their texts as they prepare the final draft for evaluating by the teacher. They edit their own writing for grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure etc. After preparing the final draft by the students, the teacher should evaluate it. The evaluation should be both analytical as well as holistic. In order to make the writing more effective, the criteria for evaluation should be made known to the students beforehand. The criteria for evaluation should include overall
interpretation of the task, sense of audience, relevance, development and organization of ideas, format or layout, grammar and structure, spelling and punctuation, appropriateness of vocabulary used, and clarity of communication. Depending on the purpose of evaluation, a numerical score or grade may be assigned. On the other hand, the post-writing activity includes sharing, reading aloud, publishing etc. (Anthony Seow 315-320)

The classroom writing practices can be divided into two broad divisions-guided or controlled composition and free composition. In guided composition, the students are supplied with the necessary structures, vocabulary, along with the thoughts and ideas to be expressed. In this type of composition, the teacher chooses what to write and how to write. The students are expected to follow the teacher's instruction. On the other hand, in free composition, the students get freedom to choose their topic freely and express their ideas about the topic in their own ways. But as it is not always practicable in formal classroom teaching, some degree of control is required. At the early stage of the teaching of writing skill, a rigid control is maintained, while as the students master the art, the degree of control is relaxed. Before practising free composition, the students should do sufficient practice of controlled composition. In other words, only when the students have acquired a certain degree of mastery in use of English, the control on the language can be relaxed to some extent to allow them to write something freely. But even here some guidance is required in the selection and organization of the facts and ideas. Even in teaching free composition, the teacher can help the students by initiating a discussion on it, so that the students can gather some idea about the topic on which they are going to write.
3.4. Methods of Teaching Prose, Poetry, Grammar, Vocabulary, and Pronunciation

The aims of teaching poetry are to give pleasure, to help the students in experiencing the feelings and aspirations of great men, to make them well acquainted with the rhythm of the language and to provide them with the joy of reading and reciting poems. By including poetry in English course, the reading skill of the student can be developed. The chief aim of teaching prose is to give language control though mastery of structures and vocabulary. The prose pieces which are meant for intensive reading are included in the English syllabus in order to make the students familiar with the usage of the English language, to develop a reading habit in the students, to help the students in learning functional grammar and to develop their ability to express their ideas in the target language. On the other hand, “Grammar may be taught with a view to give clear ideas respecting the function and relation of words and therefore, a clear insight into the meaning of language, to help the pupils in improving their oral and written expression in the light of the accepted principles of usage and with a view to train them to think clearly and connectedly; to judge, to apply and to sift” (Bhatia and Bhatia 339). The aim of teaching composition is to teach the students to express their ideas in writing. Some methods of teaching prose, poetry, grammar and composition are discussed below:

i) Methods of Teaching Poetry

“A poem not contains the content, the theme or the subject matter, but also the way it is said, the rhythm of its verse, the special beauty and music, the poetic diction, the figurative features and the suggestive power. A poem conveys the poet’s imagination, mood and feelings through words as well as music. These are to be
conveyed to the learners while teaching a poem; that is where the teaching of a poem is different from teaching of prose. . . . The focus of a prose lesson is more on teaching language but the aim of a poetry lesson is what is usually called 'appreciation' or, to be more precise, enjoyment; the teaching of poetry must be a lively, stimulating and challenging participatory activity.” ((Krishnaswamy and Krishnaswamy 168). The meaning of appreciation may differ depending upon the levels of the learners. “Appreciation” does not necessarily refer to critical or scholarly interpretation of a particular poem. If the teacher can make the students feel pleasure in reciting a particular poem or in reading or listening to it, the teacher has succeeded in making the learners appreciate the poem. According to Bhatia and Bhatia, in teaching poetry the teacher should introduce the poem with the help of the synthetic mode of introduction, i.e. by giving a preliminary talk on the main theme of the poem. After introducing the poem the teacher should read it aloud with proper intonation so that the students can make themselves familiar with the language and rhythm of the poem. After reading the poem, the teacher should proceed to teach the poem as a whole. The teacher should not teach a poem by explaining the literal meaning only. He/she should try to find out the main thoughts and ideas of the poem with students' cooperation. This will be followed by a final reading of the poem by the teacher. “The study of a poem will bring out the significance of similarities and metaphors, the imagery and pictures, the particular arrangement of words employed the beauty of its word-pictures, thoughts and the music” (Bhatia and Bhatia 329).

ii) Methods of Teaching Prose

Teaching of prose is basically related to comprehension. “The factors that are to be considered in exploiting a prose passage for teaching are: (a) linguistic
complexity, (b) length of the passage, (c) interest level and (d) the aims of teaching that particular passage” (Krishnaswamy and Krishnaswamy 152). Unlike the teaching of poetry, in teaching of prose detailed explanation of words, phrase and idioms, structures, and other grammatical items and their uses are required. Praveen Sharma mentions some main aims of teaching prose:

i) To give listening practice to the students.

ii) To enable the students to speak fluently and correctly.

iii) To give practice of loud reading and silent reading.

iv) To enable the students to write properly.

v) To help the learners to enhance their vocabulary.

vi) To enable the students to understand English properly.

vii) To develop the habit of reading for pleasure.

viii) To give them practice of structures and sentence pattern.

ix) To improve their pronunciation.

x) To develop a feeling of love among the students for English language.

xi) To enable the students to read prose effectively and with a reasonable speed.

(Sharma 39)

While dealing with a prose, the teacher should, at first, try to draw the students’ attention towards that prose. For that purpose the teacher can ask some guiding questions to motivate the students, or he/she may discuss something with the students which are related to that particular text. At the second step, the teacher should read the text aloud and offer a good speech model for the students to follow. The students may listen and try to understand what their teacher reads even without looking at their books. After that the students should be asked to read silently, and
find out the meaning of the text. At the third step, the teacher should read the text aloud, with a view to exploit the text linguistically. At this stage, the teacher should point out different linguistic features, and also teach the students how to pronounce properly and how to read with proper pause and intonation. The intensive teaching of prose is considered as one of the most important devices of language teaching. For the intensive teaching of prose, the teacher should prepare himself by going through the content of the lesson in order to provide the student with suitable introduction. The teacher should give proper explanation of new words and phrases in their proper context. The teacher should use (if possible) suitable illustrative aids for explaining unfamiliar references. The teacher should use simple English in giving the meaning of the new words. The students also may ask questions on that particular text, in order to clarify their doubt and the teacher may hold a debate or discussion on the main point of views presented in the text. Thereafter, the teacher should encourage the students to read the prose piece silently and some comprehension questions along with language exercises should be prepared for the students. The students can also be encouraged to present a verbal or written review on that particular text and reproduce the prose work by dramatizing it, by changing the mode of narration, or by making graphic representation of the same. “The activities suggested for exploiting a text need not be crowded into a single lesson. It is not also necessary to exploit every part of a prescribed prose lesson in an exhaustive manner. Depending on the nature of every passage, the activities can be verified to generate interest and enjoyment, resulting in learning.” (Krishnaswamy and Krishnaswamy 152). The rapid reader aims at developing inclination for extra-reading and a habit of rapid reading. The teacher should help the students in reading prose extensively by explaining possible difficulties and key words and special references, if any.
iii) Methods of Teaching Grammar

According to Rod Ellis, two major questions need to be considered with regard to grammar teaching in second language pedagogy:

1. Should we teach grammar at all?

2. If we should teach grammar how should we teach it?

The first question has been answered in the negative by some applied linguists. Krashen (1982), for instance, has argued that formal instruction in grammar will not contribute to the development of “acquired” knowledge—the knowledge need to participate in authentic communication. Prabhu (1987) has tried to show, with some success that classroom learners can acquire L2 grammar naturally by participating in meaning focused tasks. Others, however, including myself, have argued that grammar teaching does aid L2 acquisition, although not necessarily in the way teachers often think it does. My principal content is that formal grammar teaching has a delayed rather than instant effect. (Ellis 167)

Justifying the need for teaching of grammar, Tickoo says—“grammar teaching continues to be dogged by controversies: on its place and roles, on how KAL can help or harm learners at various levels of learning and on how best grammar can be taught in FL classrooms. Some recent studies in language classrooms have shown however, that (i) not all the essential aspects of grammar are learned without being deliberately taught even in those second language classrooms where the target language serves as medium, (ii) intentional learning often works better than incidental learning, and (iii) grammar teaching in association with meaningful use of language is time well used in most classroom contexts. . . . Grammar is best taught by methods and techniques that encourage learner discovery of rules and provide for both usage and use.” (186- 187)
The grammar books are usually divided into two broad divisions, viz. Prescriptive/Traditional/Formal Grammar and Descriptive/Functional Grammar. The first type of grammar prescribes the rules for a language. In this type of grammar, the main stress is on form; while the second type of grammar, instead of giving the rules of language, describes the behaviour of the language. Though some rules are found even in this type of grammar, here the emphasis is on the functional aspect of the language. The structural approach to second language teaching considers grammar as an integral part of language teaching; while the communicative approach believe that the knowledge of grammar may not be much essential for one to communicate in that language. In recent years, there has been a rethinking about grammar teaching. While as a reaction to the structural approach, the learners in a communicative classroom were expected not to puzzle the learners’ heads with excessive grammar, now it is being increasingly accepted that “language learning is essentially learning how grammar functions in the achievement of meaning” (Widdowson 221). However, it has been realized that good knowledge of grammar is essential for language development in learners. “It has also been realized that in an acquisition-poor environment (where most learners may not have adequate exposure to the language and may not get scope for acquiring the language through continuous interaction) some teaching of ‘formal’ grammar may be useful” (Sarma and Mahapatra 62-63). Sarma and Mahapatra also suggest that in our context, the teaching of grammar should not be separated from the teaching of the textbook (63). For teaching grammar, the teacher should follow a method which includes both inductive and deductive principles. The teacher should proceed from particular to general and when the conclusion is drawn or when the students can formulate a rule or definition of a particular grammatical item, they should be encouraged to use it, by giving examples
and illustrations. In teaching grammar, the teacher should teach functional grammar instead of formal grammar so that the students can apply those roles in their ordinary day-to-day communication.

v) Methods of Teaching of Vocabulary

A language is basically consisted of words. Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. Therefore, though earlier vocabulary teaching and learning got little priority in second language programmes, recently there has been a renewed interest in the nature of vocabulary and its role in learning and teaching. Hunt and Beglar mention three approaches to vocabulary instruction and learning—i) incidental learning, ii) explicit instruction, and iii) independent strategy development. “The incidental learning of vocabulary requires that the teachers provide opportunities for extensive reading and listening. Explicit instruction involves diagnosing the words learners need to know, presenting word for the first time, elaborating word knowledge, and developing fluency with known words. Finally, independent strategy development involves practicing guessing from context and training learners to use dictionaries.”(259). They also suggest that for systematic development of the learners’ vocabulary knowledge, all these three approaches are required. Though since the 1980s there has been a massive explosion in research into the acquisition of vocabulary, much of it is concerned with the acquisition of the isolated words rather than how to use those words in different contexts. The teaching of the vocabulary is based on the idea that the most used words in the target language should be taught first. Almost all beginners’ books restrict the vocabulary they want to introduce first year to about a thousand of the most frequent items. Vivian Cook’s course book
People and Places has about 950 separate words (excluding related words such as teacher/teaches/teaching/taught etc. as one word). The American course I Love English (Capelle et al. 1985) lists about 750 words.

"The French course Voix et Images de France was perhaps the first to choose its vocabulary by actually counting how often words were used by native speakers" (Cook 46-47). Nowadays, computer has made the job of counting the frequencies of words fairly simple. Cook mentions the 50 most frequent words in the British National Corpus (BNC) sample of 100 million words. The most frequent word "the" occurs no less than 6,187,267 times and the 50th word "her" 218,258 times. Those are (in descending order) -

the, of, and, a, in, to, it, is, was, to(preposition), I, for, you, he, be, with, on, that(conjunction), by, at, are, not, this, but, 's(possessive), they, his, from, had, she, which, or, we, an, n't, 's(verb), were, that(determiner), been, have, their, has, would, what, will, there, if, can, all, her. (47)

Here it is in fact very interesting to see that most of the frequent words in English are mostly structural words. The top 100 words include only three nouns. Again some nouns like "government" "system" verbs like "become" "seldom" and adjectives like "social" "public" are seldom taught to the beginners, despite their high frequency. On the other hand, words with specific concrete meaning like "book" "ball" and simple action words like "eat" "read" are considered to be more suitable for teaching at the beginning stage, despite of their comparatively low frequency than nouns with vague, general meaning like "people" "thing" or the abstract words like "seem" "available" which have high frequency of use. Therefore, it can be said that while word frequency has some relevance to teaching, other factors are also
important, such as the ease with which the meaning of an item can be demonstrated and its appropriateness for what the students want to say. According to Hunt and Beglar, knowing approximately 3,000 high-frequency and general academic words is significant because this amount covers a high percentage of the words on an average page (259).

Acquiring a word is not linking a form with a translated meaning. Noam Chomsky says—“language acquisition is in essence a matter of determining lexical idiosyncrasies” (131). Effective learning of vocabulary can never take place if the individual words and their meanings are learned in isolation. “Knowing a word means its spoken and written forms, its grammatical and lexical properties and its meaning” (Cook 52). Tickoo says that the vocabulary of a language includes much more than single words. It includes language forms that are not full words (e.g. un-, il-, -ment, -ness) on one hand and compound words (e.g. supermarket, post office), fixed phrases and idiomatic expressions (e.g. to make up for lost time, to harbour a grudge) on the other. Similarly, knowing a “word” involves a lot more than knowing its meaning or what it stands for. It is somewhat similar to getting to know human being. According to him, knowing of a word for use also includes knowing the following:

i) how often it is used, where and when,

ii) how it is spelled and pronounced,

iii) what part of speech it can function as,

iv) what its core meaning(s) is or are,

v) what its root form is, what prefixes and suffixes it can take and what derivations can be made from it,

vi) what grammatical patterns it fits into or what syntactic behaviour is,

vii) what associations it forms,
viii) what limitations there are to its use, and
ix) what degree of probability there is of encountering it in speech and in writing.

(Tickoo 190-191)

Therefore while teaching vocabulary all these aspects of a word should be taken into consideration.

vi) Methods of Teaching of Pronunciation

Most second language teachers use “integrated pronunciation teaching” as Joanne Kenworthy terms it, in which pronunciation is an incidental to other aspects of language. Some teachers just correct wrong pronunciation of the learners. This type of incidental correction may not do much good because the learners may not take the matter seriously, moreover this process may only improve the pronunciation of a particular word uttered in isolation. Again “One clear implication from SLA research is that the learning of sounds is not just a matter of mastering the L2 phonemes and their predictable variants . . . Learners have their own inter-language phonologies, temporary rules of their own. The sounds of the language are not just separate items on a list to be learned one at a time, but are related in a complex system . . . teaching or correcting a single phoneme may not have much effect on the students’ pronunciation, or may even have wrong effect. It is like taking a break out of a wall and replacing it with another.” (Cook 80-81)

In a linguistically complex situation like India, it is in fact difficult to decide which variety of English should be adopted for teaching in the classroom. Receive Pronunciation or RP is supposed to be the standard variety. India, as a former colony
of Britain; historically used to this variety of English. But nowadays, one another
variety, known as General Indian English (GIE) -a non-native variety is popularly
used by the educated Indians in India. Apart from this GIE, varieties of English are
used from region to region. Regarding what type of English should be used in Indian
classroom contexts, Krishnaswamy and Krishnaswamy say- “since GIE is already
used in social and classroom conditions in India, there may not be any need to ‘teach’
it consciously. The Indian teacher of English, as pointed out earlier, can minimize the
regional accent and make the classroom free from regional features. This will be an
achievable aim in teaching spoken English and serve the purpose within the
country.”(59-60)

Regarding the need for teacher to act as a role model in second language
classroom, Krishnaswamy and Krishnaswamy mention- “the teacher’s
pronunciation, choice of words, phrases, idioms and sentence create the proper
environment for learning English. Teachers can teach the language or the subject only
through their competence in the use of the language.” (81)

Improvement of one’s pronunciation requires constant practice in listening and
speaking skills. The troublesome sounds need more rigorous practice. Minimal pairs
like fit/ feet, full/ fool, cat/ bat etc. can be used for learning aural discrimination and
production. Recorded materials produced by EFLU and other institutions are also
available for learning spoken English. Listening to BBC for standard British English,
the CNN for standard American, different Radio and TV programmes can also help a
lot in learning English pronunciation and spoken English.
3.5. The Changing Role of Teacher

On the basis of the assumptions about how a second language is learned, the linguists and the educationalists are constantly looking for the best method of teaching second or foreign language. The Grammar Translation method dominated foreign language teaching from the 1840s to 1940s, and in modified form it continues to be widely used in some parts of the world even today. But during the mid nineteenth century, a demand was arisen for oral proficiency in foreign language and the educationalists attempted to build a language learning methodology around their observations of child language learning and this natural language learning principle provided the foundation for the Direct Method. In 1920s, use of Direct Method had started to decline. But the controversy over the Direct Method in fact opened the debate over how second or foreign language should be taught. Since then various methods had been introduced, but then replaced by methods based on newer theories. Methods such as- Situational Language Teaching, Audio-lingualism, Total Physical Response, Communicative Language Teaching, Natural Approach, Task-Based Language Teaching were adopted internationally during their own times. “The quest for better methods was a preoccupation of many teachers and applied linguists throughout the twentieth century. Common to each method is the belief that the teaching practices it supports provide a more effective and theoretically sound basis for teaching than the methods that preceded it.” (Richards and Rodgers 1). The earlier methods were based on the structural approach, while Communicative Language Teaching is based on communicative approach to language. Here the focus is on “acquiring skills rather than the body of knowledge” (Nunan Designing Tasks 21).

In the Grammar Translation Method, the role of the teacher is authoritarian; the role of the student is to follow the teacher. Here the teacher initiates interaction
and there are seldom any student to student exchanges. In the Direct Method, the teacher must be a fluent speaker of the target language and the classroom will be under his control. The correct pronunciation is emphasized and whenever necessary, the teacher should be able to use mime, demonstration, or visual aids to help students understand the text. Here one important task of the teacher is to provide the necessary cultural translation of the text. In Situational Language Teaching, the teacher serves as a model, setting up situations in which the need for the target structure is created and then modelling the new structure for the students to repeat. Pittman finds out the teacher's responsibility in this method as- (a) timing (b) oral practice, to support the textbook structures (c) revision (d) adjustment to special needs of individuals (e) testing (f) developing language activities other than arising from the textbook (177-178). Audio-lingualism is also a teacher dominated method where the teacher models the target language, controls the direction and pace of the learning and monitors and corrects the learner's performance. The teacher at the same time has to keep the learners attentive by varying drills and tasks and choosing relevant situations to practice structures. Brooks points out that the teacher must be trained to- "introduce, sustain, and harmonize the learning of the four skills in this order: hearing, speaking, reading and writing" (143). In Total Physical Response method, the teacher's main role is not to teach but to provide opportunities for learning. The teacher's main responsibility is to provide the best kind of exposure to language, so that the learner can internalize the basic rules of the target language. In other words, in this method of teaching, the teacher is the controller of the language input that the students receive.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which was developed during the late 1960s, is based on communicative approach to language. This method believes that a second language can be learned best in the process of struggling to
communicate. All CLT methods advocate for a learner-centred classroom, where the teacher will act as a counsellor. In this method, communicative competence is considered to be the ultimate goal of language teaching. According to Breen and Candlin the teacher has two main roles- the first role is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the classroom and between these participants and various activities and texts. The second role is to act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group (99). In the Natural Approach the teacher has three fold roles- first, the teacher is the primary source of comprehensible input in the target language; second, the teacher creates a classroom atmosphere that is interesting, friendly and in which there is low affective filter for learning and third, the teacher orchestrate a rich mix of classroom activities (188). Like that of Communicative Language Teaching, in Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) also, the focus is on the process rather than the product. TBLT proposes the notion of “task” as a central unit of planning and teaching. In TBLT, the CLT teacher has to accomplish the additional roles of- (a) selector sequencer of task (b) preparing learners for task (c) consciousness-raising (Richards and Rodgers 236). In the post-method era, it is believed that the teachers should be able to use approaches and methods flexibly and creatively based on their own judgment and experience. An approach or predetermined method, with its associated activities, principles, and techniques, may be an essential starting point for an inexperienced teacher, but it should be seen only as that. As the teacher gains experience and knowledge, he or she will begin to develop an individual approach or personal method of teaching, one that draws on an established approach or method but that also uniquely reflects the teacher’s individual beliefs, values, principles, and experiences (Richards and Rodgers 251).
3.6. Some Problems in Teaching and Learning of English

Before starting to teach English, the teachers must bear in mind that it is a foreign language which has no similarity with the modern Indian languages. Along with many other features, it has vast syntactical difference with the Indian languages. Yet the linguistic attainments in the mother tongue is believed to help the students to learn the target language, but at the same time special care must be taken to see that this influence does not become fallacious. Students should not seek to find out equivalents for all syntactical and lexical items in these two languages. Again, linguistic attainment is the foremost goal of teaching and learning of English in our country. But this linguistic goal is in fact very difficult to attain in our society, especially in a state like Assam, where English is not used for ordinary communicative purposes. It has been observed that the people of other north-eastern states can speak better English than the people of Assam, as most of the students of those states have to adopt English as the medium of instruction right from the beginning of their formal education. But in case of Assam, though it is the homeland of different tribes and communities, people usually use Assamese to communicate with people of other tribes and communities. English is used either in some highly formal situations or to express fury or under some compulsions. Again, the English used under such circumstances are of fragmentary type, not complete sentences. Speaking English without compulsion is considered as showing too much. Students in fact get only a little exposure to English and such situations are very rare where they are compelled to speak the language. Therefore, the students have to learn English only in the classroom environment which is completely artificial one. At the same time, what is learned in the classroom cannot be practised in real life. This in fact creates a great wall between theory and practice, teaching and learning. In order to
practise real English, teacher and students of the language class have to imagine different situations and try to react accordingly. But this imagination cannot help much as it may not create an urge to open up the mouth.

Language teaching is not similar to the teaching of other subjects like mathematics, science, social studies etc. "How to use it" should be the main concern of the language class, especially at the primary level. In order to teach English as a skill subject, the teacher has to be well trained and well equipped. A blackboard and a textbook are not enough for teaching a second language. A language teacher may have to go even beyond the classroom and the prescribed syllabus. Standard textbook and other teaching materials, efficient teacher and a favourable atmosphere -all are essential for effective teaching. Yet many of our teachers are believed to be untrained and unskilled in this business; many of them teach English only as a subject, not as a language. In a traditional English class, the teacher uses nothing except the textbook and the blackboard. Again, there are doubts regarding the qualities of the textbooks and relevance of the course contents. Many textbooks are doubted to have less practical value. Again a wrong evolution system may mislead the entire process of teaching and learning. As the students study mainly to get marks, they will concentrate more on those questions which may be asked in their examinations. It is observed that in the existing evolution system, a student can do quite well if he/she can predict the "common questions" and produce their readymade answers in the examination hall. This type of examination system cannot help much in learning a language because apart from the writing skill, here all other skills are almost neglected and language proficiency cannot be acquired without an overall development of all four skills. Oral examinations are taken only at the very early stage of schooling. After passing the first examination on English language, the students
need not have to answer any question verbally in the rest of their school life. At the same time, this type of oral practice at the earliest level has no significance, as it is based on memorization or a kind of parrot learning. That is why a student even after learning the same language for more than fifteen years fails to speak three correct English sentences at a stretch. Moreover, language learning needs constant practice, reinforcement, assessment, and modification. This can be ensured only if examinations held at a frequent interval.

As it is very difficult to get English exposure in our real life situations, the classrooms have to be well equipped with different teaching aids like pictures and diagrams, audio-visual aids etc. even if we cannot think of a language laboratory. But in Assam, many school buildings are worn out, furniture are insufficient and classes are overcrowded. Again, a good school library can contribute a lot to develop the reading habit of the students. Emphasizing on the need of books and library, the National Education Policy of 1986 states:

8.8 The availability of books at low prices is indispensable for people's education. Effort will be made to secure easy accessibility to books for all segments of the population. Measures will be taken to improve the quality of books, promote the reading habit and encourage creative writing. . . . Special attention will be paid to the production of quality books for children, including text books and work books.

8.9 Together with the development of books, a nation-wide movement for the improvement of the existing libraries and the establishment of new ones will be taken up. Provision will be made in all educational institutions for library facilities and the status of the librarians improved.

(Rao 27)
But most of the lower primary and upper primary Assamese medium schools do not have any school library and though most of the high schools have a library with only one or two book-shelves, numbers of books are very limited and most of the books are not judiciously selected. Showing the reason behind the unavailability of books, the school authority says, “the students do not return the books they borrow,” which again shows that the libraries are not properly maintained and those are not considered as an integral part of the teaching learning system.

Educationalists agree to the point that right motivation plays an important role in imparting education. But in rural areas where many people live below the poverty line, it is in fact very difficult to make the learners properly motivated. Moreover the unemployment problem gives a hard back-push to this motivation. Many of the students do not find the school going practice a fruitful business. They are just coming to school mechanically, as if to pass time. It is indeed a tough job to train up such students. Moreover, many students come to school with a predetermined notion that English is a very difficult subject and this input is given either at home or they learn it from their surroundings, and it is re-emphasized by the teacher’s repeated warning that English is in fact a very difficult subject. This type of English phobia hinders the learning process to a great extent. Though the original intention behind the warning is to make the students study the language more attentively, it creates an impression in the students’ mind that as English is a difficult subject, the performance level in English may not be as high as that of the other subjects. Students seem to be satisfied with poor marks in English. To learn the language, it is necessary for the students to form a reading habit right from the early stage of their life. At the beginning, they may start with some interesting books such as comics, storybooks, tales etc. and later on they should be encouraged to read for both enjoyment and knowledge. For this, the
school must have a good library with some selected English books, magazines and newspapers, so that the students can read those in the library or borrow them to read at home. There are many more such problems that hinder the teaching-learning process in our context- some of those are related to the students, some others are related to the teachers and guardians, some problems may be related to the infrastructure as well; but whatever may be the problem, a resourceful teacher with his own skills and innovations can bring remarkable change to the entire scenario.
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