CHAPTER II

2. LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND TEACHING METHODS: CONTEMPORARY AND TRADITIONAL THEORIES AND METHODS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter I it is seen that the conceptualization of language teaching has "a long, fascinating but rather tortuous history" (Stern 1983: 452). The history of language teaching has been dominated by two major trends which have been named differently at different periods by different exponents. The whole gamut of language teaching activities have swung between these two poles namely - 'formalist' and 'activists', 'deductive' and 'inductive', 'mentalistic' and 'mechanistic', 'empiricist' and 'rationalist'; 'formal' and 'functional' and so on. The need for such conceptualization of second/foreign language teaching under various methods arose only "when especially in the nineteenth century, the demand for FLT increased dramatically" (Theo Van Els 1984: 146).

There has been a debate among theorists about the characterization of a language teaching method. According to Stern - "A method... is more than a single strategy or a particular technique; it is a theory of language teaching... which has resulted from practical and theoretical discussions in a given historical context. It usually implies and sometimes overtly expresses certain objectives, and a particular view of language; it makes assumptions about the language learner; and underlying it are certain beliefs about the nature of the language learning process. It also expresses a view of language teaching by emphasizing certain aspects of teaching as crucial to successful learning" (Stern 1983: 452-453).
A language teaching method generally results ‘from social, economic, political or educational circumstances’, ‘from changes in language theories’ and in new psychological perspectives on language learning and from practical experience, intuitions and opinions of practising teachers. "It is the dissatisfactions and failures of teachers and pupils with a particular method that have contributed to the constant critique of methods and the demand for reform and new emphases” (ibid: 472).

In course of language teaching through the ages many methods have evolved. Most methods “still continue to exist in some form or other” (Theo Van Els et al 1984: 146).

A thorough knowledge of all the methods is essential for a language teacher. According to Wilga Rivers

"no matter what method is in vogue or is officially advocated, teachers who are professionally alert will adapt its technique to their purposes, to their own personality and to what they feel is appropriate for the particular classes they are teaching, always keeping in mind the age level of the students and their educational needs in the situation in which they find themselves. Any method ceases to be efficient when it is applied inflexibly according to set procedures in every situation..

As we study the evolution of language teaching methods, we see what is most effective in each method, being taken up again at a later date, elaborated and refashioned so that the best of the past is not lost but serves the purposes of the present. Much more frequently one will meet modifications and combinations as teachers adapt the method that is in vogue to suit their own teaching style in their particular situation” (Rivers 1981: 27).

A knowledge of all the important methods is crucial for the teachers of English in Bangladesh. Most teachers of English from Primary to tertiary levels have no knowledge or little knowledge about ELT or the linguistic sciences. Those who are trained have inadequate knowledge of
language teaching methods. This is why English teaching-learning situation in Bangladesh is in the doldrums now. To improve this situation the teachers of English should be trained in all the methods – their history, objectives, techniques, theoretical assumptions, merits, demerits etc.

In the light of the above an effort has been made to discuss all the important methods and their salient features in this chapter.
2.2 THE GRAMMAR-TRANSLATION METHOD

2.2.1 Introduction

When a language teacher uses grammatical rules and translation as principles and techniques of his teaching in a language class, his approach can be called the Grammar-Translation Method. In this method language learning is viewed as the memorization of grammatical rules with their exceptions and application of these rules through translation from the students' native language into the target language. Since the method is dominated by the rules of grammar, students usually learn more about the language than the language itself. This is why W.H.D, Rouse says that the objective of the method was “to know everything about something rather than the thing itself” (cited in Richards and Rodgers 1986:2). In the same tone, Lado a great critic of the method defines it as “grammar recitation and dictionary thumbing”. He further says “the students defined the parts of speech, memorized conjugations, declensions and grammar rules; and translated selections using a bilingual dictionary” (Lado 1964: 4).

A careful study of the history of the language teaching reveals that the study of grammar had already existed when Greek and Latin were learned by oral communication without resorting to the help of grammar. At that time the study of grammar was, so to say, a separate discipline. “Both Romans and Greeks were skilled grammarians and the study of grammar was highly valued by the upper classes” (Krashen and Terrell 1983: 8). They also express their doubt about the instrumentality of grammar for learning language. They say “What is not obvious is whether they used the study of grammar as a means for learning another language or simply as a goal, worthy in and of itself, after one had acquired fluency and competency in the new tongue” (ibid: 8). Another striking common feature of the middle ages was “translation between Latin and the vernacular”. Translation became so common that “many saw learning
another language as equitable with learning to translate from one language to another” (ibid: 8).

It is an undeniable fact that there exists no authentic history of the Grammar-Translation Method. About its history H.H. Stern says:

“No full and careful documented history of Grammar-Translation Method exists. There is evidence that the teaching of grammar and translation occurred in language instruction through ages; but the regular combination of grammar rules with translation into the target language as the principal practice technique became popular only in the late eighteenth century” (Stern 1983: 453).

J.C. Richards and T.S. Rodgers hold almost the same view. They say that this method “dominated European and foreign language teaching from the 1840s to the 1940s and in modified form it continues to be widely used in some parts of the world today” (Richards and Rodgers 1986:4). Inspite of its tremendous impact on language teaching throughout the world, it cannot be traced back to “the tenets of any particular master teacher”. However, there is no doubt that it was clearly rooted in the formal teaching which prevailed in Europe in the nineteenth century. Since Latin was no longer in use for communication, the study of it as an academic subject cannot be justified on utilitarian grounds. “Classical studies were then intended and made to produce an excellent mental discipline, a fortitude of spirit and a broad human understanding of life” (Mallison cited in Titone 1968: 28).

About the reason for classical studies and the adaptation of the Grammar-Translation Method to the modern language teaching Wilga M. Rivers says:

“The learning of Latin and Greek was justified as an intellectual discipline. The mind is trained, it is asserted, by the logical analysis of the language, much memorization of complicated rules and paradigms and the application of these in translation exercises. Latin and Greek were further justified as the key to the thought
and literature of a great and ancient civilization. The reading and translation of texts was considered of great importance, as were written exercises in imitation of these texts. Modern languages were accepted as reputable areas of study only after much controversy and opposition from the supporters of classical studies. They had to prove themselves to be of equal value for the training of mind and as the key to a great literature and civilization. It is inevitable, then, that modern language teaching methods should be modeled at this stage on the methods already employed for the teaching of an ancient language which was no longer in use for communication and of which even the original pronunciation was in doubt” (Rivers 1981:28).

But A.P.R. Howatt maintains different views about the origin of the Grammar-Translation Method. He says:

“The origins of the method do not lie in an attempt to teach languages by grammar and translation, these were taken for granted anyway. The original motivation was reformist. The traditional scholastic approach among individual learners in the eighteenth century had been to acquire a reading knowledge of foreign languages by studying a grammar and applying this knowledge to the interpretation of texts with the use of a dictionary. Most of them were highly educated men and women who were trained in classical grammar and know how to apply the familiar categories to new languages. However, scholastic methods of this kind were not well-suited to capabilities of younger school pupils and moreover, they were inappropriate for group-teaching in classrooms. The Grammar-Translation Method was an attempt to adopt these traditions to the circumstances and requirements of schools. It preserved the basic framework, of grammar and translation because these were already familiar both to teachers and pupils from their classical studies. Its principal aim, ironically enough in view of what was to happen later, was to make language learning easier. The central feature was the replacement of the traditional texts by exemplificatory sentences” (Howatt 1984:131).

So the method which was primarily used by an individual for acquiring a reading knowledge of foreign languages was extended to the teaching of language.
F. Ahn, H.G. Ollendorff and Plotz were successful masters of the Grammar-Translation Method. J.C. Fick (1763-1827) designed the first English teaching course on Grammar – Translation Model.

The introduction of the Grammar-Translation Method in England was the result of the adaptation of it by the Oxford and Cambridge Local Examinations known as Locals. The Locals included modern languages including English in the curriculum of the Secondary schools. But the ‘great’ schools (Eton, Harrow etc.) opted out on the ground that they did not teach modern languages. As a result the modern languages and English lost the academic prestige through their association with the Locals and social prestige by their exclusion from the ‘best’ schools. Consequently they became ‘soft option’.

"In practical terms, the fear of being labelled a ‘soft option’ forced modern language teachers and textbook writers to ape the methods of the classics. French had to be as ‘demanding’ as Latin, and German as ‘intellectually disciplined’ as Greek. Textbooks had to be ‘thorough’ (i.e. exhaustive in their listing exceptions and peculiarities) and based on selections from the ‘best authors’. Spoken language was, at best, irrelevant and accuracy was elevated to the status of a moral imperative” (Howatt 1984:135).

Thus the Grammar-Translation Method extended its domain from classical studies to the modern language teaching including English in England.

Another reason for the method being in force is that the teachers who were themselves taught by this method and who have not had sufficient exposure to other methods of language teaching continue using it.
2.2.2 Objectives:

The Grammar-Translation Method aims at

i) inculcating an understanding of the grammar of the target language.

ii) training the student to write the new language accurately by regular practice in translating from the native language.

iii) providing the student with a wide literary vocabulary, often of an unnecessary detailed nature.

iv) "training the student to extract the meaning from texts in the new language by translation into the native language and at advanced stages, to appreciate the literary significance and value of these texts" (Wilga Rivers 1981:28).

The above objectives are achieved by the following assumptions and practices:

i) In this method the literary language is considered superior to the spoken language and so the fundamental purpose of learning a foreign language is to be able to read the literature written in that language. Students are given the task of reading the works of the best authors of the target language. The teacher reads the piece first and explains the content in detail in the native language of the students.

ii) Students study the grammar deductively, that is, they are given the grammatical rules and examples, are told to memorize them and then they are asked to apply the rules to other examples. That is why J.C. Richards and T.S. Rodgers say "In most Grammar-Translation texts, a syllabus was followed for the sequencing of grammar points
throughout a text and there was an attempt to teach grammar in an organized and systematic way" (Richards and Rodgers 1986:4).

(iii) Since “the sentence is the basic unit of teaching and language practice” (ibid:4), the teacher explains a particular grammatical point in detail, students are given sentences as exercises for applying the rules. They are also given heavy task of translation from one language into another. If they can translate well, they are considered successful language learners.

2.2.3 Tests:

Now and then the following kinds of tests are conducted in the Grammar-Translation classes to measure the progress of the students in the target language.

*Reading Comprehension Questions:*

Students answer questions in the target language based on their understanding of the reading passages which are generally informative, inferential and relating to their own experience.

Questions requiring the students’ knowledge of antonyms, synonyms and cognates are also set.

*Fill in blanks*

"Students are given a series of sentences with words missing. They fill in the blanks with new vocabulary items or with items of a particular grammar type, such as prepositions, verbs with different tenses" (Freeman 1986:14).
Use Words in sentence

Sometimes phrases and idioms are given and students are asked to frame sentences using them.

Composition

The teacher asks students to write a paragraph, essay, letter, or a story on a particular topic. Sometimes instead of writing a composition, the students are asked to prepare a precis or summary of the reading passage.

2.2.4 Theoretical Assumption:

The Grammar-Translation Method is not based on any theory which triggered it. "It is a 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 1985:5). Though there is no theory to support the method there are some principles which have helped the method to develop. According to the method the target language is basically looked upon as a system of rules to be observed in written texts and sentences. "Language learning is implicitly viewed as intellectual activity involving rule learning, the memorization of rules and facts related to first language meanings by means of massive translation practice. The first language is maintained as the reference system in acquisition of the second language. Basing itself on a faulty psychology, this method for learning modern languages was justified - like Latin and Greek had been - as a mental training" (Stern 1983: 455).

2.2.5 Drawbacks:

This method is not the right approach, for teaching modern languages as the outcome is quite frustrating. Because after studying the
foreign language for quite a few years students in most cases are unable to use it. "They developed a distaste for the language and inferiority complex about language learning in general" (Lado 1965:4).

There is a mass and often a confusing mass – of grammatical rules and exceptions and explanations. H.H. Stern also says that "the major defect of the Grammar-Translation Method lies in the over-emphasis on the language as a mass of rules (and exceptions) and in the limitations of practice techniques which never emancipate the learner from the dominance of his first language" (Stern 1983:455-456).

In addition to this "much of the grammar taught within this method is pedantic or archaic or even erroneous" (Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens 1964:265).

Therefore this method is not successful with less intellectual students "who muddle through making many mistakes over and over again, thus building up cumulative habits of inaccuracy which are difficult to eradicate at a more advanced stage. These less gifted students find language study tedious and usually drop out of the class as soon as they possibly can" (Wilga Rivers 1981:30).

This method emphasizes reading and writing skills. It obviously neglects the speaking skill which is the most vital aspect of communication. There is little training in using the language actively to express one's own meaning even in writing and "the student is often trained in artificial forms of language, some of which are rare, others old fashioned, many of little practical use" (ibid: 31).

Translation is a skill in itself. It cannot be equated with understanding, speaking, reading and writing which are very different skills and need to be learned as such. In fact, translation is a very difficult
task. "In its usual form it is appropriate more to the advanced stages of a university special degree course, when literary and historical styles are being studied than to the early stages of acquiring practical skills in a foreign language" (Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens 1965:268).

2.2.6 Advantages:

In spite of the virulent attacks from the reformers "the Grammar Translation or Traditional Method has maintained itself remarkably well... The first language as a reference system is indeed very important for the second language learner. Therefore, translation in one form or another or other cross-lingual techniques can play a certain part in language learning. Moreover, some learners endeavour to understand the grammatical system of the second language. Hence grammar teaching too, may have some importance for them" (Stern 1983:455).

The highly intellectual students interested in abstract reasoning are benefited by this method. Moreover, the best product of the Grammar-Translation Method can use the language actively if they have the opportunity to live for a period of time in an area where it is spoken.

The Grammar-Translation Method is not too demanding on the teacher. When he is tired he can keep the class busy giving written exercises. The method is also cheap in the sense that it does not require the modern sophisticated things like language laboratory and other audio-visual aids.

Lastly, the Grammar-Translation Method is the right approach for a situation where the teacher is untrained and has to teach a large class for acquiring the reading skill in the target language.
2.3 THE DIRECT METHOD

2.3.1 Introduction

The method is direct because in this approach every effort is made to convey the meaning of the target language directly through objects and actions without resorting to the native language of the learner. In other words, it can be said that the Direct Method "emphasized language learning by direct contact with the foreign language in meaningful situations" (Lado 1964:4).

Wilga M. Rivers also says that the Direct Method "advocated learning a new language through direct association of words and phrases with objects and actions without the use of native language by teacher or students" (Rivers 1981:32).

"In fact the Direct Method receives its name from the fact that meaning is to be connected directly with the target language without going through the process of translation into the students' native language" (Freeman 1986:18).

If we take a look into the history of language teaching we find that the Direct Method dominated the language teaching scenario in the late nineteenth century and thereafter.

"This does not mean incidentally that a number of its basic ideas have not been suggested or used before. A scholar who certainly deserves mention in this connection is the Czech Ian Amos Komensky or Comenius. In the pedagogical work of this philosopher and theologian FLT takes up an important place...The idea of Comenius, as expounded in a number of publications, can be summarized as follows-

(1) The learner will acquire rules of grammar inductively. The best method is not to make the learner learn the rules themselves but to provide direct practice in speaking and reading through imitation and repetition."
The best method of teaching meaning is one using sensory experience, generally visual perception" (Theo Van Els et al. 1984: 149).

But it is incorrect to regard Comenius in every respect as the forerunner of the Direct Method. Because "Comenius clearly deviates from the Direct Method on one of the most important points. In his Latin courses he used L1 as well as L2" (ibid: 149).

From the mid nineteenth century people were not happy with the outcome of the Grammar-Translation Method. So from 1850 to 1900 a lot of efforts were made to make language teaching more effective through a radical shift from the Grammar-Translation Method. So

"the reaction to the grammar based approaches and subsequent call to use more traditional ways is used here in the sense of natural way of learning language. Traditional ways of learning other language came from diverse sources and in different ways with various labels. The approaches have been called natural, psychological, phonetic, new, reform, direct, analytical, imitative and so forth" (Krashen and Tarrel 1983: 10).

"The Direct Method is not one single method but rather a collection of approaches and techniques. A number of these have names of their own... the difference between the various direct methods have never been fundamental and usually boil down to different conclusions which are drawn for teaching from differences in emphasis on common principles" (Theo Van Els, et al. 1984: 148).

The exponents of the method shared a common belief that students learn to understand a language by listening a great deal to it and that they learn to speak it by speaking and associating speech with appropriate action.

There were two factors, which largely contributed to the growth of the Direct Method. Firstly a New World order was emerging with boost to industry, international trade and travel. A need for learning the spoken language was felt seriously.
Secondly, the rapid progress in linguistic theory, philology and phonetics also stimulated the Direct Method. Since the study of phonetics had developed during the second half of the nineteenth century, language teachers were able to make use of its findings on the mechanics of sound production and to adopt its newly developed system of notation. The International Phonetic Association was established in 1886 and this association outlined the directions of the Direct Method in six articles.

Around the turn of the century the Direct Method in spite of controversy, gained recognition in ministerial guidelines in several countries (for example in Prussia and France).

In the subsequent years it was not integrally applied but it had a very powerful impact on theory and practice widely. In the U.S.A it was introduced into the Cleveland Public Schools. In Britain it was used in a ‘compromised form’. Though all the principles of the Direct Method were adopted, the translation and the grammatical explanations in the native language were not avoided.

2.3.2 Objective:

The Direct Method did not aim at teaching the literary variety but everyday spoken language. It also did not aim at training the students to use the language effectively for communicative purpose. To achieve this goal the method trained the students to think in the target language.

2.3.3 Principles:

Classroom instruction was conducted exclusively in the target language. Only everyday vocabulary and sentences were taught. According to this method spoken language is the primary form of language.
“Therefore, students study common, everyday speech in the target language. They also study culture consisting of the people who speak the target language, the geography of the country or countries where the language is spoken and information about the daily life of the speakers of the language” (Freeman 1986:25).

In the method all the four skills were taken care of but the oral skill was given utmost importance. In order to felicitate the communicative skills of the students the reading and writing exercises were based on what they practiced orally. “Oral communication skills were built up in a carefully graded programme organized around question and answer exchanges between teachers and students in small intensive classes” (Richards and Rodgers 1986:10). In the class grammar was not taught deductively and an explicit grammar rule was never given:

“Students are encouraged to form their own generalization about grammatical structure by an inductive process through reflecting what they have been learning. In this way the study of grammar is kept at a functional level, being confined to those areas which are continuously being used in speech” (Rivers 1981:33).

A new teaching item is first introduced orally.

“When the teacher introduces a new target language word or phrase, he demonstrates its meaning through the use of reelia, pictures or pantomime, he never translates it into the students’ native language” (Freeman 1986:24).

In case of teaching concrete vocabulary the teacher takes the help of demonstration – object and picture; “abstract vocabulary is taught by association of ideas” (Richards and Rodgers 1986:10).
The syllabus used in the method was also situation oriented (for example, one unit would consist of language that people would use at a bank, another of the language that they use when going shopping) or topics (such as geography, money or the weather)

Following guidelines are followed in teaching oral language.

"Never explain: act
Never makes a speech: ask questions
Never imitate mistakes: correct
Never speak with single word: use sentences
Never speak too much: make students speak much.
Never use the book: use your lesson plan.
Never jump around: follow your plan
Never go too fast: keep the pace of the students.
Never speak too loudly: speak naturally
Never speak too slowly: speak normally.
Never speak too quickly: speak naturally.
Never be impatient: take it easy."

(Titone 1968:100-1)

The teacher uses a specially designed textbook in foreign language. Difficult expressions are explained in the target language with the help of paraphrase, synonyms, demonstration or context. In order to explain the meaning of the text the teacher asks questions about it. Great stress is laid on good pronunciation.

About the texts, Wilga M. Rivers (1981) says that they "are read aloud by the teacher and the students are encouraged to seek direct
comprehension by inferring meaning of unknown element from the context rather than by seeking equivalents in a bilingual list. Where the meaning cannot be discovered in this way the teacher gives explanations in the language being learned using pictures and gestures where necessary" (Rivers 1981:33).

The students learn to write the language first of all by transcription, then by composing summaries of what they have been reading or writing simple accounts of what has been discussed orally. They gradually move to creative composition.

2.3.4 Evaluation:

In the matter of evaluation, the students are never asked questions requiring their knowledge about the language. They "might be interviewed orally by the teacher or might be asked to write a paragraph about something they have studied" (Freeman 1986:25). In the class students are also given exercises which "involve transposition, substitutions, dictation, narrative and free composition" (Stern 1983:459).

In respect of the errors of the students the teacher employing various techniques tries to get students to self-correct whenever possible.

2.3.5 Theoretical Assumption:

In this regard Stern says:

"Linguistically, language teaching was to be based on phonetics and on a scientifically established coherent grammar. The learning of language was viewed as analogous to first language acquisition and the learning processes involved were often interpreted in terms of associationist psychology. Hence the emphasis on sounds and simple sentences and direct associations of the language with object and persons of immediate environment for example, the classroom, the house, the garden and the street" (Stern 1983: 459).
According to Howatt, the true roots of the Direct Method lie deep in the art of teaching itself. They may owe something to organized pedagogy, but not a great deal, even less to psychology and virtually nothing to linguistics (Howatt 1989:197).

2.3.6 Merits

The Direct Method removed the major faults of the Grammar-Translation Method “by substituting language contact for grammar recitation and language use for translation” (Lado 1964:5).

When used by a competent teacher the Direct Method succeeds with the whole class where the Grammar-Translation Method had at best helped the exceptional students.

The Direct Method was the first attempt to make second/foreign language learning situation as one of language use and avoid the use of first language as a point of reference.

“The use of a text as a basis of language learning, demonstrations of pictures and objects, the emphasis on question and answer, spoken narrative, dictation, imitation and a host of new type of grammatical exercises have resulted from the Direct Method. Language pedagogy in the present century for example, Palmer in the twenties and the audio-lingual and audio-visual methods in fifties and sixties, adopted many of the techniques first developed by the Direct Method teachers” (Stern 1983:459-460).

2.3.7 Demerits

This method assumed that second language learning should be like first language acquisition, though as Lado points out-

“This is true only up to a point, since the psychology of learning a second language differs from that of the first language. The child is forced to learn the first language because he has no other effective way to express his wants. In learning a second language
this compulsion is largely missing, since the student knows that he can communicate through his native language" (Lado 1964:4).

In this method only highly intelligent students with well-developed powers of induction are profited but the method can become discouraging and bewildering for the less talented as it is a method of association between language and situation.

The method made the students learn how to answer questions but they could not ask them.

The Direct Method has two major drawbacks.

“One has been how to convey meaning without translating and how to safeguard against misunderstanding without referring to the first language. Another has been how to apply the Direct Method beyond the elementary stages of language learning” (Stern 1983:460).

This method required native speaking teachers or teachers who had native like fluency in the target language. But it was not always possible to have such competent teachers and teachers with less fluency could not adhere to the principles of this method.

The Direct Method turned out to be successful in private school like the Berlitz chain where “paying clients had high motivation and the use of native teaching speaker was the norm” (Howatt 1984). But it did not produce the expected result in the public education as there “the constraint of budget, classroom size, time and teacher background made such a method difficult to use” (H. Douglas Brown 1983:58).

It is true that the Direct Method has many drawbacks but achieves the “greatest success” in a situation where the students get exposure to the target language outside the class to hear and practice it.
2.4 THE READING METHOD

2.4.1 Introduction

The Reading Method is one in which the effort is made to improve the ability of the students in both intensive and extensive reading of the foreign language materials. It does not mean that other language skills are neglected but the development of the reading skill is given the topmost priority. This is why Stern says “this method deliberately restricts the goal of language teaching to training in reading comprehension” (Stern 1983:460)

2.4.2 History:

Three persons initiated the Reading Method. They were Michael West, Bond and Coleman. Michael West was a British educationist working in colonial Bengal. He could observe the foreign language (English) situation closely. He “argued that learning to read fluently was more important for Indians learning English than speaking. West recommended an emphasis on reading not only because he regarded it as the most useful skill to acquire in a foreign language but also because it was the easiest, a skill with the greatest ‘surrender value’ for the student in the early stages of language learning” (ibid: 460). West advocated that the education system should be such that a student might get benefit from each class even he left school before completing his course. For this West used “surrender value” a term of his own. He says,

“By the ‘surrender value’ of a subject we mean the proportionate amount of benefit which will be derived by one pupil from an incomplete course of instruction in that subject” (West 1926: 112).

He further says training in spoken English produces no ‘surrender value’, for school leavers. “Basic literary skill in English could be acquired much more rapidly particularly if the children were already literate in their
mother tongue. They could moreover, be used in later life, whereas spoken English was a useless skill for most Bengalis away from the major cities of important influence” (Howatt1984: 245).

For the improvement of reading skill West favoured the use of common modern equivalents in place of old fashioned literary words. He also argued that students should meet a new word after a gap of five or six sentences. The importance of acquiring reading skill was also obvious in the U.S.A.

"By the 1920s use of the Direct Method in non-commercial schools in Europe has consequently declined... A study (in America) begun in 1923 on the state of foreign language teaching concluded that no single method could guarantee successful result. The goal of trying to teach conversation skills was considered impractical in view of the restricted time available for foreign language teaching in schools, the limited skill of teachers and the perceived irrelevance of conversational skills in a foreign language for the average American College student” (Richards and Rodgers 1986:11).

With the publication of Coleman’s report in 1929 as a part of the modern foreign language study, it became clear that the majority of American students studied foreign language for only two years. And it was not possible for students to achieve any serious level of competence in all four skills. So “the report maintained that the only reasonable objective for such a short period of study was the development of reading ability” (Rivers 1981:35). This report had a powerful impact in language teaching scenario. “Teachers began to seek the most effective ways of developing the reading skill, so that graduate of the language course of limited duration would be capable of independent reading after formal study of the language had ended”(ibid: 35).
Bond also developed a Reading Method Approach to College Language courses at Chicago University between 1920 and 1940. “The student was given detailed instruction of reading strategies. The course of study that was developed over a period of decades, provided graded reading materials and systematic approach to learning to read. The spoken language was not entirely neglected but it was the reading objective that received the main emphasis” (Stern 1983:461).

2.4.3 Objective:

It is already stated that the sole object of the Reading Method is to develop the student’s reading skill. According to Coleman the aim of this method was to develop “the ability to read the foreign language with moderate ease and with enjoyment for recreative and for vocational purposes”(Coleman as cited in Rivers 1981:35). Richards and Rodgers advocated that “a more reasonable goal for a foreign language course would be a reading knowledge of a foreign language, achieved through the gradual introduction of words and grammatical structures in simple reading texts”(Richards and Rodgers 1986:11). In this regard Rivers (1981) says that in “the Reading Method students were to be taught to read the new language with direct apprehension of meaning without a conscious effort to translate what they were reading” (Rivers 1981:35).

The method also aims at developing autonomous silent reading as well as increasing the reading rate of an individual student.

2.4.4 Principle:

Teachers, following Palmer, held that training of students in correct pronunciation, comprehension of uncomplicated spoken language and the use of simple speech patterns could improve the reading skill of the students.
2.4.5 Technique:

Unlike the Direct Method, the use of mother tongue of the students is not banned in the Reading Method. It begins with oral lessons to acquaint the students with the sound system of the target language. "Because facility in pronunciation and 'inner speech' were regarded as an important aid in reading comprehension" (Stern 1983: 461). When the reading practice begins the text is read loudly either by the teacher or a student. Questions and answers also follow this.

The course is divided into intensive and extensive reading. "Intensive study, done under the supervision of the teacher becomes more analytic and provides material for grammatical study, for the acquisition of vocabulary and for training in reading complete sentences for comprehension. There is no place for translation but students are encouraged to infer the meaning of unknown words from the context. For extensive reading students are also encouraged to go through the graded texts according to their level of achievement. In this connection S. Kathleen Kitao says

"Methods of teaching reading can be divided into two categories—inductive and deductive methods. Deductive methods involve teaching students directly how to read, that is teaching them specific skills or strategies. Inductive methods involve having students read, with varying amount of guidance and expecting that through the experience of reading, they will develop reading skills or strategies. The second one is thought as ideal one as the most readers improve to read by reading in their L1" (Kitao 1995: 67).

Vocabulary control in reading texts was given top priority.

In the Reading Method several techniques were adapted from native language instruction. Some writing exercises were introduced to help the students remember vocabulary and structure for comprehension of the text. The students were also taught a minimum of the essentials of grammar.
2.4.6 Theoretical Assumption:

This method did not mark a shift either from linguistic or from psychological theory but from the practical educational considerations in the USA.

"This method had a strongly pragmatic basis. Its educational assumptions were similar to those current in the American school curriculum of twenties; namely to gear activities to specified ultimate practical uses" (Stern 1983:461-462).

2.4.7 Evaluation:

In this method instead of being asked to translate the students were given questions in order to assess the achievement in the comprehension of the texts.

This method helps the better students to increase their reading ability. The system of extensive reading gives the students opportunities to progress at their own rate. The method introduced the concept of language for specific purposes (LSP), the application of vocabulary control and graded texts.

The method has many drawbacks. After the recommendation of Coleman, the Reading Method produced students who could neither understand nor speak the language "beyond the simplest exchanges". If not controlled "the extensive reading can lead to satisfaction of quantity rather than quality-number of pages perused rather than the degree of comprehension" (Rivers 1981:37). The system of graded reading valuable from pedagogical point of view may sometimes give a false idea of the level of the reading achievement. Moreover, students who use strategies effectively in native language reading cannot always transfer them to the second language reading. (Hosenfield, Arnold, Kirchofer, Luciure and Wilson cited in S. Kathleen Kitao 1995)
2.5 THE COMMUNITY LANGUAGE LEARNING METHOD:

2.5.1 Introduction:

1970s was a period of chaos but it was extremely fruitful in the sense that because of Chomskyan revolution a lot of language researches were done and many innovative language teaching methods were inspired as a reaction to the audiolingualism which was waning fast. The Community Language Learning is a classical example of an affective method.

The Community Language Learning Methods have their roots in Charles A. Curran’s ‘Counseling Learning’ inspired by Carl Roger’s view of education in which learners in a classroom are regarded as a group rather than a class which needs certain therapy or counseling. According to Roger learning takes place when the members of the group interact in interpersonal relationship and students and teacher join together to facilitate learning in a context of valuing and prizing each individual in the group. Curran, a professor of psychology in Chicago University applied psychological counseling techniques to learning. “Community Language Learning represents the use of counseling learning theory to teach language” (Richards and Rodgers 1986:113). Generally counseling involves a person giving advice, assistance and support to another who has a problem or is in some way in need. In Community Language Learning situation the teacher plays the role of counselor and the students the clients. A group of learners sit in circle; a student whispers a message in his native tongue (L1); the teacher translates it into the target language (L2); the students repeat the message in the foreign language. If possible, it is recorded too. Students compose further messages in the foreign language with the teacher’s help. The students also reflect about their feelings.
2.5.2 Objective:

The principal aim of the method is to impart the speaking skill in the foreign language to the students. "Through the method the teacher can successfully transfer his or her knowledge and proficiency in the target language to the learner, which implies that attaining near native like mastery of the target language is set as a goal" (ibid:119). Speaking skill is emphasized most for language is considered as an instrument for communication. This is why Larsen-Freeman says "Teachers who use the Community Language Learning Method want their students to learn how to use the target language communicatively. In addition, they want their students to learn about their own learning, to take increasing responsibility for it" (Freeman 1986: 99). Reading and writing skills are also taken care of.

2.5.3 Technique:

In this method the initial role of teacher is that of a counselor. This does not mean that the teacher is a therapist or that he is not teaching. Rather it means that the teacher recognises how threatening a new learning situation can be for adult learners. So he understands and skilfully supports his students in their struggle to master the target language by creating an acceptable atmosphere and counseling and paying attention to students. Thus the teacher can remove the negative feeling from the mind of the students. As a result students feel free.

The teacher is very sensitive to the students' limitations and never gives them more work than they can handle. Thus he creates a sense of security in them. In addition at the beginning learning is concentrated only on one topic at a time. The teacher inspires the students to take independent initiative because "students learn best when they have a choice in what
they practice. Students develop an inner wisdom about where they need to work” (Larsen-Freeman: 1986:98).

According to Curran there are six elements necessary for non-defensive learning. These are:

1) security
2) aggression (which means students have the choice to assert themselves)
3) attention (students should focus on one topic at a time)
4) reflection (students reflect on language)
5) retention (integration of new materials)
6) discrimination (ability to distinguish among different elements of the target language).

As with most methods, the Community Language Learning Method combines innovative learning tasks and activities with the conventional ones. They include:


In this method teaching begins with translation from the native language into the target language. Students work in small groups so that they can feel a sense of community and can learn from each other. Cooperation, not competition is encouraged. Students transcribe utterances and recorded conversations for practice and analysis of linguistic forms in order to focus on particular lexical usage or on the application of particular grammatical rules. They reflect and report on their experience of the class. This usually consists of expression of feelings - sense of one another, reaction to silence, concern for something to say, etc. They usually listen to a monologue by the teacher involving elements they might have elicited or
overheard in class interactions. They are also engaged in free conversation with the teacher or with one another.

"Gradually the learner becomes able to speak a word or phrase directly in the foreign language without translation. This is the first sign of the learner’s moving away from complete dependence upon the counselor. As the learner gains more and more familiarity with the foreign language, more and more direct communication can take place with the counselor providing less and less direct translation and information until after many sessions perhaps many months or years later, the learner achieves fluency in the spoken language. The learner has at that point become independent" (Brown 1987: 118-119).

The technique of Community Language Learning Method has two underlying principles-

1) “Learning is persons - which means that both teacher and learners must make commitment of trust to one another and learning process.

2) Learning is dynamic and creative which means that learning is living and developmental process” (Larsen-Freeman 1986: 106).

In this method no text is considered necessary. In the early stage the students design the syllabus according to their desired area of study. And material may be developed by the teacher as the course develops. The teacher writes on the blackboard sentences (which have already been discussed in the class) highlighting “elements of grammar, spelling and peculiarities of capitalization in the L2.....Students are encouraged to copy sentences from the board with the board with notes on meaning and usage. This becomes their text book for home study” (Richards and Rodgers 1987: 125).
2.5.4 **Theoretical Assumption:**

Community Language Learning advocates a holistic approach to language learning which is both cognitive and affective. This kind of learning is possible in communicative situation where teacher and learners involve in "an interaction...... in which both experience a sense of their own wholeness" (Curran cited in Richards and Rodgers 1987:117). The learning process is like the ontogenetic development of the child. As the child passes through some stages to become an adult, a second language learner also passes some stages and at one stage he "knows everything the teacher does and can become knower for a new learner. The process of learning a new language, then, is like being reborn and developing a new persona; with all the trials and challenges that are associated with birth and maturation" (ibid:118). Language learning develops through creating social relationships beginning successfully with teacher and fellow students.

2.5.5 **Evaluation**

There is no particular mode of evaluation in the method. Students are to be evaluated in keeping with the principles of the method.

2.5.6 **Advantages:**

The method removes "the threat of all knowing teacher, of making blunders in the foreign language in front of classmates, of competing against peers – all threats which can lead to feeling of alienation and inadequacy"(Brown 1987:110). According to the advocates of the method the Community Language Learning Method centres on the learners and stresses the humanistic side of language learning and not merely its linguistic dimensions.
2.5.7 Disadvantages:

Community Language Learning Method places unusual demands on the teacher. The teacher must be familiar with the method of psychological counseling. The teacher must operate without conventional materials depending on students’ topics to shape and motivate the class. The absence of syllabus also leaves the objectives unclear and makes evaluation difficult. The critics of this method also question whether a teacher should start counseling students without proper training. In this method the teacher’s role can become non-directive. But at the initial stage the learners need direction from the teacher. Finally, the method gives more importance to fluency than accuracy.
2.6 THE INTERACTIVE APPROACH

2.6.1 Introduction:

In formal language teaching-learning the classroom plays a very significant role because lots of events take place in any classroom. This is why “since the 1960s there has been an increasing attempt in research on teaching and learning from the instruction to relate the major features of teacher and student behaviour in classrooms, to learning outcomes” (Craig Chaudron 1988:1). In language learning the input is very important “but a programme based solely on input will not necessarily foster communicative efficiency. There is also need for output activities of different types, the first (practice) in which students produce language under semi-controlled conditions and the second (communicative) in which students engage in the very tasks of communicating in English in the classroom” (Jeremy Harmer 1983:38).

The average second language learners hardly have the chance to come in communicative touch with the native speakers of the target language. So classroom activities appear to contribute a great deal to creating such an environment for the learners. According to Krashen (1982) the classroom should function to provide the learner with comprehensive target language input in affectively supportive climate. Such supportive instruction will be very valuable when other naturalistic input is not available. Conversation and instructional exchanges between teachers and students provide the opportunities.

Recently the interactive features of classroom behaviours have gained much importance in contrast to the traditional view of teaching and learning. The traditional view conceptualizes classroom instruction as conveying information from the knowledgeable teacher to the ‘empty’ and passive learner. In the traditional classroom “the interaction is totally
dominated by the teacher and few opportunities exist for pupils to use 
language or to contribute actively to the creation of classroom discourse. 
Pupils are expected to listen silently as teachers focus on transmitting 
information about the subject ... Pupils are expected to talk when the 
teacher asks a question or allots them speaking turns. Questions are asked 
only to get pupils to display their understanding of the facts already 
conveyed to them by the teacher... If on rare occasion they do attempt to 
ask questions, make comments, or initiate new topics they are discouraged 
from doing so by the teacher ... Fear of reprimand prevents them from 
talking to each other and no spontaneous interaction takes place...” (Karuna 

In the traditional teacher-centred language teaching there is hardly any 
scope for the learners to participate in classroom activities. But classroom 
interaction is very important for achieving proficiency in the target 
language because “it is argued that

1) only through interaction can the learner decompose the TL structures and 
derive meaning from classroom events;

2) interaction gives learners the opportunity to incorporate the TL structures 
into their own speech; and

3) the meaningfulness for learners of classroom events of any kind, whether 
thought of an interactive or not will depend on the extend to which 
communications have been jointly constructed between teacher and 
learners”(Craig Chaudron 1988:10).

2.6.2 Objective:

The purpose of Interactive Approach is to “help students develop 
what they know about the language into an ability to use the
language” (Julian Edge 1993:83). The goal of teacher<->the whole class interaction is to promote accuracy and the student<->student interaction generally aims at developing fluency.

2.6.3 Dimensions:

Classroom interaction has the following dimensions in respect of the participants.

“The teacher sometimes gives instruction to the whole class (T->Ss) and sometime to an individual (T->S) and sometimes teacher tells one student to say something to another (T->S->S). Sometimes students communicate directly with each other (S<->S). We also see communication with teacher started by students (S<->T) but their behaviour is something we can encourage rather than something we can plan.

A movement from interaction between the teacher and the whole class to the interaction between students themselves (either in pairs or groups) is the most usual pattern of interaction in modern ELT” (ibid: 69).

2.6.4 History:

The Interaction Analysis was originally developed by Flanders in the fifties. The study tried to assess the social climate of classrooms and other educational groups. “The underlying philosophy of the Flanders’ system was the belief that a ‘democratic’ classroom management is preferable to an ‘authoritarian’ one” (Stern 1983:493).

The history of Interaction Analysis reveals that it was orginally applied to classes in which general school subjects e.g. social studies or science subjects were taught. Later on it was adopted for language classes with modifications and additions. Fanselow (1971) first applied it to foreign language teaching. His method is called “FOCUS: Foci for observing Communication Used in Setting.” “It is Fanselow’s intention to describe
and conceptualize what ‘teachers actually do’.... Fanselow’s scheme distinguishes five characteristics of communication in the language class:

1) source: who communicates?
2) for what pedagogical purpose?
3) in what medium?
4) how is the medium used?
5) what content is communicated”(ibid: 493-494).

The Interactive Analysis became popular with foreign language teaching researches for devising some other principles for effective classroom interaction.

2.6.5 Technique:

The teacher-learner interaction produces typical pedagogical form of interaction; the teacher always initiates, the learner only responds. This greatly limits the communicative function. In order to avoid this and for effective and adequate interaction in the classroom, learners are set in pairs and small groups and are given instructions as to what to do and the purpose of interaction. They are also provided with materials so that they are enabled to sustain interaction without the teacher’s presence.

In pair work, one person is silent and the other person is usually called upon to speak. When learners are used to pair work they are led to group work. In group work it is possible for a learner to remain silent and some people speak more than the others do. This should be carefully guarded against. The teacher should make sure that each learner can participate in the discourse out of his or her individual differences. When the learners are capable of taking part in group work, they should be encouraged to pay attention to how they interact in groups. And the more
freedom they are given “the more important it is that they understand exactly what they are supposed to do” (Julian Edge 1993).

In order to create more varied forms of interaction in the classroom, the teacher of foreign language turns increasingly to the field of simulation. Learners are asked to imagine themselves in a situation, which occurs outside the classroom. They are asked to adopt a specific role in this situation. They are directed to behave as if the situation really existed in accordance with their roles. They are required to concentrate more on the communicative meaning than on the practice of language. They create interaction themselves on the basis of their roles.

In the more creative types of role playing, the teacher controls only the situation and the learner’s roles in it but leaves the learners to themselves to create interaction. In this respect Littlewood says:

“... The teacher creates a situation and sets an activity in motion, but it is the learners themselves who are responsible for conducting the interaction to its conclusion” (Littlewood 1981:18).

2.6.6 The Role of the Teacher:

During interaction period the tasks of a teacher are:

- To make sure as quickly as possible every one has understood what they are supposed to be doing, and they are doing it.
- To be available in case of problem.
- To move round the class and listen carefully so as to be informed about the language the students are using.
- not to interfere” (Julian Edge 1993:87).

In Interactive Approach the teacher should be prepared to subordinate his own behaviour to the learning needs of his students. He is
more than an instructor is, "... he is a facilitator of learning and may need to perform a variety of specific roles separately or simultaneously" (Littlewood 1981:92). These include the following tasks:

He coordinates the activities of his learners to form a coherent progress leading towards greater communicative ability. While independent activity is in progress he may act as a consultant and adviser giving help where necessary. Moving about the class he monitors the learners' strength and weakness as basis for planning future learning activities. Finally, he may participate in the interaction as cocommunicator.

2.6.7 Feed back:

Feedback is the means by which the teacher informs the learners of their accuracy in the target language. It helps the learners repair their utterances too (Craig Chaudron 1988:133). The positive feedback is praise and negative one is the grammatical explanations and giving the correct response.

"Correcting three types of errors can be quite useful to second language learners: errors that impair communication significantly; errors that have highly stigmatizing effects on listeners or readers; and errors occur frequently in students' speech or writing" (Hendrickson cited in Chaudron 1988:140). Chaudron himself says that the errors repeated in the class room with their corrections are very helpful in learners' output

2.6.8 Merit:

Researches (Pica, Doughty and Young) show that instruction with interaction and questioning is more useful for promoting learning than instruction without interaction in the class room.
Interaction in the classroom gives learners more opportunities to express their own individuality, which is the important condition for developing communicative skill. It provides more opportunity to develop cooperation among learners and between learners and teacher.

Finally it can be said that interactions leave “the learner with scope to contribute his personality to the learning process. They also provide the teacher with scope to step out of the didactic role in order to be a human among humans” (Littlewood 1981:94).
2.7 THE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING APPROACH

2.7.1 Introduction:

Communicative Language Teaching has its roots in the shift that was occurring in the traditional British foreign language teaching by the late sixties. The situational language teaching lost its appeal to the applied linguists who were looking for a more effective method. The result was a close study of language itself and a return to the traditional concept that utterances were meaningful in themselves and expressed the intention of the speaker and the writer (Howatt 1984).

The forerunner of the Communicative Language Teaching was Scope, which for the first time developed a sociolinguistic mode of language teaching as opposed to a purely linguistic one. The original motivation for adopting Communicative Language Teaching in the early seventies was remedial, an attempt to overcome the inadequacies of the structural syllabuses, materials and method. The method was introduced in Britain to remove the deficiency of the students of developing countries in communication, who had a long formal education in English.

"According to him (Widdowson) an utterance depends on two factors for its meaning i.e. the code and the context. It is only when the interrelationship of the two is taken into account that we move from 'speech functions' to 'speech acts'. This sociolinguistic views of language gave birth to situational and notional syllabi" (Usha Nagpal 1995:99).

In 1971 according to the council of Europe’s project known as the Threshold level or T-level some experts tried to develop a language course on the basis of a unit credit system corresponding to learners’ needs. And each unit was related to others. In the light of the needs of the European language learners Wilkins proposed functional or communicative definition of language which could be a basis for developing communicative...
syllabuses for language teaching. His approach was communicative because it assigns higher priority to the content of communication than its forms. (Wilkins cited in Wilga Rivers 1981:232). He also emphasized that the learner should be taught what is relevant to his/her needs. And his/her knowledge could be activated in actual language behaviour. Thus the Communicative Language Teaching was shaped into an approach.

2.7.2 Objective

The Communicative Language Teaching aims at enabling students to become communicatively competent. Communicative competence is something more than Chomsky’s competence which is only linguistic. By communicative competence Hymes means “the ability not only to apply the rules of grammar correctly but to use utterances appropriately” (Kitao 1995:128). According to Hymes the grammatical competence is not enough because “There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless” (Hymes 1979:14).

For developing communicative competence for using the language appropriately in a given social context the learner should be made aware that different linguistic forms can be used to perform a single function and a single form can again serve a variety of functions. The learner must be capable of choosing the right form for the right function in a given context (Freeman 1986).

Canal and Swain (cited in Richards and Rodgers 1986 and Kitao 1995) identify the following four dimensions of communicative competence.

1. Grammatical competence (ability to use grammatically correct utterances)
2. Sociolinguistic competence (ability to use the appropriate form in a given context)

3. Discourse Competence (ability to unite grammatical forms into a text either written or spoken)

4. Strategic competence (ability to use strategies for achieving goals and compensate for breakdown of communication etc.)

Communicative Language Teaching aims at developing all the competencies in learners of L2.

2.7.3 Characteristics:

H. Douglas Brown (1987) describes the following four characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching.

1. Classroom goals are focused on all of the components of communicative competence and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.

2. Form is not primary framework for organizing and sequencing lessons. Function is the framework through which forms are taught.

3. Accuracy is secondary to conveying a message. Fluency may take on more importance than accuracy. The ultimate criterion for communicative success in the actual transmission and reception of intended meaning.

4. In the communicative classroom students ultimately have to use the language productively and receptively in unrehearsed context” (Brown 1987: 213).

According to Johnson and Morrow (cited in Larsen-Freeman 1986:132). Communicative Language Teaching Approach has the following characteristics.
1) information gap (one participant knows something which the other does not know)

2) choice (freedom of the speaker as what he/she will say and how he/she will)

3) Feed back (the listener must have the opportunity to reply).

2.7.4 Theoretical Assumption:

Real communicative activities promote learning. Activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning.

"Language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process. Learning activities are consequently selected according to how well they engage the learner in meaningful and authentic language use (rather than merely mechanical practice of language patterns)" (Richards and Rodgers 1986:72).

Krashen and other second language acquisition theorists are of the view that language learning comes about through using language communicatively rather than through practicing language skills. But Johnson (1984) and Littlewood (1984) think that the acquiring of communicative competence is a matter of skill development involving both cognitive and behavioural aspects. This theory then encourages an emphasis on practice as a way of developing communicative skills.

Communicative Language Teaching is not based on any theory of learning. The above principles are discerned in some Communicative Language Teaching practices.

2.7.5 Technique:

The first and foremost task of a teacher is to facilitate communicative process between all the participants in the classroom by
monitoring all the classroom activities. The traditional procedures are not rejected but reinterpreted and extended. Each teaching point is introduced with dialogues followed by controlled practice of the main grammatical patterns. The teaching points are contextualized through situation practice.

For developing coherence and cohesion in the target language students are sometimes given scrambled sentences for restoring them to their order. Interesting and enjoyable game picture-strip stories with the feature of information gap, choice and feedback are given to students to develop their communicative skills. Teaching materials are presented in a text or a dialogue etc. "Learners are usually invited to enter vicariously into the situation so that they become participants" (Stern 1983:260).

Students' errors of forms are tolerated and are seen as natural outcome of the development of the communicative skills.

2.7.6 Syllabus:

The syllabus is designed on the basis of notions and functions. General notions include abstract concepts like existence, space, time, quality and quantity. Specific notions include name, address, health, welfare, education, shopping etc. Functions corresponds to identifying, reporting, denying, and declining an invitation, apologizing and so on.

Some experts are in favour of abolishing syllabuses. According to them since students are aware of their own needs and communicative resources each of them can create a syllabus as part of learning. Others favour Brumfits' grammar-based syllabuses around which notions function.

If a syllabus is to be designed at all, the following factors need to be taken into consideration:
“(a) The sociolinguistic profile of the society in which the learners are living.

(b) The language and educational policies of the state.

(c) The social function of the L2 e.g. is it a foreign or second language for the learners?” (R. Bell 1987:127).

2.7.7 Evaluation:

The construction of tests in Communicative Language Teaching can be a bit of problem because “The aim is not to test only formal correctness but also social appropriateness in a given context... test item consists of the response the learner is expected to make. It can be formulated as multiple choice or as an open ended test item” (Stern 1983:260).

The teacher can informally evaluate his students’ performance. For more formal evaluation, the teacher is likely to use communicative test, which is integrative having a real communicative function. In order to assess their writing skill a teacher might ask his students, for instance, to write a letter to a friend.

2.7.8 Merits:

The great contribution of Communicative Language Teaching is that for the first time it introduces the socio-linguistic aspect of communication in language teaching. And it makes language teaching “need oriented”. As a result concept like ESP, ESL, EFL, etc have emerged in English teaching. All other language courses assume that learners need the whole of language for general purpose. But such global view of language is unrealistic to achieve (R. Bell 1987).
2.7.9 Demerits:

"The adoption of a Communicative Approach raises important issues for teacher training, materials development, and testing and evaluation. Questions that have been raised include whether the Communicative Approach can be applied at all levels in a language programme, whether it is equally suited to ESL and EFL situations, whether it requires existing grammar-based syllabuses to be abandoned or merely revised, how much an approach can be evaluated, how suitable it is for non-native teachers, and how it can be adopted in situations where students must continue to take grammar-based tests. These kinds of questions will doubtless require attention if the Communicative movement in language teaching continues to gain momentum in the future" (Richards and Rodgers 1986:83).