CHAPTER - VI

TEACHING OF THE FOUR SKILLS
Learning a second language like English is, in fact, learning the four skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. The first two skills are closely related to one another, although the first is a recognition skill and the second is a production skill. Also, both skills depend almost completely on the learner's knowledge of the pronunciation of words and the articulation of sounds in the language. In this chapter we shall consider the techniques to develop and teach these four skills and, as usual, problems related to them with probable solutions.

(i) **Listening**:

Practice in listening comprehension must precede speaking practice. "The importance of ear training in
developing speaking proficiency receives particular emphasis. There are strong arguments, both physiological and psychological, for preceding speaking practice with training in listening comprehension ... Ear training facilitates speaking. Articulation is dependent upon hearing sounds accurately, discriminating among sounds, establishment — i.e., memorization or internalization — of proper auditory sound images, and development of a feel for the new language." 1

We cannot develop speaking skill unless we develop listening skill. To converse in English, students must understand what is said to them. The ability to understand spoken English becomes significant for listening to lectures and talks, listening to the radio, studying, understanding people from other states and nations etc.

Listening to spoken English assists pupils in acquiring the language, i.e., picking up structures and vocabulary. To quote Newmark & Diller once again: "When listening comprehension precedes speaking, the student's initial experience includes more correct responses and

1. Allen & Campbell (Eds.), op. cit., P.98. The quotation is from "Emphasizing the Audio in the Audio-Linguial Approach" by Gerald Newmark & Edward Diller.
more frequent positive reinforcement, less apprehension, and more rapid development of confidence in his language learning ability." 2

There are two kinds of listening. Focussed listening and casual listening. When we listen for some particular purpose to find out some information, for instance, listening to somebody illustrating how to open a bank account or listening to a piece of important news on the television or the radio, it is focussed listening. In such situations, we listen much more attentively. On the other hand, when we listen without any particular purpose in mind, for instance, listening to the radio while talking to some family member or doing some other work, it is casual listening. We do not listen attentively and remember much of what we heard.

Much of the listening in class is focussed listening. We expect students to listen attentively and remember later on what they listened to. To make them listen attentively the teacher should impart them simple listening tasks.

Listening may also be described as Extensive listening and intensive listening. Extensive listening means exposure

2. ibid., P. 98.
to a wide variety of patterns and sounds. This equips the pupils to listen with comprehension to English later in real life situations. Intensive listening is related to one or two peculiar points; this type of listening practice is mainly for language items as part of the language teaching programme. Both types of practice can be done with the help of recordings that the teacher makes himself as well as with the tapes which accompany texts. At a more sophisticated level this can be done in the language laboratory. The most significant aspect is that the pupils must listen to good models. Listening is found to be most fruitful when it is done in preparation for speaking.

Listening comprehension is generally neglected in schools and colleges in India. It is "generally treated as incidental to speaking, rather than as a foundation for it." 3

The teacher can take the following steps to emphasize listening comprehension:

(i) Speak pairs of words or sentences and ask the students to tell if they are the same or distinct:

3. ibid., P. 99.
Teacher :  Advice /ədˈvaɪs/ - Advise /ədˈvaɪz/  
Students :  Distinct  
Teacher :  Practice /ˈpræktaɪs/ - Practise /ˈpræktaɪs/  
Students :  Same  

(ii) Write minimal pairs of words or sentences using such words on the blackboard in two columns. He may utter a word and ask the students to recognize if it is from column 'A' or 'B'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A</th>
<th>Column B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nice /naɪs/</td>
<td>Niece /niːs/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major /ˈmeɪdʒə/</td>
<td>Measure /ˈmeʒə/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pen /pɛn/</td>
<td>Pain /peɪn/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) Give different orders and the students do the activities:

- Bring a glass of water
- Shut the door
- Go to the blackboard
- Write down your name etc.

(iv) Ask students to recognize a person or a place from a description presented by him. They may also be asked to follow directions for getting
to a place, for instance on a map. Their understanding will be measured correct if they reach the right place.

(v) Use dialogues. Listening comprehension can be enhanced by using dialogues. The teacher introduces the topic. Then he gives two or three guiding questions. He reads the dialogue. The students listen for the principal idea and answer the guiding questions. The teacher repeats the dialogue and students follow it. Newmark & Diller advise in this regard, "Go through the dialogue again, without stopping to give students a feel for how the entire conversation sounds at a normal speed. If a recording of the dialogue is available, play it, using several voices for this presentation." 4

(vi) Use auditory aids like taperecorder, CD-player, radio, television, linguaphone, etc.

Radio is a useful aid in language learning, since comprehensive courses in language learning are presented by radio. By using this agency, the learner may be given a good deal of knowledge about the language. However, there needs to be the closest possible co-operation between

4. ibid., P. 99.
the educational and broadcasting authorities. Much of the success of any broadcast depends on the co-operation of teachers in planning, use and assessment of broadcasting service.

Now television is not a newcomer in the field of English teaching. Although it has acquired much popularity, yet its forbidding price makes one only wishing for it. There are some programmes of educational importance that are relayed through television, but there is no co-ordination between these programmes and the school programmes. Most of our students can not take its full advantage.

The CD-player and tape recorder are the means by which we can re-hear the speech of the speaker. While the speaker is putting forward his ideas, his speech is recorded and is played as and when needed. The ideal pronunciation may be recorded and put forward before the learners to provide them with knowledge about it. Tape-recorders and CD-players should be employed for well-selected material which should be presented in a graded manner. But the teacher must know that by switching the machines off and on, he may spoil the total effect.
In this new rapidly altering modern era, the employment of linguaphone in schools and colleges may appear odd and ridiculous to many people. Its chief reason is that during the last twenty or thirty years, numerous new devices have been introduced. They have thrown the linguaphone into useless devices. But it is impossible to furnish a large number of schools and colleges in far off rural areas with modern facilities. Such institutions can very easily purchase a linguaphone. The linguaphone, through recorders, trains the ears in correct pronunciation, grammatical patterns, poetry reading, correct usage etc. The linguaphone is cheaper than other audio-devices.

These auditory aids are very useful as far as the teaching of listening comprehension is concerned, if carefully and properly used. However, economic condition is another factor which determines the use of these aids. The teacher should use the cheaper aids, if costly ones can not be procured. He should, however, guard against their overuse, for by doing so he will relegate the subject into the background and give prominence to illustrations. This must never be done. Proper training of the teacher in the use of these aids is also required. But would only training meet any objective? Definitely not. The
reason is not far to seek. Most of the Indian schools and colleges are not in a position to make use of these devices, as they have no funds at their command which is obvious from Table 37 (Appendix II). The table shows that only 20.94 per cent teaching institutions provide teachers with modern audio-visual aids. The condition in rural areas is most worrisome, as only a single teaching institute out of 109 has provided these aids. If our schools and colleges are not provided with enough funds, all exercise will go in vain. Therefore, the authorities must pay attention to this fact.

The suggestions made are aimed at having pupils spend more of their time listening to natural speech and real models of the second language. They emphasize the need for the methodical development of listening comprehension not only as a foundation for speaking but also as a skill in its own right. If teachers are desirous to use their experience, experiment and imagination with new devices and techniques several ways can be discovered to enhance listening comprehension.

(ii) Speaking:

The social purpose of language and the value of speech as a medium of communication are stressed in all
linguistic theories today. People make use of language to communicate with those around them and people belonging to different linguistic communities use different languages for purposes of communication. Whatever be the language used for communication — English, Hindi, Punjabi, etc. — it is possible to use two mediums for linguistic communication. These are speech and writing. Out of these two spoken language is more important. It comes first in the history of every language community. The history of every language will reveal that the spoken form of the language came centuries before the written form. It comes first in the life of every individual human being, too. All of us start speaking long before we start writing.

Besides, spoken language is used much more than written language. There are a number of people who can not read or write, but they do use language for communication and the only medium of language they can use is the oral medium. Even those who can read and write use the spoken medium more than the written medium. Written language is only an attempt to represent the sounds used in spoken language by marks on paper. In addition, modern technological developments have contributed to the importance of the spoken medium of language. The telephone, the radio, the television and hundreds of other devices raise
problems of communication which are primarily concerned with speech.

As far as teaching English as a second language in India is concerned, we must always keep in mind that learning to speak a language is by far the shortest road to learning to read and to write. Speech training must have precedence over learning to read and write, in point of time as well as in point of significance. Since speech is the groundwork all the rest is built up from it. It may be stated here that nearly forty per cent of the respondents opine that speaking is the most important language skill (Table 32). Through speech, the student learns to make the direct connection between the English word or phrase and the object, action or thought it bears. He learns the skill of employing words in the right sentence-structures and phrase-structures and he can learn this in no other manner.

Education is a medium of conversation. Through this medium, we convey our ideas to others and know the ideas of others. Learning to speak has got a significant place in teaching English. Moreover, speech has its own influence and attraction. It takes a person a long way in life. The more a person is efficient in speaking and
conversation the more he will be able to attract others.
It is, therefore, very essential to make the students efficient in the art of speaking.

However, there has been a great deal of thinking on the point as to what should be the standard of speech in English in India. There are numerous varieties of spoken English — English as spoken by the Englishmen (Received Pronunciation), English as spoken by the Australians, English as spoken by the Americans, English as spoken by the Africans or English as spoken by the Indians. The pronunciation of English varies from one country to another and there are marked phonetic and phonological features associated with English spoken in important English-speaking countries. Even within the U.K. there are variations between England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. England itself has different pronunciations existing within a small geographical area. One particular accent, nevertheless, has acquired social prestige in England. It is often called Received Pronunciation (RP) to indicate that it is the result of social judgement. Similarly, there are several different varieties of English in India that are distinct from R.P. But it is possible to use the term 'General Indian English' (GIE) in spite of the differences that exist within India.
Illustrating the term GIE, Balasubramanian writes, "By General Indian English is meant a certain variety of English spoken by educated Indians. General Indian English is free from regional features. It is both a descriptive and a prescriptive model. It is descriptive in the sense that it describes the phonological features of a variety of English, and prescriptive that is prescribed at the CIEFL to Indian speakers of English as a model of spoken English to imitate. This model, if acquired, will at least make the spoken English of Indians free from those features which make it Telugu English, Punjabi English or any one particular variety of Indian English." 5

Let us now take up the vowels of English for a little detailed discussion. We shall discuss the vowels that occur in RP and those that occur in GIE to understand the difference between the two. In RP there are 20 distinct vowel sounds (i.e. the substitution of one for another may bring about a change in meaning). Of these 12 are pure vowels or monophthongs. These are:

\[
\begin{align*}
/\text{i}/ & \quad \text{as in } \text{sit} \\
/\text{i}/ & \quad \text{as in } \text{sit} \\
/\text{i}/ & \quad \text{as in } \text{sit} \\
/\text{i}/ & \quad \text{as in } \text{sit}
\end{align*}
\]

The 8 remaining vowels are vowel-glides or diphthongs.

These are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/æ/</td>
<td>as in ear /iə/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ɛ/</td>
<td>as in air /eə/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ai/</td>
<td>as in eye /ai/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/au/</td>
<td>as in how /hau/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ei/</td>
<td>as in gay /gei/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ɔɪ/</td>
<td>as in boy /bɔɪ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/uə/</td>
<td>as in sure /sʊə/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/u/</td>
<td>as in go /gəʊ/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whereas, GIE has a system of 11 pure vowels and 6 diphthongs. The 11 pure vowels are:
/ɪ:/  as in **seat** /seɪt/  
/i:/  as in **sit** /sɪt/  
/e:/  as in **late** /leɪt/ (Most Indians use the pure vowel /e:/ instead of the diphthong /eɪ/ that is used in RP).  
/ɛ/  as in **let** /leɪt/ (This vowel that occurs in the speech of most Indians in words like **let** is more open than the vowel /e:/ they use in words like **late**. The symbol /ɛ/ is used to distinguish the vowel in **let** from the vowel in **late**.  
/æ/  as in **map** /mæp/  
/aː/  as in **guard** /ɡɑːrd/ (RP /ɑː/) is a back vowel. Most Indians use a fronter vowel symbolized as /ɑː/. Most people in India pronounce /ɑ/ sound in words like this. **Guard** is pronounced /ɡɑːd/ in RP, i.e., with a back vowel and without /ɑ/ sound.)
The six diphthongs are:

\[ /\text{ai} / \quad \text{as in eye} /\text{ai} / \]
\[ /\text{o} \text{i} / \quad \text{as in boy} /\text{boi} / \]
\[ /\text{au} / \quad \text{as in how} /\text{hau} / \]
\[ /\text{o} \text{e} / \quad \text{as in near} /\text{near} / \]
\[ /\text{er} / \quad \text{as in rare} /\text{rear} / \]
\[ /\text{ar} / \quad \text{as in poor} /\text{poor} / \]

Thus, the chief differences between the vowel systems of GIE and RP are as follows:

(i) As against RP/ə/, /ʌ/ and /ɔː/, GIE has only one phoneme that can be symbolized as /ə/, as shown below:
(ii) As against RP /ɔ/ and /ɔː/, GIE has only one phoneme /ɔ/, as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>GIE</th>
<th>RP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mud</td>
<td>/mʌd/</td>
<td>/mʌd/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirt</td>
<td>/ʃɜːt/</td>
<td>/ʃə:t/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>/ˈpɜːrəs/</td>
<td>/ˈpɜːrəs/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(That is to say, GIE does not distinguish between the words *cot* and *caught*. Both the words are pronounced alike.

(iii) GIE has the monophthongs /e:/ and /ə:/ instead of the RP diphthongs /ei/ and /əu/.

(iv) RP normally has a week vowel /ə/, /ɪ/ or /u/ in unaccented syllables. This feature is not consistently observed in GIE, where the choice of the vowel is often determined by the spelling.

(v) In RP the five long vowels /iː/, /uː/, /oː/, /ɔː/ and /ɔː/ and the diphthongs are relatively longer than the other vowels, but the length is reduced...
before voiceless consonants (the consonant produced by opening the glottis wide and holding the vocal cords tight is called a voiceless or breathed consonant). Thus the /i:/ in bead is longer than /i:/ in seat. In GIE the patterns of length are not consistently maintained.

As far as consonants are concerned, RP has twenty four consonants (including the two semi-vowels). These are:

- /p/ as in pay /pei/
- /b/ as in bat /bæt/
- /f/ as in full /ful/
- /v/ as in verb /vər/ 
- /θ/ as in think /θɪŋk/ 
- /ð/ as in thus /θʌs/ 
- /s/ as in sea /siː/ 
- /z/ as in zoo /zuː/ 
- /t/ as in tea /tiː/ 
- /d/ as in dog /dɔɡ/ 
- /tʃ/ as in chin /tʃɪn/ 
- /dʒ/ as in judge /dʒʌdʒ/ 
- /s/ as in sugar /ˈsʌɡər/ 
- /ʒ/ as in measure /ˈmeʒər/ 
- /k/ as in cool /kuːl/
The main differences between the consonant systems of RP and GIE are as follows.

(i) As against RP /dʒ/, /z/ and /ʒ/, GIE has only one consonant that can be symbolized as /j/, as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>RP</th>
<th>GIE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judge</td>
<td>/dʒədʒ/</td>
<td>/jəj/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoo</td>
<td>/zuː/</td>
<td>/juː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasure</td>
<td>/piːəʒə/</td>
<td>/piːəʒə/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) GIE uses /v/ (voiced, labio-dental and fricative) in place of /w/ (voiced, labio-dental and semi-vowel).
(iii) In RP the production of /ə/ (voiced, dental, fricative) necessitates the keeping of the tongue in between the position required for producing Hindi ' tanggal' and 'kha'. In GIE, it is pronounced as Hindi 'tang'.

(iv) The production of RP/θ/ (voiceless, dental, fricative) has the same difference. In GIE, it is replaced by Hindi 'tha'.

(v) In RP /ɔ/ sound is not pronounced when the letter 'r' is followed by a consonant. For example, heart /hɔ:t/, but in GIE it is pronounced.

(vi) In RP, normally, /ɔ/ sound is not pronounced when the letter 'r' occurs at the word final position and not followed by a vowel in the very next word. But in GIE, it is pronounced.

Now, it has been well-established that there is an Indian pronunciation of English as spoken by educated Indians, and this standard is, more or less, used by the best speakers of English in each state. This General Indian Pronunciation of English can serve as a standard if the aim is communication with other Indian speakers in the country. However, this notion of standard Indian pronunciation of English words is vague and the exact
meaning behind this term is yet to be made clear. It must be admitted that Indian pronunciation of English words is not mature enough to be designated as standard pronunciation of English words.

The real problem, however, is the retardation in the formation of good speech habits as far as Indian pupils of English as a second language are concerned. There are lots of causes of retarding in speech and these causes vary from individual to individual. In our Indian schools and colleges, less attention is paid to speech training. It may be that teachers do not understand its value. They rely too much on the grammar-translation method. Consequently, there is almost no speech training in the class-rooms. In fact, spoken English is, generally, no longer used outside the English class-room in our schools and even in several of our colleges. One is not very sure how far it is used even during the English periods in schools and colleges. Lack of facilities and opportunities to speak English is a significant factor responsible for retardation in speech. It is worth noting that nearly half of the respondents (49.89%, to be precise) have supported this view (Table No. 38).

Our teachers are not well-equipped in phonetics. The reasons are numerous. There is no provision for teachers
to get trained in phonetics and phonology at a large scale. Then, the helpful aids such as the television, CD-player, taperecorder, linguaphone etc. that can be very useful in learning correct pronunciation are neither available at the training centres nor at the institutions where the teachers serve. Besides, the Boards and Universities also do not lay stress on oral tests. There is a regular feature to take a viva-voce test at the end of M.A. Examination in English. But the purpose is to evaluate the amount of memorized content of the courses. No stress is laid on the fluency or pronunciation. There is indeed a scarcity of good books on pronunciation, though pronunciation can not be taught through books alone.

Regionalism and regional standards of speech put obstacles in learning correct sounds of English words because of differences in speech habits or muscle habits. In India the regional speech habits have absorbed spoken English and they have regionalized pronunciation of English words. They tend to substitute sounds from the mother-tongue for English sounds. For example, /skuː/ is pronounced as /iʃkuː/ in Uttar Pradesh. In Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana and Punjab, it is pronounced as /sʌkuː/. Likewise /piːpəl/ for /piːpəl/ and /teibəl/ for /teɪbəl/. In south the pronunciation of /t/ is soft.
In certain parts, people replace /s/ by /s/ and /s/ by /s/ sounds. In the same way, /f/ is replaced by 'ph'. In certain provinces they do not speak /zh/ sound and it is invariably replaced by 'ja', 'jo' or 'jh'. In some provinces they pronounce /j/ sound in place of /o: / and /d/ is replaced by /t/. In Assam, Bengal and Orissa, /w/ is replaced by 'vh', for instance 'vhirb' in stead of /v:i:b/. On account of this regional standard in English, spoken English becomes less intelligible, specially in a gathering representing all parts of the nation.

The problems of students and teachers increase, as there is no one-to-one relationship between letters of the alphabet and the sounds they represent.

Now, it is the responsibility of the teacher that the pupils should be provided with proper and ample opportunities for speaking and conversation. The more they will converse the more they will get practice. It is sometimes said that the best way to learn English, a foreign language, is to live in a place where nothing but English is spoken. This environment can not be provided to every student in India. Hence, it becomes the duty of the English teacher to present an atmosphere, at least in his class, to enable the students to practise conversation in English. The art of speaking very much depends upon
practice. The teacher should encourage the students to practise speaking.

Speech training should be a pleasant activity, otherwise it will fail. In the beginning the child should be encouraged to make progress with more familiar sounds—proceeding from known to unknown. To begin with, oral composition may take the form of a simple object, story, animal or incident. The teacher should get its main points from the pupils and write them in their proper sequence on the black-board.

In the beginning stages, pictures can play an important role in oral practice. The teacher should put well-thought out and carefully worded questions on a picture. It will be a mistake to ask a student to tell all he sees in a picture. His attention may be distracted from the main points. The success of a picture lesson depends completely on the teacher's questions that should aim at focussing the student's attention on the main points in the picture.

Construction of stories or completion of stories can also serve as a good device. In the beginning it will not be easy for the child to narrate the full story. He may be encouraged to go on adding sentences to his initial story telling.
Dramatization can also serve the purpose at this stage. It touches all the activities of a child. Therefore, it would be valuable to harness this instinct to the teaching of English. A story gains in vitality by being acted. Some word-games can be devised according to the requirements of the pupils. Word-games provide drill in correct speech. Practice in framing questions can be given by dividing the pupils into two groups and by asking the groups to have a conversation.

The art of speaking may also be encouraged by 'saying and doing' exercises. These can be used as a good means of promoting the skill of speaking. Recitation of the poetry and the description of its gist can also serve as a device for speaking English. Debates, oral essays, prepared speeches etc., can also be used for developing the competence in English speaking. However, these devices must be employed for the students of the higher classes. They might have an adverse effect in junior classes.

In higher stages, the dialogue is the best kind of text to teach the spoken language. The reason is that it presents the language directly in the contexts in which it is most commonly used. The students practise in the same way. In this way, there is a link between
language and situation. In addition, the dialogue accommodates within its framework several features of the spoken language and key patterns. The students participate actively in the lesson. Though, the dialogue must be well-constructed. The structural items should be restricted to one or two primary structures. The situations should be realistic. The dialogue should not be very long and it must be interesting.

Often, we find that the students commit many mistakes while speaking English. So it is essential to correct the mistakes of the students in speaking. But the question arises when these mistakes should be corrected. Should these mistakes be corrected when the students are speaking? No, this is not acceptable. This will mar the initiative of the students. They will know more if they are encouraged to speak. In fact, their mistakes should be corrected when they have finished speaking. While the pupil is answering a question or saying something, the teacher ought to listen to it properly. Afterwards, when he has finished speaking, the teacher should point out the mistakes and encourage him to correct them.

The teacher should also point out the mistakes made by a student in mispronouncing a sound or word. To serve this purpose, it is indispensable that the teacher's
own pronunciation is reasonably good. Every teacher of English as a second language must be well aware of the existence of phonetics and all English teachers are willy-nilly, phoneticians. Phonetics is the study of the medium of spoken language, that is, the production, transmission and reception of the sounds of human speech. It is almost impossible to teach a second language without giving some attention to pronunciation so that no bad speech habits are formed by faulty imitations. Only phonetics can help students overcome problems relating to pronunciation. Because it deals with the organs of speech: vowels and consonants; syllables (including stressed and unstressed syllables); accent and intonation; allophones and allomorphs; phonemes and morphemes; etc.

The most valuable feature of phonetics is that the learner can himself evaluate the correctness of his pronunciation with the help of phonetic transcription. It is a useful device to represent on paper the way in which words are pronounced in a language. This is particularly useful when one is dealing with a language like English in which there is no one-to-one relationship between letters of the alphabet and the sounds they represent. For instance, in English one letter often represents many sounds (consider the letter 'a' in ability, access, and age. The same letter 'a' represents three different
sounds in these words. Now consider the letters 'ch' in chuck, chord and machine. The same letters 'ch' represent three different sounds.

Pronouncing each word properly is not the end of the matter in the teaching of English. The other aspects of spoken English — stress, accent, rhythm and intonation, are not taught in isolation like the vowel and consonant sounds but they occur in the stream of speech. They are presented in the company of other words. Stress is a very important aspect of spoken English. In any English word which has more than one syllable, one of the syllables is always said with greater force than the remaining syllables in the same word. The word barker is stressed on the first syllable, accumulator has the main stress on the second syllable, cigarette has the main stress on the third syllable and deliberation on the fourth. The student as well as the teacher will have to take care to stress the appropriate syllable when they pronounce an English polysyllabic word. The teacher must suggest students to possess either Dr. Jones' English Pronouncing Dictionary or The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English by Hornby and others, ELBS/OUP, which can definitely help them stress the appropriate syllable.

Intonation is slightly different from stress. When we speak, the pitch of our voice keeps on rising.
and falling. The pitch creates differences in meaning. Some parts of our sentences are spoken at a high pitch, while others are spoken at a low pitch. This rise and fall of pitch in voice is called intonation. The intonation can be defined as the varying patterns of pitch in a sentence-structure. The teacher can teach intonation by proper modulation of his voice at the time of giving model reading, while putting questions and while engaging his students in classroom conversation. He should not address the class at a constant pitch of voice. Tone, stress, rhythm and intonation convey much of the meaning of the spoken language.

Thus, phonetics has proved very effective in teaching of spoken English particularly in the countries like India where English is taught as a second language. It is based on scientific principles. Therefore, there are no chances of distorted speaking. The teacher should spare no pains to include phonetics in his classroom teaching and make it more and more fruitful. However, Table No. 33 shows that 45.65 per cent respondents comprising 20.83 per cent Degree College teachers, 55.56 per cent Inter College teachers, 62.69 per cent Jr. High School teachers and 60.66 per cent Primary School teachers themselves have no knowledge of phonetics at all. These observations are regrettable.
Besides, to improve the standard of spoken English in Indian schools and colleges, we will have to make changes in the present examination system, if we can not totally remove it. It will have to be made more orally oriented. Unfortunately, the tests we use at present test the writing aspect mainly, and the reading aspect partly. Listening comprehension and speaking as skills are neglected. Our emphasis in tests is on knowledge of structure, vocabulary and idiomatic phrases. Students get no incentive for speaking English. Hence, the result is the poverty of comprehension; the poverty of spoken English, of expression and the poverty of knowledge. It will be fair enough to set some exercises on speech training and pronunciation while taking any examination at the higher secondary stage or even later. Stress should be laid on near pronunciation and correct expression. Some marks should be allotted for oral expression in English. A graded scheme may be followed in the monthly, periodical and annual examinations.

The use of modern audio-visual aids is very essential as far as the teaching of spoken English is concerned. Many of them have been duly described in the previous part of the chapter. However, the tape-recorder deserves a repetition. The tape-recorder is of great use in acquiring correct pronunciation. The voices of the teacher and students.
can be recorded and played back. Thus, the students can make comparisons and the teacher can monitor the work of each one of the students. Special dual-track tape-recorder may be introduced at this stage so that the teacher's model can be played and the student's copy recorded, all in one operation.

However, the most important thing is that more emphasis should be laid on spoken English. The teacher can serve as the best model for his students. If he takes care to improve his own speaking and pronunciation and trains his students also, the desired goal may be achieved.

(iii) **Reading**:

Reading is one of the basic skills in language learning. But, reading is not merely a simple mechanical skill. When used properly, it can become an effective means of acquiring knowledge as well as pleasure. Thus, reading is a means to an end, not an end in itself. In this sense, reading is a significant way of putting the newly acquired language skills to productive use.

Reading is a very important aspect of education. It is the beginning of education. It opens the door of knowledge. Reading habits not only assist the individual in accumulating stores of knowledge and wisdom from the
cultural heritage, but are also an extremely stimulating pursuit for leisure hours - leisure hours not only during the active period of life but also, and more importantly, during the period when a person has retired from active life.

Despite the practical utility of speaking English, we cannot ignore the fact that in India where English is taught as a second language, the teaching of reading is of particular importance. The students cannot get as much exposure to English as is required for full command over speaking. Thus, the only other option left is extensive reading.

Reading is meant for comprehension. Comprehension is too often narrowly interpreted as involving written answers to questions based on a short reading passage. The answers are judged correct if they reproduce more or less exactly the appropriate sentence in the passage. The pupil may scarcely have understood the sentence at all but can use the mechanics of the method to get a right answer. By the term 'reading comprehension' we mean 'reading with meaning'. In fact, reading without comprehension is a wasteful act. Good reading involves clear understanding of the material meant for reading. Once the pupil has completed the stage of mechanical
reading, he must acquire the proficiency of relating written symbols to the thought hidden behind them. This is, in short, the principal object of reading.

Reading is an audio-visual activity and also a test of intelligence and comprehension. But in India this linguistic skill is neglected both in the mother-tongue and in English. Due to inadequate training there is much retardation in reading activity whereas "further education depends on quantity and quality of reading. All the important study skills require quick, efficient and imaginative reading."  

Reading is a difficult exercise for pupils. It requires proper articulation, pronunciation, stress, rhythm etc. We are short of such teachers who can read well or who can help in reading well and thus the teachers fail to properly initiate this activity to gain results. Overcrowdedness in the classes is also an unfavourable situation for reading exercises. Our text-books are defective. The problem with these text-books is one of printing mistakes. The second is that the material is not well-graded and selected. The third is, that the

content matter of the books is difficult. It is also not interesting. Often there is much vagueness about it. The material in the text-books does not suit the pupil's standard.

There is no place for assessing the reading ability in the examination system. Besides, reading is neglected in the mother-tongue also, so it fails to receive any attention in the second language. These problems, when properly considered, lead us to realise the importance of reading as an independent skill to be developed and also to discover ways and means that may be helpful for the teacher in developing good reading habits among his students.

Sometimes, productive reading and reading with meaning, may carry some difficulties for the reader. These difficulties are related to the presence of unfamiliar words, grammatical constructions, ideas, etc. Better comprehension will take place when these difficulties are overcome.

The comprehension difficulties as mentioned above call for special attention in an alien language course. Helping the pupils develop the habit of reading with comprehension in an alien language course needs thorough and planned instruction. Therefore, the teacher will
have to make use of a number of devices to bring the students to core of the writer's thought. The duty of the teacher is to act as a guide, displaying to his class how to uncover all that is there in the subject-matter, all that is to be examined in the construction, structures and planned paragraphs in which the material is presented.

Reading is of two types - (i) loud reading and (ii) silent reading. It is important to distinguish between the nature and utility of loud reading and silent reading. Loud reading is known as oral reading also. It should be introduced after two months of reading. This means that when pupils learn what they have to read in a book, it should be introduced. It develops in the pupils the ability to pronounce words correctly and present their ideas before the audience in an attractive manner. It aims at giving the pupils the necessary skill involved in the art of reading. Loud reading is a practice as well as a test. The teacher is able to assess the knowledge of the pupils while they are reading aloud. He can test his pupil's knowledge of English words and phrases whether he knows how to pronounce them, how to phrase words, how to enunciate clearly. Oral reading develops the quality of self-dependence and self-reliance in the pupils.
If reading aloud is practised properly and scientifically, it imparts life not only to the words but to the passages as a whole. A perfect reader can make the ideas of the writer clear before the listeners. In addition, this method is very helpful in silent reading. If loud reading is not conducted, the pupils will continue to repeat their mistakes in silent reading.

The loud reading should be done only after the teacher has given a model reading. The passage for reading should be within the comprehension power of pupils. Mistakes in reading should be checked and corrected by the teacher. In the beginning, speed must never be emphasized. Weaker pupils should be given special attention.

However, it is very difficult to obtain good results through reading aloud. It does not help in penetrating the meaning. In oral reading, a great deal of attention is paid to the voice, sound, speed etc. Due to all these things, very little attention is paid to the content material and so the aspect of knowledge becomes more or less zero. It does not provide the right setting for the teaching of reading for pleasure and profit. Loud reading consumes a lot of energy. Hence, a person, who has a habit of reading aloud, can not study a good deal and for a longer period of time. Moreover, in the classroom
we have a limited time. In that period, it is possible for one pupil only to perform loud reading. The remaining pupils will continue to be passive listeners. They will not get any opportunity to participate in working of the class.

In spite of all its drawbacks, reading aloud has its place in the teaching of English. It provides a lot of practice to the student to express himself properly in spoken English and helps the listeners understand the passage read. It is an essential preliminary stage in the teaching of reading.

Nevertheless, reading aloud can not be called the best training or preparation of thought. It is often parrot-reading, as the attention of the reader is focussed on articulating the words, not on comprehending the meaning they convey. He can concentrate his attention on their meaning, only when he does not read aloud. This implies that reading should be silent. Generally, it is the silent reading that is used in practical life. If proper emphasis is to be laid on the voice, sound, speed, etc., loud reading is good, but instead of all these things, if ideas and feelings are to be imparted importance then silent reading will be of more use.
The objectives of silent reading are both pleasure and profit. It helps create taste for independent reading. It saves time and energy, for it is quick. All the pupils may be engaged in work at the same time. It works as a deterrent against the tendency so common amongst beginners to translate what they read in English into their native language. Students gain an easy access to the study of literature and gather fresh information and fresh knowledge and develop their aesthetic sense and a critical outlook by silent reading. Students who are efficient in silent reading may carry on their self-study in the libraries and the reading rooms. Every student has to take to silent reading, it may be at any stage or standard. So its practice is very essential.

Improvement is a constant process in knowledge. Silent reading should also be improved. Only those passages should be given to students that can be understood and appreciated by them. The eyes should be trained to move from one group of words to another. The number of words in each group should be increased gradually. There should be no lip movement. If the lips move, silent reading becomes oral reading without producing the sound. The teacher should give a definite time for silent reading. The time should be judiciously ascertained in accordance
with the nature and length of the material and the general standard of the class. It must be borne in mind that silent reading is not a time-passing device and should not be taken for fun.

Since the elementary classes, silent reading should be started in one way or the other. If all of a sudden the students are asked to take to silent reading, studying in the higher classes, there might be some problem, for upto this time they had the practice of oral reading only. It is also possible that they may not feel at home in silent reading.

In order to develop the competence in reading both the methods, reading aloud and silent reading, should be developed carefully. It is not possible to discard any of the two. As far as the reading of poetry and such other material is concerned, oral reading will be more beneficial as compared to silent reading. On the other side, in order to comprehend and study serious subjects, only silent reading can be useful. Such a study needs concentration that is not possible in reading aloud.

As far as reading comprehension is concerned, there are two kinds of reading in which the question of comprehension is involved. These are intensive reading and extensive reading.
Intensive reading refers to the detailed analysis of the reading material for the purpose of full grasp. This includes the comprehension of words, phrases and idioms, the use of structures, comprehension of grammatical items and the grasp of general meaning of the given material. Intensive reading is related to further progress in language learning under the teacher's guidance. It provides a basis for general control of language in speech and writing. Extensive reading, on the other hand, is related to the overall meaning or central idea of the given material. This type of reading develops at the pupil's own pace according to his individual ability. The aim of the extensive reading is to train the pupil to read directly and fluently in the target language for his own pleasure, without the help of the teacher.

It is sad that so far the chief emphasis in Indian schools and colleges has been on intensive reading and that too in a faulty manner. Extensive reading has not acquired enough significance. A rethinking of the problem is expected from the teachers and concerned authorities.

One of the important results of modern industrialisation is the increased amount of leisure that people have come to have. This leisure may be used or misused. In most of the cases, it is likely to be misused. What
to speak of the less educated, even the most sophisticated people with high academic qualifications hardly devote any time to good reading. One must feel concerned about this lack of reading habit among our people. Recent years have seen people's increasing interest in movies, social parties, restaurants and numerous more idle amusements. They entertain rather than cultivate the mind. No doubt, entertainment is essential for healthy life but not at the cost of mental attitude. And good reading, too, can entertain and thus become the source of pleasure. It can inform as well. It can broaden mental horizon and make for many-sided progress.

Now, the teacher will have to think how to develop good reading habits among students. He must concentrate all his attention on the students in schools and colleges and make them more and more book-minded. He should create in them a real love for books and not only an interest for reading. Proper guidance in regard to the choice of books should be given to the students. The teacher may recommend good books to his students, keeping in view their age and interests. Preliminary survey of students' reading interests should be conducted through questionnaires, interviews and all other means available. Such surveys will reveal the actual reasons that stand in the
way of our students' spending their leisure time in reading. Essential changes can be effected in students' habits, once we know the causes.

The teacher should keep a sympathetic eye on the development of his students in their gaining skill in silent reading. Besides, every effort should be made to make them realise that extensive reading imparts pleasure as well as knowledge. For this object the teacher will have to guide the students in the judicious division of their leisure.

A school or a college without a good library is a body without soul. An efficient library service supplements teacher's guidance. A good number of copies of each interesting book should be readily available in the library. Moreover, each class should have a bulletin-board. Such bulletin-boards are extremely helpful in improving reading interest of the students. Illustrated material for reading, involving a paragraph or two, pictures, cut-outs from newspapers, magazines, etc. containing some interesting items and other similar reading items should be put up on the bulletin-boards. But above all, in order to make the teaching of English comprehensive, balanced and useful, the teacher of English must try to teach the pupils reading in a proper and scientific way.
(iv) **Writing:**

Writing is not an end in itself; it is only a means. It enables people to come into contact with other minds breaking the barriers of space and time. It can provide a privileged access to the land of ideas. It can show the radiance of a mind that fights limitations of all sorts and finds fulfilment by experiencing true liberation. It can help us recognize the unity of mankind and promote its unification. Therefore, it is the sacred duty of the teacher to teach his pupils how to write English effectively.

Writing is a difficult skill; it needs perfect control of the muscles of the wrist, hand and fingers and this control a young child does not naturally have. Hence, there is need to teach writing English. It involves teaching to develop the skill of controlling the small muscles of the wrist and fingers; teaching co-ordination of hand and eye; making pupils do different exercises in written work.

Writing should be begun just after word-recognition exercises. It may, thus, be started after about fifteen days of teaching English. There are three benefits of doing so. First, writing reinforces oral and reading
work. The language items already learnt become firmly fixed in the minds of students. Second, writing presents a change of activity and, thus, helps reduce monotony. Third, it enables students to do some homework.

The first and foremost requirement of good writing is a good handwriting. Handwriting must be legible. Illegible handwriting creates a very bad impression on the reader. It should be attractive. The letters should be uniform in shape and size, suitably spaced and the lines of writing parallel to the top of the paper. A good handwriting also means writing with good speed. There should be complete adjustment between writing and thinking. There should be no omission of words or phrases due to quick thinking in fast writing. Good handwriting is not only pleasant to look at, but it has a healthy effect on the personality of the child as well.

A bad handwriting develops lack of confidence in the person who has written it and once the lack of confidence has been generated, it is not possible for the reader to look at the handwriting with interest and pleasure. Various factors are responsible for the bad handwriting of the students. Bad handwriting is sometimes due to imitation of bad examples, so the teacher should always write with a set hand on the black-board. In most
classrooms pupils do not have writing tables. They sit on the floor and write. So they have the wrong posture. They even hold the exercise-book in the wrong position. Use of fountain-pens or ball-pens from the early stages is also responsible for bad handwriting. In the beginning pupils should write with a soft pencil. They should be discouraged to write with very small pencil on paper and with thin slate pencils on the slate. The quality of paper on which the pupils write has its own significance. In the beginning they should not be asked to write on small papers without lines. Ways of holding pen or pencil are also responsible for good or bad handwriting. The teacher should give frequent demonstrations to show how the pen is held with the thumb on the left hand side, the fore-finger on the top and the middle finger on the right. Besides, students should not be permitted to use rough note-books, for they conduce to a habit of hurried scrubbing.

The English letters have their origin in Roman Script. At present, English has primarily three types of scripts: (a) print script, (b) cursive script, and (c) rounded cursive script. In print script, letters of a word are not joined together. The printed material
is always found in this script. Therefore, it is named printed script. The chief advantage of this script is that the pupils concentrate more and more on the shapes of letters that they meet in the text-books or the other printed material. Thus, at the early stage, they are saved from the bother of learning two distinct forms for each letter. While in cursive script, letters of a word are joined together by curves etc. It is also called running writing. It is uniform, rhythmic, natural and speedy. In rounded cursive script, only some letters of a word are joined together. Since it combines some characteristics of both cursive and print scripts, it has the advantages and disadvantages of both kinds of scripts.

Keeping in view the advantages and disadvantages of print and cursive scripts, it is advisable that during the first two years, print script should be taught. After that, cursive script must be introduced.

Similarly, there are primarily two styles of writing: (a) vertical and (b) slanted. In vertical style letters are written in vertical fashion (\). It is perhaps the best style of writing. The slanted style is also of two kinds: (i) forward slant (/), and (ii) backward slant (\). Forward slant is better than backward slant, as the latter
hinders speed. The teacher should emphasize the vertical style. If a pupil is quite inclined to adopt slanted style, the teacher should discourage the adoption of backward slanted style.

The teaching of writing English should go through four stages. The first stage is related to motivation. First of all the students must be motivated to learn writing. The teacher, for this, may use motivational techniques.

The second stage is very significant. It is related to penmanship, that is, giving knowledge of writing letters of the alphabet. This training is also concerned with the movement of hand and muscles.

In the third stage, writing words and sentences should be taught. Side by side, emphasis should be given to beautiful and uniform writing. For this, the teacher can give certain exercises as:

(A) **Calligraphy** :-

A model word or sentence is written on the first line of the exercise book. Pupils are asked to write the same word or sentence many times below the model word or sentence.
(B) **Copying**:

Pupils are asked to copy words, phrases and sentences from the blackboard or book. The teacher takes a round of the class and supervises the written work of students.

(C) **Dictation**:

When the practice of copying the words has been done, the teacher should start dictation. The aim of dictation must be borne in mind: it is not to discourage the child by telling him what he has not mastered. It is only a diagnostic technique to the advantage of the teacher, who is in need of knowing where to reinforce. The aim is not to increase the speed of writing either. It is only an attempt at bringing the two faculties of the pupil’s mind in close collaboration while learning writing. He hears words, whose image is necessarily deepened as he tries to put them in writing.

For dictation, the teacher should select such a passage the vocabulary and structure of which are familiar to the class. First the teacher should read out the
passage clearly to the students. In the second reading, he should dictate it to them in sense groups, speaking two to four words at a time. After he has, in this way, dictated the whole passage, the teacher should read it out for the third time, giving a brief pause at the end of sentence so that the students may supply any words that they might have missed at the time of writing.

In the fourth stage, pupils are initiated into composition writing without any help. Written composition is divided into three sub-categories: (i) descriptive, (ii) narrative, and (iii) reflective. In the classroom, the teacher should, first of all, take to descriptive composition. He should make the students practise this type of composition a good deal. With the practice of this type of composition, the students automatically acquire the ability to write narrative and reflective compositions. For successful writing of a reflective essay, it is necessary to find out different fine aspects of the topic, but it is not possible for the children of a tender age to develop the capability of thinking about the minute details. For them practice of descriptive essays is sufficient.

The main objectives of composition writing are to enable the students to know the various vocabulary
items and the structures which he has to use in writing a particular piece of composition; to enable them to express in writing what they speak, feel, think and understand; to teach them how to organise thoughts and ideas according to the accepted usage and to provide them with practice in the use of English. In order to meet these objectives, the teacher will have to make a lot of conscious efforts. The art of composition is very much dependent upon practice. It is wise to make the student practise composition at the earliest. So far as the topics are concerned, the teacher should bear in mind the limit of the students' knowledge of the language. It has been experimentally found that students commit more mistakes in their composition when they write on topics that concern their everyday lives. The topics should be specific rather than general. They should be concrete, realistic and practical and should be related to the needs, interests and experiences of the students.

After the student has submitted his composition to the teacher, it is for the latter to correct it and make suggestions for its improvement. But what should be the teacher's approach to composition correction? Should he mark each mistake or should he be selective? Bright & MacGregor suggest, "The teacher who carefully
crosses out or underlines every mistake in his pupils' books develops a keen eye for errors but his pupils do not: it is easier for them to develop a tolerance of red-ink rash. It is the pupils and not the teacher who should learn to spot mistakes by practising proof-reading.7

One of the teacher's most perplexing problems, as far as the teaching of writing is concerned, has been the teaching of English spellings. It is universally admitted that English spelling is full of difficulties. The reason is that it is anomalous and inconsistent. Besides, it does not correspond to the pronunciation. English has 44 sounds, whereas the number of letters of the alphabet is only 26. Thus 5 vowels are made to do the job of 12 pure vowel sounds and 8 diphthongs. 21 consonants, three of which viz. C, Q, X are redundant, stand for 24 consonants. Moreover, there are several words in English in which a letter or letters are silent. For example, 'P' and 'l' in 'psalm', 'l' in 'walk' etc. Besides, new methods of teaching like 'sentence method', 'word method', and 'look and say method' have taken the place of old methods of teaching such as 'spelling method'

and 'alphabetic method'. In the new methods, the attention of students is drawn not to the letters which form the words, but to the general shape or structure of a word or a sentence. This leads to the habit of spelling words wrongly.

The question 'should correct spelling be taught?' has been engaging the attention of the educationists for a very long time. Their conclusion as supported by recent experimental investigations is that spelling should not be taught. Spelling is caught rather than taught. The teaching of spelling should, therefore, be incidental. Spelling drill is simply wasteful and ineffective. The only thing which should be done to teach correct spelling is to develop in students the habit of reading carefully. Thus, they will meet the words in print again and again. If they misspell a word, there will seem something wrong with its total appearance. It is their visual memory that will come to their rescue at that time. Besides, students especially at the high-school stage and afterwards should be encouraged to look up the dictionary. This is essential for their word-study.

However, the principal aim of a writing course is to train the pupil in expressing himself effectively in good English. To meet this aim, the suggestions given
by Broughton and others for the teacher may be useful. They suggest that the teacher can "(i) limit the length of the written material to be produced, (ii) increase the amount of class preparation for the task, (iii) provide guidance on the final form of the written work, for example with picture prompts, or word prompts as a result of the oral preparation, (iv) encourage students to collaborate in the actual process of writing, (v) allow cross-checking between the draft stage and the writing of the final product, (vi) limit the complexity of the writing task itself, and (vii) can demand that the task be completed either slowly or quickly."

Well, unlike Geography or Economics that is a content or a knowledge subject, English is a skill subject like swimming or driving. Just as we learn swimming or driving through constant practice, we acquire English language in the same way. Language learning is essentially a habit forming process, and constant and intensive practice is the basis of habit formation. The four basic language skills, viz. listening, speaking, reading and writing, must receive due attention. No skill should be neglected at the cost of others. There is sometimes a tendency on the part of English teachers to neglect listening.

and speaking because these skills are generally not tested in the examination. On the other hand, some teachers devote too much time to listening and speaking and consequently neglect reading and writing.

The emphasis laid on these basic skills should differ at various levels of teaching. The first thing in English learning is speech and, therefore, much attention should be devoted to speech practice during the first four years. Later on, the emphasis on speech should be reduced and from secondary classes more attention should be paid to reading and writing. This does not mean, in any case, that speech is to be totally neglected. On the other hand it is to be considered essential but the time devoted to it should be decreased as (i) the students have already acquired mastery over the basic sentence-structures and (ii) reading and writing become more significant at these stages. Our approach in teaching English throughout the whole course must be balanced and aim at the proper development of the four language skills. Thus, we need a multi-skill approach.

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