CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Role of English in Today’s Globalized World

With the advancement of technology and economic liberalization, the entire world has become a global village. Now, it is very important to understand this concept of globalization in context to the world market. Companies with the same business interests around the world, merge and become multinational/transnational companies. They expand their business into any country which is able to provide their business with sufficient facilities to manufacture their products or conduct their services productively and economically (Graddol 1997, 2006; Troy 1997). In this era of globalization, English language has established itself as the universal medium of communication. Proficiency in the English communication continues to take its place at the core of conducting business with international firms (Cameron 2002; Graddol 2006; Kachru, Kachru, & Nelson 2006; Kameda 2005; Nickerson 1998). Of all the different languages in the world, English as a global/international language or a lingua franca, is widely used in communication between people and countries. It has become a potent tool of socio-cultural and knowledge exchange as well as an effective soft skill of enviable market value. It has penetrated deep into all business sectors and has become a global passport for professional success. Almost all people around the world depend on English language for their economic and social well-being. English Language; the language of news, business, information, opportunity, employment, power and prestige; has become the synonym of all progress in the recent years. It is the dominant language in operation at the world stage (James 2010). English holds an undisputable position in international politics, banking, the press, news agencies, advertising, broadcasting, recording
industry, motion pictures, traveling, science and technology, communication, and lot more. No other language covers such a wide range in functions as English does and will ever do (Shermila 2005).

Kachru draws comprehensible circles of three in ascending order to show the wide coverage of English in the world. The Inner Circle forms the base, followed by the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle respectively. The Inner Circle refers to the native speakers of the language who have historical and sociolinguistic base, like U.K., U.S.A., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland. The Outer Circle comprises of countries like India, Singapore and Malaysia which had once been colonized by Britain and the countries being listed in the expanding circle include China, Egypt and Korea where the performance varieties of the language are used essentially in EFL contexts (Koul 1992). The spread of English has resulted in the development of many varieties of English so that one English becomes many Englishes. This model by Kachru, in a way, suggests that no single variety is better than the other linguistically. “…English now has multicultural identities” (Koul 1992: 357).

Another very important reason regarding English as a world language is that all the world's knowledge is enshrined in English. English is universally renowned for its power of expression and its rich literature. Therefore, proficiency in English is of paramount importance to access this vast treasure of wisdom and knowledge.

English is also the language of the Internet as most of the web content is written in English. As it is extremely difficult to translate every web page and its content in the vernaculars, one has to be competent enough in the English language to access the given information on the Internet. It is also becoming important in e-commerce, domestic and international travel and tourism.
The status that English plays in the world today is unprecedented in the world history. The liberalization of the world economy with English as a main link language has influenced the people all across the globe. Intercultural contact, mainly through internet has changed the way people think and live. Looking at the present scenario, it would not be an exaggeration if one visualizes a time when there will be one ruler, one government, and one massive country with English as the lingua franca.

1.2 Role of English in India

English language has become such a world phenomenon that no country of the world can evade its influence. It gains all the more importance for a country like India which is increasingly growing to be an important player in the global market. The liberalization of the Indian economy ushered in all kinds of reasons to learn this language. While few decades ago, students who had specialized in English joined either teaching or the civil services, now a whole new spectrum of job opportunities has opened up. There are now call centers that need trainers to equip their employees with communication skills, there are multinationals who have been recruiting marketing staff that need to be taught spoken English, there are medical transcription centers which need efficient translators and reporters. Those desirous of immigration to the West need professional help for qualifying tests like the IELTS, TOEFL etc.

Another important role of English in India is as a library language. Much of the literature pertaining to developments in science and technology, communication, arts, social sciences, philosophy etc. are reported in English. The unending world knowledge is accessible to anyone, provided he/she has some proficiency in English. Baruah (1992) points out that about 60 percent of the world’s literature for science and technology journals, newspapers, periodicals etc. are published in English. Any literate
Indian who would like to access this literature in their authentic forms needs to be proficient in English.

English has contributed a lot in the field of literature. The Indian writers in English like Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Salman Rushdie and the like have raised the status of Indian literature in English by their outstanding works, which reached the international arena. They can be compared with great works of the native speakers of English. It was their good command in English which lead them to produce such prolific literature in the English language. The great thinkers and national figures like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, among many others, have made the rich heritage of Indian tradition heard to the West and to the world at large through one powerful tool that is English language (Vaseeker 2005). The language has enabled the Indian scholars to translate the rich Indian culture and religious belief to the West. Within the country, common people can have an access to the classic books written in Sanskrit and Persian through their translation in English by Indian scholars (Sena 2005). English will always remain the living force in India whether in the field of national unity, science and commerce, education, and lot more.

English occupies all the important places in the socio-economic-cultural set-up in the country. It is the tool for binding the multi-diversity country into one massive whole. In the field of administration, education and judiciary; English occupies a prominent place. National level seminars, workshops, conferences, competitive examinations, interviews are conducted mostly in English. Business and banking are mostly done in English. In the mass media, entertainment buzz, broadcasting, whether through television or radio, English has a vital role to play (Bindal 2005). Even in family, friendship, and so on, English has a dominant role to play. The hierarchy of the role of English starts from the top that is at the national level, then the state level, and
so on till it reaches the very bottom line that is the family. Therefore, English carries with it the symbol of prestige, merits, and a certificate of job opportunities (Sarangi 2005).

To have a better insight of the role of English in the present day India, one cannot ignore its history of growth in India. It was so planted that that to uproot it from the Indian soil seems next to impossible. Both the foreigners (British), and the natives (Indians) fertilized it so well that in today's world it has grown to the highest, and no other Indian language can compete with it. The Indians seem to grow in their craving for the language as the days go by. Now it is very much a part of their culture especially for the elite and the educated communities.

1.3 Historical Background of ELT in India

There are three phases of the underpinning of English in Indian soil. All contributed to the same purpose. The first phase was the Missionary Phase which started around 1614 by the Christian missionaries. Their work was mainly in proselytizing the natives, and for educational purposes. The second phase was the demand from the South Asian Public who wanted to study English. The cause behind this may be for educational reasons or because of their apprehension of the domination of Persian or Arabic, which they do not want to be subordinated to. The third phase was the Government Policy where Macaulay's ‘Minutes’ was executed in 1835. The purpose of the minutes was to form a class of people who will be interpreters between the British Raj and the Indian masses they governed. Moreover the interpreters should be over and above English in moral and intellect even though they are Indians by birth (Kachru, 1983). Lord William Bentinck, the then Governor General of India, gave a seal of approval, thereby creating a firm ground for English as a medium of instruction in educational institutions and for transacting government business (Sena 2005).
three phases give a comprehensible account of the plantation of English in India that set the ground for the indispensable role that the English language plays in the present day scenario.

From the despised instrument of oppression to the reluctantly adopted lingua franca to the status symbol of the upper classes to its position today as a second language, English has come a long way and so has the teaching of English in India. Before Independence, When Lord Macaulay recommended the use of English for educating the Indian masses in 1835, he felt that English language was the only suitable medium to transfer technical knowledge and scientific bent of mind to Indians. His aim was to groom a small section of Indians who could later use English as a medium of communication and bridge the gap between India and the western world. Later, ‘Wood's Despatch’ in 1854 set out a framework that recommended elementary education in the vernaculars for the masses which created a two-tier education system in India. But in the post independent India, as in other colonies which gained independence, a decision was taken to replace the colonial language by a national language, which was chosen to be Hindi (Moore 1966).

History of Language Policy in India can be discussed at two levels, the school level and the tertiary/university level. At the school level the most important move in policy making was the recommendation, ‘Three-Language-Formula’ by the conference of Chief Ministers in 1961. This was adopted in India to accommodate the interests of group identity attached with the mother tongue and the regional languages, a national pride and unity attached with the Hindi language, and administrative efficiency and technological progress attached to the English language.

Later, in the twenty-first century also, the ‘three-language-formula’ continued to be relevant. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) developed by the National
Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT, an Institution in charge of school education in India) in November 2000 stressed the relevance of the ‘three-language-formula’, and emphasized that its basic objective was to enhance “national unity and facilitate intra-state and international communication” (NCERT 2000). Understanding the significance of English as a ‘world’ language, Govt. of India decided to introduce teaching of English right from the elementary stage itself in all government primary schools in India from 2001 onwards. A few words from Kothari Education Commission Report (2001) are worth quoting, “English being a language of international importance would play a vital role in higher education. No student should be considered as qualified for a degree unless he has acquired a reasonable proficiency in English.” According to the National Curriculum Framework 2005, “the multilingual character of Indian society should be seen as a resource to promote multilingual proficiency to every child, which includes proficiency in English” (NCERT 2005).

At the level of tertiary education, it is recorded by Howatt and Widdowson (2004) that failure in the initial attempts to translate basic science texts into the ancient learned languages of Sanskrit and classical Arabic resulted in adoption of English as the medium of instruction at post elementary schooling in order to prepare pupils for higher studies in the language.

In the post-independent India, University Grants Commission (UGC, a body in charge of university education) was formed in 1953. In 1957, Kunzru Committee set up by the UGC, recommended the following:

i) the change from English to an Indian language as the medium of instruction at the university level should not be hastened;

ii) even when a change in the medium of institution is made, English should continue to be studied by all university students;

iii) the teaching of English should be given special attention in the pre-university class (a three-year degree course was proposed in place of the four-year undergraduate course);
iv) the teaching of English literature should be related to the study of Indian literatures in order to promote critical thinking and writing in Indian languages; and
v) English be retained as a properly studied second language at the university level. (Krishnaswamy and Burde 1998: 186)

In 1964-66, the Indian Education Commission recommended that English should be continued as the medium of instruction at the university level. The 1966 Report of the Education Commission of India suggested:

For a successful completion of the first-degree course, a student should possess an adequate command of English, be able to express himself with reasonable ease and facility, understand lectures in it and avail himself of its literature ... English should be the most useful library language in higher education and our most significant window on the world.

The continuation of English at the university level was further endorsed by a Ministry of Education Study Group in its report on Study of English in India in 1967, next by National Policy on Education in 1968. In 1989, the importance of English was recognized by the fact that the UGC recommended it as a compulsory subject of study at all undergraduate courses.

The more recently constituted National Knowledge Commission 2006, an advisory body to the Prime Minister of India, has the objective of transforming India into a knowledge society. It addresses five focus areas of the knowledge paradigm: ‘access’- easy access to knowledge; ‘concepts’- all levels and forms of education; ‘creation’- effective creation of knowledge; ‘applications’- of knowledge systems; and ‘services’- like e-governance. The commission says:

In a multi-lingual country like India, language is relevant not only as a means of communication or a medium of instruction but also as a determinant of access. Increasingly an understanding of, and a command over the English language, is perhaps becoming the most important determinant of access to higher education, employment possibilities and social opportunities. School leavers who are not adequately trained in English as a language are always at a handicap in the world of higher education. And those who do not know English well enough, find it exceedingly difficult to compete for a place in our premier educational institutions. This disadvantage is accentuated further in the world
of work, not only in professional occupations but also in white-collar occupations. (National Knowledge Commission 2006)

The Working Group on Language Policy in the Knowledge Commission says that for creating suitable ground conditions for India to become a knowledge society in the new millennium, it is essential to make the best possible school education available to all sections of society, bridging the gap between English medium and regional language medium instruction and that between the rural and the urban as well as the government schools and privately run schools. For the tertiary level, the Working Group recommends:

At the undergraduate level we recommend a course called 'Critical Understanding, Thinking and Expression' that would be taught to all students regardless of the other subjects chosen by them. The aim of this course would be to equip the student with the multiple skills of comprehension, logical thinking and examining different views on a topic to arrive at an informed and independent position and the ability to express oneself clearly and effectively. (National Knowledge Commission 2006)

The language policy in India has always been closely linked with the issue of English language education, above and beyond the attention. What began as a post-colonial predicament, continued specifically in the Indian context as an asset to rely on at the level of both intra-national and international communication. Therefore, the language policy in India is supported by the general ideology prevalent in the Indian society towards the importance of English. However, the divide between policy and practice in this context necessitates the current study.

1.4 Background and Rationale of the Problem

According to Mahajiteswar Das (1990: 61), it is necessary to develop competency in all the four language skills; that is, listening, speaking, reading and writing; in order to improve communication skills in the English language. Also, it is worthwhile to note that effective written and oral communication of a general nature in English might be relevant to general learners but people who want to use English
language for specific purposes need a specialized kind of learning. This observation made by Mahajiteswar Das gains special significance in the context of vocational and professional courses. Thus, there is a need for a study of the learners’ needs, so that the tailored use of English will result in satisfying the immediate needs of learners undertaking the specialized courses of study.

In 1968, the National Policy on Education (NPE) laid special focus on the study of English. The NPE insisted that India must not only keep pace with scientific and technological knowledge, but also should contribute to it significantly. It was for this purpose that the study of English required to be strengthened especially for the technical students. But unfortunately in the technological institutes, a lot of thrust is being given to the technical subjects and little importance is given to the English language.

The increasing specialization of content in English teaching curricula saw its beginning in the early 1960s. English language plays a major role in transmitting knowledge as a means rather than as an end in itself. Teaching of English generally is treated as teaching with utilitarian purpose. Generally, English language is used when associated with an occupational, vocational, academic or professional requirement. When needs are clear, learning aims can be defined in terms of these specific purposes under which the language contents are tailored. This results in focused teaching such that the learner picks up communicative ability in the required area. The results can be impressive where such a requirement for communicative ability is matched with specially designed materials relevant to the needs of particular students. According to Mackay, “A difference in approach from the current ‘start at the beginning again’, or remedial ‘solutions’ is needed, when English ceases to be an examination subject and assumes the role of ‘instrument of communication’ (Mackay and Mountford 1978:4).
To meet the rising needs of English language teaching, variants of general ELT have paved way to English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). In all the above-mentioned variants, the nature of the purpose involved is self-indicative. ESP marks advancement in the conventional framework of ELT, which defines the teaching requirements depending upon the specific needs of different groups of students. ESP advocates the designing of special courses instead of one multi-purpose course, to suit the needs of various groups of students. The concept of ESP is said to be particularly appropriate for teaching English to students of science and technology (EST). Besides, English at the undergraduate level of engineering studies differs from English in other undergraduate courses because it has a specific purpose unlike a general purpose in other colleges. It differs from other courses in the three aspects, such as relevance, register and style (Kennedy and Bolitho 1984). These three aspects gain prominence in material designing because the course must equip the learners for both academic and professional requirements. Their academic functions include oral and written communication, comprehension of lectures and books, note-making, note-taking, paper presentations, group discussions, participation in regional, national and international seminars and most importantly taking interview. Though, the professional requirements may be job-specific yet it largely includes client management, presentations, seminars, meetings, group discussions and, of course, interviews.

As this study concentrates on English language teaching in Engineering institutes, it would be worthwhile to look at the profile of AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education)- the body that monitors technical education in the country. AICTE is vested with the statutory authority for planning, formulation and maintenance of norms and standards, accreditation, funding priority areas, monitoring and
evaluation, maintenance of a parity of certification and awards, and ensuring the coordinated and integrated development of technical and management education. A duly constituted Accreditation Board conducts the mandatory periodic evaluation to maintain standards.

As far as engineering institutes are concerned, Punjab is one of the leading states in churning out thousands of engineers every year. Punjab Technical University (PTU), with 102 self-financed (private) and government-funded engineering and technology institutes under its periphery, is the largest and the most significant university offering technical courses in Punjab. In addition to these, there are about a dozen private and government universities (deemed universities) that offer engineering courses. All these engineering institutes under PTU, accommodate students not only from Punjab but also from neighboring states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. Students of engineering and technology studying at these institutes are offered a course in English language for one semester during the first year of its four year engineering programmes. In 2011, taking into consideration the changing needs of its students and the rising popularity of Communicative language Teaching (CLT) among the academia, PTU changed its English language course from Communication Skills to Communicative English. It was done with an objective to make the entire curriculum more practical, useful and communicative. It was expected to play a vital role in improving students’ proficiency in English communication and preparing them for the workplace or making them ‘industry-ready’. But unfortunately, it has been found that the existing curriculum is somewhere, somehow not being able to meet the needs and expectations of the learners as well as the teachers. The teachers, in general, seem to be hesitant and resistant towards implementing CLT in their language classrooms. Despite the attention given to CLT in the literature, language teachers have not received enough
training on applying such methodology in their teaching programs (Savignon 2002) because the term lacks precise definitions (Brown 2001). CLT raises concern because there is a great deal of confusion and controversy about what it means to teach communicatively as well as a lack of research on applying CLT in a language classroom (Canale 1983). Nattinger (1984) notes that there are some general descriptions of CLT, but its definitions are vague and contain many variations. Some teachers and researchers may agree that CLT focuses on developing learners’ communicative competence, interaction, and the process of language use. However, for teachers and program developers, CLT is a challenging concept to apply to language instruction. Many teachers feel frustrated due to the ambiguous explanations of CLT (Savignon 1990). Unfortunately, there is still insufficient guidance for teachers to use CLT in Second Language (L2) classrooms (Burke 2007). The teachers are neither being able to understand its nuances nor implement it effectively in their classrooms.

1.5 Teachers’ Profile

Almost all the teachers teaching English language in the engineering colleges/institutes in Punjab are generally post graduate in English literature with least or no academic background or experience in the field of English language teaching. This interferes with the teaching techniques involved in the teaching of engineering English, as their methodology and orientation are entirely different. Most of the teachers are unaware about the upcoming trends and recent developments in the language teaching methodologies. Even if some of the teachers (who are mostly the young post graduates) try to keep themselves abreast with the latest developments in ELT through books and journals, they find themselves in a conundrum when it comes to implementing it on a practical level in their language classrooms. The senior teachers (with an experience of 10 years and above) especially are stubborn in their attitude
towards language teaching. They resist any kind of change in their usual, clichéd classroom methodologies and most of them are dissatisfied with the current Communicative English syllabus prescribed for the students of B.Tech. first year.

1.6 Students’ Profile

The students that come to the engineering colleges/institutes in Punjab belong to heterogeneous regional, social, cultural and economic backgrounds. They even have different reasons to undergo the engineering programs. It has been observed that due to lack of technical institutes in the neighboring states, Punjab accommodates not only its own students but students from other states as well like Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. They come from diverse economic and social strata having varied academic backgrounds. Some students have done their schooling from Convent or English medium schools where as others have passed out from Hindi or Punjabi (regional language) medium schools. Some students belong to educated urban families while some belong to uneducated rural families. Thus, the engineering students in Punjab come from diverse backgrounds and bring along with them different levels of proficiency in English language. With such heterogeneity in the student population, there is a strong need to strike a balance between the conceptual and linguistic level of each learner, arising out of their different academic needs. A single approach towards the teaching would be inadequate to meet the requirements of all the students.

1.7 Statement of the Problem

Language teaching has undergone a number of phases in using different approaches and methods as a result of continuous development and change of knowledge in the world. Among the many methods, CLT- whose origins are supposed to be found in the changes that took place in the British language teaching tradition
from the late 1960s, has expanded throughout the world since the mid-1970s in a wider scope (Richards and Rodgers 2001). India is a country not outside this scope.

In recent years, global consideration is being given to Communicative language teaching in the belief that it can cater to the communicative needs of the learners. This is also true in case of India and it seems for this reason that curricula and teaching materials are meant to be designed on the principles of CLT. However, since the concept of CLT is a western idea and method; there might be a possibility for CLT to be ill-suited to the Indian contexts for varied reasons like misconceptions about CLT principles, lack of pre-service and in-service teacher training on CLT, traditional examination, large class size, cultural constraints characterized by beliefs about teachers’ and students’ role and classroom relationships, personal constraints such as students’ low motivation and unequal ability to take part in independent active learning practices and even teachers’ limited expertise in creating communicative activities like group work and pair work (Widdowson 1979; Brumfit and Johnson 1979; Larsen-Freeman 1986; Byrne 1986; Medgyes 1986; Bax 2003; Hiep 2007; Jin, Singh and Li 2005; Fazili 2007; Rayan 2011). It should, therefore, be investigated if these ill-suiting circumstances prevail in Indian educational contexts specifically in engineering and technology institutes where the needs of the students are very specific and more communicative. Thus, to understand the situation comprehensively, a careful attention needs to be given to the teachers’ beliefs and perceptions of CLT. But at the same time, it is very important to take the learners’ perspective also into focus as Nunan (1986:1) argues that attention to learners and their perceptions of learning process is of paramount importance in effecting an educational innovation and says, “It is only through sensitivity to the learners and their perception of the learning process along with a willingness to consult and negotiate, that curriculum innovations are likely to be
effective”. Studying only teachers’ perception and classroom practice based on the notion of CLT principles is, therefore, not much enough to analyze the problem at the implementation level. This is because the concept of teaching and learning and the practice of teachers and learners are inseparable and two faces of a coin. In addition, the learners desire to communicate something is a matter in their activities/practices (Harmer 1991:85). Therefore, this study tries to investigate both teachers’ and learners’ perceptions about CLT and their practical application of CLT principles in the ELT classrooms with particular reference to the engineering institutes in Punjab.

Thus, the following research questions are posed:

- How do English language teachers and learners perceive CLT and its principles in the engineering institutes in Punjab?
- Do English language teachers and students practice CLT in the ELT classrooms in the engineering institutes in Punjab, and if so, how?
- To what extent these classroom practices correspond to the teachers’ and learners’ perceptions of CLT?

1.8 Purpose and Significance of the Study

A look at the global situation would give us an idea about the importance given to communication skills. In the present scenario, communication skills are a dire necessity, without which a person can hardly make a good use of the technical knowledge. In any profession, one of the important skills that is looked for in a candidate is the ability to communicate effectively. English is the language of communication in all the professional courses. Therefore, it is desirable that an educational course has a strong foundation in English language. It is more important in the case of engineering course.
Students, whose first language is not English, and who take up engineering courses face difficulty with academic writing due to their lack of exposure in the use of English, which is limited to a relatively few social contexts. In a professional course, the students are required to use English language with appropriacy as they enter an environment where the demand for both written and spoken modes of communication is subject-specific. Students are expected to use the technical discourse of a subject and write in an academic style following the conventions of essays, laboratory reports and research papers etc. (Mercer and Swann 1996: 95). Thus, an ESP course, which is not tailored to suit the students' needs, disappoint the students of professional courses, who eventually, are likely to approach private or off campus courses to develop their communication skills.

With the fast growing requirements in the world of Information Technology (IT), language needs to change frequently in the professional settings, thereby demanding effective communication among the professionals to meet the desired language competency. Thus, a single approach and methodology will lead to dissatisfaction among the professional students and hinder their professional growth.

1.9 Objectives of the Study

This study investigates the extent to which CLT and its main principles are welcomed by the English language teachers and learners and the degree to which they materialize the principles in real classroom practice in the engineering institutes in Punjab, India. The objectives of the present study, therefore, are three-fold. Accordingly:

1. It investigates the English language teachers’ and learners’ perceptions of CLT in context to the engineering institutes in Punjab.
2. It examines how often the ELT instructors practice the CLT principles in their entire classes.

3. It tries to identify what gaps there might exist between the CLT principles and actual classroom practices.

1.10 Likely Benefits of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to have the following benefits:

- Most importantly, this study is expected to provide methodological insight and information to English language teachers at the engineering institutes which are helpful for them to implement the principles of communicative language teaching appropriately.

- In addition, it is expected to provide pedagogical contributions and serve those who wish to develop curriculum and design ELT materials as a reference to incorporate CLT principles in the actual classroom practices in an effective way.

- It is also expected to yield informative insight regarding the design of future language teaching training programs specifically to researchers, teachers, and program coordinators through the experience gained from observing and interacting within the dynamics of actual classroom settings.

- It will also stimulate the possible other researchers to conduct similar or further studies and serve as an initial work.

1.11 Assumptions

In a qualitative study, it is important to address the researcher’s beliefs and assumptions about the study because the researcher is the main source for data collection in qualitative research (Merriam 1998). The following understandings of the research on CLT led to the present study. Most of the teachers have no idea about CLT and the upcoming trends in ELT since they are qualified in English literature and not
Kainth 19

English language and; whatever little knowledge they gain from books, journals or trainings/seminars does not sufficiently equip them with the implementation strategies and techniques. Some language teachers are not sure or have misconceptions about the application of CLT in their classroom practices because its definition is rather broad as compared to other traditional teaching methodologies such as the Audio-lingual and the Grammar Translation methods. More importantly, language teachers’ past experiences as language learners influence their beliefs and perceptions in teaching which in turn affect their classroom practices. Teachers’ experiences as language learners influence how they teach because they are likely to follow the behaviours observed from their instructors. Their perceptions are formed based on their experiences as learners and their personality (Borg 2003). Additionally, I believe that language teachers’ beliefs on how a target language (English language in this case) should be taught impact their instructional practices including what teaching methods to employ. Borg states that teachers make pedagogical decisions based on their knowledge on the content, thoughts, and beliefs. Their beliefs and knowledge are actively transferred to their teaching practices (2003).

1.12 Scope and Limitations

This research was confined to the study of the engineering colleges/institutes under Punjab Technical University only; since, it is the largest technical university in Punjab with 102 engineering colleges/institutes under its ambit.

Another limitation of this study is that only 34 engineering colleges/institutes (one-third of the total number) were selected for the survey out of the 102 colleges affiliated to Punjab Technical University as it was not feasible to survey all the colleges in a limited time-period. So, in order to conduct a comprehensive study of Punjab, colleges were selected from all the 22 districts in Punjab with at least 1 college from
each district. Thus, I had to disregard a proportionate selection of colleges on the basis of their density in each district as some of the districts have a high density of engineering institutes such as 22 in Mohali, 11 in Patiala, 7 in Amritsar, 6 in Ludhiana, 6 in Fatehgarh Sahib etc. and some have a density as low as just 1 engineering institute/college in the entire district such as Mansa, Fazilka and Tarn Taran districts. Further, 2 teachers and 20 students were randomly selected out of the total teacher and student population from each of the selected college, which were sometimes not proportionate to the total teacher and student population in the concerned college. Only one teacher was included in the sample in case of the engineering colleges/ institutes with single faculty in language teaching department.

### 1.13 Plan and Methodology of the Work

To achieve this objective, that is, to investigate teachers’ and learners’ perception of CLT and their practical application of CLT principles in ELT classrooms, several research methods were used. The participants included teachers and students randomly selected from different engineering institutes of Punjab. The research instruments used in this study include- Questionnaires for English language teachers and students. Class Observation and Teachers’ Interview were also used as secondary instruments to support and substantiate the data obtained from the primary research instrument i.e. the Questionnaire.

The first research instrument used is Questionnaire. Separate questionnaires for teachers and students including the major principles of communicative language teaching served as the major instrument of the study. The questionnaire is divided into three sections:

1. Personal information section- to provide accurate description of the respondents.
2. CLT perceptual dimension- to measure the English language teachers’ perception of the CLT principles.

3. CLT practical dimension- to measure the degree to which the English language teachers practice CLT principles.

Other research instrument used is Classroom Observation. Classroom observations were conducted in order to verify whether teachers and students practice the principles of CLT (beside what they professed in the responses to the questionnaires) in their ELT classrooms while the actual class lesson is going on. The third research instrument used is Teachers’ Interview. The purpose of interview was to substantiate the results obtained from the questionnaire and classroom observation and to obtain a greater depth of information, free and flexible responses and to get information concerning feeling, attitude or emotion to certain questions which is not possible through questionnaire and classroom observation (Koul 1984). The interview questions were prepared based on the CLT principles.

To see the extent to which the English language teachers and learners understand CLT principles and the frequency they practice it in ELT contexts, the data gathered through questionnaire, classroom observation and interview were analyzed. Based on the results generated, an attempt is made to find out the gaps between the perception and practice of the CLT principles in the ELT classroom. Subsequently, the possible recommendations are given to fill in these gaps.

1.14 Chapterization

This research work is focused on the perception and practice of CLT principles in the ELT classroom by the teachers and learners in context of the engineering institutes in Punjab for which the chapterization is as under:
Chapter-1  Introduction

In this chapter, a detailed introduction to the topic, historical background, rationale, statement of the problem, objectives, purpose and significance, assumptions, scope and limitations of the study is given.

Chapter-2  Review of Literature

In this part, a review of the relevant literature is given, showing the work previously done on Communicative Language Teaching, its impact on the research undertaken and how it can further the research.

Chapter-3  Research Methodology

In this chapter, a plan of work describing the various aspects of the study in a logical sequence is given. Also, a detailed discussion is made on the research methods employed for the study. It, therefore, discusses the participants of the study, the data collection instruments, the development of research instruments, the data collection procedure and methods of data analysis used in the entire study.

Chapter-4  Presentation and Analysis of Data

In this section, the collected data is presented, analyzed and discussed. It consists of presentation and discussion of the statistical results obtained from questionnaires, classroom observations and interviews.

Chapter-5  Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter constitutes the conclusions of the research results. After the conclusion, some possible recommendations are given to bridge the gaps between teachers’ and learners’ perception and practice of CLT in ELT classrooms in the context of the engineering institutes in Punjab.
References


