2.1. THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING:

American and British proponents view CLT "as an approach and not a method that aims to:

i) make communicative competence the goal of language teaching.

ii) develop procedures for the teaching of the four skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication".

(Richards and Rodgers 1986:66)

This aim of teaching 'communicative competence' is a total departure from the aim of traditional language teaching approaches where the emphasis is mainly on the teaching of structural competence.

Various people have delineated the overall aim of CLT. Piepho (1981:22) lists under the broad category of 'Individual and social learning' the following:

- communicative ability;
- critical interpretation of texts;
- primacy of active use of language;
- principles of the unity of content;
- language and social skills.

Richards and Rodgers (1986:73) have stated Piepho's objectives in the following way:
"Piepho (1981:8) discusses the following level of objectives in a communicative approach:
1. an integrative and content level (language as a means of expression);
2. a linguistic and instrumental level (language as a semiotic system and an object of learning);
3. an effective level of interpersonal relationships and conduct (language as a means of expressing values and judgements about oneself and others);
4. a level of individual learning (remedial learning based on error analysis);
5. a general educational level of extra linguistic goals (language learning within the school curriculum)"

Candlin (1976:238;1981:25) remarks that "the only proper goal of language teaching is to lead a learner to be able to communicate in a foreign language". He goes on to list the functions which language seen as communication fulfils. They are:
1. Language as a means of communicating (seeking and giving) ideas.
2. Language as a means of social coordination.
3. Language as a means of social control.
4. Languages as a means of expressing wants, beliefs and desires.

These objectives apply to all teaching situations. Specific objectives for CLT cannot be stipulated beyond this level because this approach is based on the assumption that language teaching should reflect the needs of the learners. These needs may relate to the various domains of
reading, writing, listening and speaking, each of which can be approached from a communicative perspective. Curriculum or instructional objectives for a particular course will reflect specific aspects of communicative competence according to the learner's proficiency level and communicative needs.

Accepting the need to teach language as communication requires corresponding change in focus from the sentence as the basic unit in language teaching to the use of sentences in combination which necessitates a change in syllabus and syllabus design.

Littlewood (1981:6) has identified four broad categories of skill which make up a person's communicative competence and language teachers should aim to cultivate these skills in the learners.

1. The development of linguistic competence reflected in learners' being able to manipulate the linguistic system for spontaneous and flexible use in expressing messages.
2. The ability to distinguish between the linguistic forms and its corresponding communicative functions. In other words, items mastered as part of linguistic system must also be understood as part of a communicative system.
3. The skill to use language to communicate meanings as effectively as possible in concrete situations. The feedback received should be processed so as to judge the
success or failure of the communication and the capability to remedy failure by using different language.

4. Awareness of the social meaning of language forms and the ability to vary speech to suit different social circumstances, using acceptable forms and avoiding potentially offensive ones.

2.2. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

Given below are some of the characteristics of CLT.

1. Communicative competence and fluency is the objective or goal: The primary objective of CLT is communicative competence. "Communicative competence is the desired goal (i.e. the ability to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately)". (Finocchiaro and Brumfit, 1983:92)

"Fluent and acceptable language is the primary goal: accuracy is judged not in the abstract but in context". (Ibid:91)

"... the ability to use real, appropriate language to communicate and interact with others is the primary goal". (Ibid).

Thus CLT objectives are specified in behavioural terms on the basis of needs analysis.

2. Learners are aware of the aims and objectives: The CLT school stresses the point that learners must recognise and know the aims and objectives of all exercises and activities in which they are involved. This enhances learner motivation and paves the way for more effective learning of the target language.
3. **Primacy given to the target language in classroom instruction and communication:** CLT commits itself to using the target language as the medium of classroom communication but judicious use of the native language is accepted where feasible. Translation may also be sparingly used where students need or benefit from it. Banishing the first language from the classroom is not in the interest of learning. Candlin comments that "Particularly at the early stages of second language learning, optimal use must be made of those communication skills that the learner has developed through use of the native (or dominant) language and that are common to communication skills required in the second language. It is particularly important that universal aspects of communication in the second language (for example, certain features of the grammatical code such as vocabulary) be presented and practised in the context of less arbitrary and more universal ones". (1983:19)

4. **The use of authentic, real-life language stressed:** CLT inputs usually try to be truly authentic as learners are more likely to acquire the language if they are exposed to authentic samples of it. Besides, in the world outside the classroom the learner will be called on to deal with all kinds of language situations. CLT believes that language simplified for classroom purposes will not be of help to learners in real-life contexts.

5. **Language proficiency equated with communicative competence:** There is a change in criterion to be used in
assessing pupil performance, away from formal accuracy towards communicative effectiveness. Foreign/second language proficiency is equated with foreign/second language communicative competence.

6. **The primacy of language use as against structures:** CLT adheres to an anti-structural view. Littlewood (1981:1) states that "One of the most characteristic features of CLT is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language", or as Maley (1986:88) puts it- "Concentration on use and appropriacy rather than simply on language form (i.e. meaning as well as grammar)".

   This enthusiasm for language use rather than language as structure has resulted in a consequent preference for 'semantics' (meaning in real life contexts) over 'grammar'(rules and paradigms in isolation from authentic language in use) and the formulation of tasks for learners to perform. Grammar explanations have a minimal part to play in CLT for it is believed to make no difference to the development of pupil's practical competence.

7. **The 'learning by doing' or experience based view:**

   Another frequently cited dimension of CLT is its experience based view of second language teaching. It is based on the theory that "experience is the best of all schools... the ideal curriculum consists of well-selected experiences".

   (Applebee, 1974:119)

   It represents the language teaching version usually referred to as "learning by doing" or "the experience approach". (Hilgard and Bower, 1966)
8. **The notion of direct rather than delayed practice of communication:** The notion of direct rather than delayed practice of communication acts is central to most CLT interpretations. Attempts to communicate are encouraged from the very beginning, the main thrust being on the ability to negotiate meaning successfully and effectively. Reading and writing may begin from day one if so desired.

9. **Contextualisation:** Contextualisation is a basic premise. Language is studied in the broader socio-cultural contexts of its use. "Any use of speech is functionally organised ... for a particular situation in relation to a particular topic. The language that we actually produce changes when these elements change, because we have learned to adjust our language use to be appropriate for the conditions in which we use it". (Finochiaro and Brumfit, 1983:13)

Traditional language teaching model presented new items in a relatively isolated form, and then practised them in increasingly contextualised situation. The communicative approach reverses the procedure as the following diagram illustrates (Brumfit, 1980: 121):

**Traditional:**

![Diagram](attachment:image.png)

**Communicative:**

![Diagram](attachment:image.png)
10. **The primacy of fluency focussed activities over accuracy focussed activities:** CLT shows a marked tendency "to favour fluency-focussed rather than simply accuracy focussed activities". (Maley, 1986:88)

"Fluency (in which the emphasis is on open-ended communication activities taking place in real time) is more likely to promote learning than accuracy". (Ibid).

11. **Classroom tasks/interactions are chosen on the basis of their communicational relevance:** Communication tasks are not designed with a particular structural or functional category in mind. Rather they are chosen for their communicational relevance in the framework of the whole activity. CLT pays attention "to communication tasks to be achieved through the language rather than simply exercises on the language". (Maley, 1986:88).

"Language used in the classroom should be immediately relevant and inherent in the task, rather than learnt for some eventual hypothetical use later (often referred to as 'transfer')". (Maley, 1986:93)

The second language learner must have the opportunity to take part in meaningful communicative interaction with highly competent speakers of the language i.e., to respond to genuine communication needs and interests in realistic second language situations. (Clerk, 1972:132)

12. **Student initiative and learner autonomy:** CLT encourages student initiative and autonomy. He is encouraged to work with minimal help from the teacher. The greater the responsibility given to learners, the more effective their learning will be.
13. **Cooperative learning and student interaction:** CLT uses procedures where learners work in pairs or groups employing available language resources in problem solving activities. Students are expected to interact with other people, either in speech or writing. Cooperative learning activities include games, simulations, non-whole class organisational patterns (eg., group or pair work).

14. **The Curriculum-wide approach:** This approach embraces the entire curriculum of the learner, taking into consideration his language needs in other subjects as well.

The primary objective of a communication-oriented second language programme must be to provide the learners with the information, practice and much of the experience needed to meet their communication needs in the second language. In addition, the learners should be taught about language, drawing as much as possible from the first language programme, and about the second language culture, drawing as much as possible from other subject areas. It is thought that such a curriculum-wide approach may facilitate a natural integration of knowledge of the second language, knowledge of the second language culture and knowledge of language in general.

(Canale, 1983:19)

15. **Learner-centred approach-sensitivity to learner differences and needs:**

A prominent feature of CLT is its learner centredness. Stern (1983:387) remarks that "The awareness of learner characteristics and individual differences among language
learners can sensitize teachers to possible variations in learner reactions to teaching and to differences in learning strategies". Individual learners possess unique interests, styles, needs or goals. CLT instruction materials and methods cater to these individual characteristics and aptitudes.

According to Maley (1986:89) CLT manifests "a sensitivity to learner's differences rather than a 'lockstep' approach in which all students proceed through the same materials at the same pace".

"It is a sensitivity to individual needs which is the major characteristic of the functional/notional approach to language teaching". (Finocchiaro and Brumfit, 1983).

"... it is student-determined rather than teacher-determined. What needs to be taught is defined by the failures to communicate at the first stage, which thus operates as a diagnosis for the teacher, and as a motivator for the students who are aware of their needs". (Maley, 1986:89)

A communicative approach must be based on and respond to learner's (often changing) communication needs and interests. (Canale, 1983:18).

16. **Awareness of language variation**: Another characteristic of the communicative approach is its "awareness of variation in language use rather than simple attention to the language. (i.e., recognition that there is not one English but many Englishes)". (Maley, 1986:89).
Native-speaker like pronunciation is never demanded. Comprehensible pronunciation is sought.

"It is particularly important to base a communicative approach at least in part on the varieties of the second language that the learner is most likely to be in contact with in a genuine communicative situation and on the minimum levels of competence that various groups of native speakers (such as age groups, occupational groups) expect of the learner in such situations and that the majority of learners may be expected to attain". (Canale, 1983:18).

17. **Needs analysis**: Needs analysis is an essential step in designing a communicative curricula or syllabus. CLT envisages interest in analysing and planning for the genuine needs of the learner.

18. **The individualised nature of the CLT syllabus:**

a) A significant point is the 'personalised' character of the syllabus. The syllabus is developed on the basis of the particular needs manifested by the class or a particular group of individuals.

b) The CLT syllabus de-emphasises the systematic study of grammar, it is functionally organised and concentrates on 'relevant' behavioural and communicative objectives. The shift is from descriptive to interactive language.

c) The syllabus and curriculum is flexible and adaptable to promote effective, suitable communication.
19. **The trial and error process:** Putting learners into situations where they have to grope and paraphrase, and to adjust to other speakers doing the same is a central feature of CLT. CLT advocates propound the theory that the target linguistic system will be best learned through the process of struggling to communicate. Language is created by the individual often through trial and error.

20. **Teacher non-intervention:** CLT raises the issue of non-intervention by the teacher. The traditional kind of classroom teacher-domination is conspicuous by its absence. Teacher-pupil relations are closer and less formal. There is greater incidence of informal discussion and mutual exchange of personal information. CLT advocates the democratisation of teacher-pupil relationships.

21. **Integrated development of all language skills:** The balance of emphasis between the 'four skills' is shifted away from writing in particular and in favour of speaking. But this does not mean that the other skills have been relegated to the background. "The primary goal of a communicative approach must be to facilitate the integration of the various competences for the learner, an outcome that is not likely to result from overemphasis on one area of competence over the others through out a second language programme". (Canale, 1983:18)

22. **Active correction of pupils' mistakes is discouraged**
Immediate, active correction of pupils' mistakes is discouraged as it dampens motivation. CLT maintains that
error is a normal part of language learning and sustained exposure to the target language is sufficient for pupil competence to 'come right' in the end. The teacher's correction strategy should be devised so as to bring home to pupils that intelligibility and 'basic message effectiveness' are what really matter rather than formal correctness. According to CLT theorists correction has no long term influence on the development of Foreign/second language competence. (Mitchell, 1988).

23. The humanistic approach: The communicative approach views learners "not so much as full-time linguistic objects at whom language teaching is aimed, but rather as human individuals whose personal dignity and integrity, and the complexity of whose ideas, thoughts, needs, and sentiments, should be respected. By specific means, foreign language teachers must contribute to the self actualizing process of the individual, by striving to be 'humans among the humans' (Littlewood, 1984:94) genuinely interested people. Involved on both an intellectual and an emotional plane, they do not have to open up, but are open to all the participants in the class-room interaction". (Peter Medgyes, 1985)

All teachers have been forced to play the role of psychologists consciously or unconsciously over the centuries but in the communicative approach this responsibility of the teacher is greatly enhanced.
24. **Communicative tests reflective of real life tasks:**

The performance tasks in communicative tests are representative of the type of tasks the learner is likely to face in their own life situation and attempts to correspond to normal language use, i.e., "demonstrate this knowledge of language use in a meaningful communicative situation". (Canale et al., 1980:34)

The principle (communicative relevance of tasks) is important not only with respect to classroom activities but testing as well. It has been argued that paper-and-pencil tests, tape-recorded listening and speaking tests, and the like do not allow the learner to try out his/her communication skills in a realistic communication situation and thus cannot have the same psychological and instructional impact as do testing activities that directly involve more authentic and meaningful communicative interaction. (Clark, 1972:132)

2.3. **THE-COMMUNICATIVE SYLLABUS**

2.3.1. **Syllabus and Curriculum: The Difference**

A.M.Shaw (1977) distinguishes between syllabus and curriculum clearly when he quotes Robertson (1971:564) as follows"... the curriculum includes the goals, objectives, content, processes, resources, and means of evaluation of all the learning experiences planned for pupils both in and out of the school and community through classroom instruction and related programme".
He then defines syllabus as "a statement of the plan of any part of the curriculum, excluding the element of the curriculum evaluation itself". And he concludes that "the syllabus should be viewed in the context of an ongoing curriculum development process".

A syllabus has been compared to a blueprint: it is a plan which the teacher converts into a reality of classroom interaction. But a syllabus has the added advantage of being more amenable to alteration than a blue-print if it turns out to be imperfect in any way. There is plenty of scope for the teacher to make suitable changes in keeping with alterations in the classroom situation and respond to the framework provided by the syllabus designer.

2.3.2. The Principles of Syllabus Design:

Brumfit (1985:64-65) has briefly described the different aspects of syllabus organisation. Syllabus organisation implies the whole process of organizing and specifying what is to be taught in a body of material, or in an educational institution, in order to enable the learning of a language to be as effective as possible.

1. First, a syllabus must be goal-directed. Its main justification is that it enables a learner to achieve certain objectives.

2. Second, since a syllabus implies movement, it must contain a starting point as well as an end. The starting point must relate to learner behaviour, for whatever the
goals of the syllabus are, learning can start only from where the learner is at the time of entry.

3. Third, a syllabus is an administrative tool: that is, it is a device which has to operate in the real world of institutions and commerce. A syllabus which is effective will need to be as securely based in actual institutions or behaviour patterns as a bridge is in actual solid ground.

4. Fourth, a syllabus involves the making of generalizations for it is a device for teaching with, not for learning from, and teaching is rarely addressed to individuals. Syllabuses are aimed at classes in schools, colleges, at hypothetical learners in textbooks or teach yourself books, and the learner behaviour will necessarily be generalized in the syllabus specification. A syllabus specifies a way of offering material to people to learn. But it cannot specify precisely how they will learn it because each person has slightly different needs, motivation and learning styles, and because each person varies in commitment to learning from lesson to lesson.

2.3.3. Syllabus Design apropos to Methodology and the Language Learning Process.

Language learning is a process of linguistic and cultural negotiation of meaning and not a static product. Students have to develop their innate ability to use language for their own purposes in interaction with the purposes of other language users. Any discussion on syllabus organisation, especially so communicative syllabuses, should take cognition of this need.
Language teaching will not be well served if it is based on the assumption that we can specify the learners' product exactly. The drawback of all syllabuses is that they tend to concentrate on the product or content. Syllabus designers face the problem of relating what are primarily descriptive procedures to the needs of the language classrooms, i.e., convert description to process. A syllabus should not merely be a list of behavioural specifications because what the teacher is teaching is a generative system which all human beings have a capacity to acquire. It is not the teaching of a limited set of behaviours, but a capacity to produce those behaviours - a capacity which enables its users to do many other behaviours than those specified by any limited set. With language we construct and we play, adapt and refine, stretch and twist and break the components of the system in order to create new messages, for ourselves or for others. We acquire a flexible and dynamic system, and the process of acquisition should reflect this aspect of flexibility and dynamism.

Any discussion of syllabus design must recognise the features of language which have been referred to above.

2.3.4. The Characteristics of a Good Syllabus:
1. A statement of efficient learning: A syllabus is a statement of efficient learning. When designing a syllabus we attempt to organize the material in such a way as to reflect most closely the processes of learning in the human
mind, in order to facilitate the process. In other words, syllabus design must be responsive to learning theory.

2. Systematic view of language: A syllabus is necessary and it should be based on a systematic view of the nature of language.

3. Segmentation of syllabus: A syllabus must also be capable of being broken down into discrete elements, for education takes place in real time and is, in practice, segmented.

4. Selection, grading and sequencing: The traditional concerns with selection, grading and sequencing (MacKey, 1965) are still relevant but the tendency to be fully systematic must be avoided. Selecting, grading and sequencing is determined by considerations of individual needs of learners.

5. Generalization from local considerations: A syllabus involves generalization from local conditions which impose their own constraints. Thus any practical syllabus will have to take into account such factors as the mother tongue(s) of the students, the nature of the language teaching tradition, the administrative support available, and the intensity and quantity of language instruction.

6. Relating language need to language theory: A realistic syllabus must start with a relationship between what is needed and learning theory. A syllabus being a generalisation to accommodate a number of different students, both the needs and the learning process implicit
will be generalised, but the needs specification should be able to incorporate reasonably appropriate predictions of the purposes for which students will need the target language, and of the settings in which they may be expected to operate.

2.3.5. The Merit in Structural/Grammatical Syllabuses:

Until the last decade or so, it was generally assumed that language learners had to first master the basic vocabulary and grammar of the language, and then, by practising, learn how to use them in various suitable situations. Syllabuses normally consisted of inventories of vocabulary and grammar items. The grammatical items (structures or sentence patterns) were selected and graded to form a structural syllabus. Most syllabuses are still of this kind, and arguments are still going on about the drawbacks of such organization.

According to Brumfit (1985:66) there is a pragmatic reason for not rejecting the grammatical basis for syllabus design. Not only is it arrogant to assume that generations of language teachers and linguists were all wrong quite so fundamentally, but more important is the inevitable necessity of building our syllabuses on the experience of the past. In practical terms a syllabus is partly an anticipation of learner difficulties and in the past these have been considered purely in grammatical terms. It is possible to help learners acquire the syntax of the target language without making the similar mistakes made by our
It is also necessary to utilise past knowledge by modifying the grammatical syllabus to cater to the needs of particular circumstances.

2.3.6. Objections to the Traditional Structural/Gramatical Syllabus

The last decade has seen the establishment of a consensus about what was wrong with structural/grammatical syllabuses. Structural/grammatical syllabuses have been attacked on several grounds.

Representative writers (van Ek, 1975; Wilkins, 1976; Widdowson, 1978) have put forth the view that grammatical syllabuses can only offer at best a partial account of language learning with varying degrees of sophistication.

Grammar is specification of the structure of a language. Learners need the language, not to display their knowledge of its organization, but in order to perform speech acts to convey meanings.

Learners language needs are not catered to. Specifying a syllabus in grammatical terms is likely to lead to teachers ploughing their way systematically through an inventory of grammatical structures, whether or not the students need them.

It results in discussion in class of grammatical terminology and an emphasis on the descriptive categories rather than language use itself. The grammatical syllabus
concentrates on the organization of the language at the expense of the value of linguistic items in the operation of normal discourse.

It was assumed that first the code should be taught and that classroom activity would give sufficient experience of using the code to enable learners to operate on their own when necessary. This was 'skill-using' following 'skill-getting' in Wilga Rivers terms (1972). The job of the syllabus was to specify what the underlying knowledge of the code to be acquired was before it could be put into use. Syllabus specifications were generally aimed at teachers' 'presentation' techniques, and provided the content for presentation. During the later 'practice' and 'production' stages the techniques used would enable learners to develop capacities to use the language. This latter stage was the concern of methodology and not for syllabus specification. This methodological discussion for many years insisted on the need to 'situationalize' language, to practice it in contexts and meanings. This claim is the offshoot of much theoretical speculations, and empirical investigation about the ways in which we behave in relation to each other, with language.

2.3.7. The Components of a Communicative Syllabus:

The principles on which communicative syllabus is structured are different from those for selecting the linguistic content to be included in it. The former necessitates taking into consideration a number of extra-linguistic factors such as the educational setting in which
the course is to be taught, the characteristics of the learners, the circumstances in which the educational institution operates and even the society in which the language learning and teaching process is to be carried on. If we desire to make up the deficit in earlier syllabus types, and ensure that our learners acquire the ability to communicate in a more appropriate and efficient way, we have to insert a large number of components into the syllabus. Yalden (1983:86-87) lists these components as follows:

1. As detailed a consideration as possible of the purposes for which the learners wish to acquire the target language.
2. Some idea of the setting in which they will want to use the target language (physical aspects need to be considered, as well as social).
3. The socially defined role the learner will assume in the target language, as well as the roles of their interlocutors.
4. The communicative events in which the learners will participate: every day situations, vocational or professional situations, academic situations and so on.
5. The language functions involved in these events, or what the learners will need to be able to do with or through the language.
6. The notions involved, or what the learner will need to be able to talk about.
7. The **skills** involved in the 'knitting together' of discourse: discourse and rhetorical skills.
8. The **variety** or varieties of the target language that will be needed, and the levels in the spoken and written language which the learners will need to reach.
9. The **grammatical content** that will be needed.
10. The **lexical content** that will be needed.

2.3.8. **Designing a Communicative Syllabus:**

The process of constructing a communicative syllabus can be better understood by examining the overall process of planning the second language program. Within this framework, the syllabus is only one part, though a very important one, of the whole. The diagram which follows accompanied by a table clearly illustrates the various stages in the language program development:

Language Program Development

| Needs Survey | Description of purpose | Selection or development of a syllabus type | Production of a syllabus | Development and implementation of syllabus | Evaluation of classroom procedures |

(Yalden, 1983: 88)
Table: Stages in Language Program Development

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>I</td>
<td>Needs survey</td>
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</table>
| II    | Description of purpose to be prepared in terms of  
      | a) student characteristic  
      | b) student skills on entry to and exit from the program. |
| III   | Selection or development of syllabus in terms of  
      | IV and the physical constraints on the program. |
| IV    | The Proto-syllabus: description of language and  
      | language use to be covered in the program. |
| V.    | The Pedagogical syllabus: development of  
      | teaching, learning and testing approaches:  
      | a) development of teaching materials:  
      | b) development of testing sequences and decisions on testing instruments. |
| VI.   | 1. Development of classroom procedures:  
      | a. selection of exercise types and teaching techniques;  
      | b. preparation of lesson plans;  
      | c. preparation of weekly schedules.  
      | 2. Teacher training: briefings or workshops on  
      | a. principles;  
      | b. desired outcome;  
      | c. exploitation/creation of teaching material. |
| VII   | Evaluation  
      | a) of students;  
      | b) of program;  
      | c) of teaching. |
Recycling Stage

a) congruence or 'fit' between goals set and student performance is determined;
b) content is reassessed;
c) materials and methodological procedures are revised.

(Yalden, 1983:89)

The first stage in the process involves two steps:
- carrying out a survey of the communicative needs of the learners for whom the program is being prepared;
- conducting a survey of the physical resources at hand.

2.3.8.1. Stage I: Needs Survey:

Language teaching should be carefully planned so as to achieve the stipulated objectives. It is imperative that the syllabus planner or the teacher be fully cognizant of the needs of his students and society. The success or failure of a curriculum is to be assessed in the light of learners' language needs.

English and Kaufman (1975: vi) define needs assessment as "... a process for identifying and defining valid curriculum and instructional and management objectives". Needs analysis guarantees that classroom learning is related to learners' real life situations. "Needs assessment is a tool which formally harvests the gaps between current results (or outcomes, products) and required or desired, places these gaps (needs) in priority order and selects those gaps (needs) of the highest priority for action usually through the implementation of a new or existing curriculum or management process."
In order for a needs assessment to be valid and useful it should include the educational partners of learners, educators, and community members in the process of defining gaps (needs)." (Ibid.3-4)

The teacher should attempt to discover in cooperation with the student, areas which indicate potential communicative requirements. These could include both classroom needs (classroom language) and those which he may require in future vocational or recreational pursuits. The needs survey can also include the learner's own desire or wants for the purpose of self-expression rather than for purposeful or transactional communicative behaviour. The object is to obtain as much information as possible in any given situation about the learners and about their purposes in acquiring the target language.

English and Kaufman (1975:II) emphatically stress on the importance of needs assessment in terms of what it means to the learner, to the community and to the country as a whole. The disastrous result of the neglect of needs analysis has been aptly summarised by English and Kaufman (1975:62):

If some procedure like needs assessment is not adopted, a process that is empirical and public and open to inspection, challenge, and validating, and by which school and school system, goals and objectives are identified and prioritized we will continue to be plagued by problems. Some of these difficulties are: confusion of means and ends, uncertainties over which problems are most acute, an inability to defend administrative decisions regarding programme priorities, and a susceptibility to adopt new things before we really know what they are designed to do when applied.
In India where the notion of needs analysis has yet to take root, we find that much of the English teaching at all levels is unordered, ungraded, unspecific and uninteresting. Only a need based syllabus will make the teaching/learning of English meaningful and equip the students with the appropriate language.

Data Collection:

The first step in needs analysis is data collection. In collecting data two broad areas need to be covered:
- who the learners are (what they bring with them):
- what their purposes, needs and wishes are in learning the language, (where they are going).

2.3.8.1.1. Checklists for Predicting Communicative Needs:

Littlewood (1981:82-84) discusses the relevance of van Ek and Alexander's 'Threshold Level' (1980) in predicting communicative needs. In deciding what functions, topics and so on are most likely to be relevant to the learner's needs, teachers must rely ultimately on their own intuition and observation. However, they can make their task easier by using published checklists, which could be modified as they think necessary.

In 'Threshold Level' an attempt has been made to specify:

a) the most important communicative needs that are likely to arise in every day situations:
b) suitable language forms that could be learnt for coping with these needs.
It assumes a 'general' learner who wants to cross the "threshold" into a reasonably normal life in a foreign country, or who wants to interact with foreign visitors in his own country. The teacher is assisted in answering certain questions about the learner such as:

1. What situations might the learner encounter?

The specification lists some of the situations in which the learner may probably need to use the foreign language. Two kinds of situations are envisaged:

- situations where language is predictable or 'transactional' situations, (e.g. in a bank or supermarket):

- situations where language is unpredictable and thus requiring a vast range of different linguistic needs, (e.g. personal conversations with friends).

2. What language activities does the learner most likely to take part in?

The specification assumes that the learner will need to participate mostly in oral activities and therefore his writing and reading needs will be limited. But writing and reading activities are still recognised as useful aids to learning.

3. What functions of language are likely to be most useful?

The specification lists sixty eight communicative functions which it considers to be most important. Some of these are fairly simple and may be expressed by conventionalised forms (e.g. accepting or declining invitations). Others (e.g. describing or narrating) are much more extensive and complex, and the actual language
needed being determined almost entirely by the topics and notions involved.

4. What topics are likely to be important?

A list of topic areas are mentioned which might prove useful to the learner. For each topic the specification suggests what the students should be able to do with it (e.g., sports; states own preference, etc.), thereby linking topics with communicative functions. It also lists important 'topic related' notions (e.g., under sports; team, to play, game, race, to swim, etc.). Specific topics and related notions will determine what specific items of language/vocabulary the learners will need.

5. What general notions are likely to be important?

Besides topic related notions mentioned above, the specification provides a list of general notions such as locations, number, ownership, etc., which the learners might need to express.

Upto this point, the specification applies equally to learners of any foreign language for general purposes; it is a prediction of communicative needs, and these needs would be expressed in whatever language the students happened to be learning. A major aim of the document is to specify equivalent communicative objectives for learners of different foreign languages. After this point the document refers specifically to the learners of English.
6. What language forms should the student learn, in order to satisfy communicative needs that have been described?

The needed language forms are listed under three main headings:

- forms which express communicative functions (mostly grammatical patterns);
- forms which express general notions (grammatical patterns and items of vocabulary);
- forms which express topic-related notions (mostly items of vocabulary). It distinguishes between forms which should be mastered for productive use and forms which need to be mastered for comprehension purposes only. Where necessary, especially for productive use, it recognises the importance of structural factors in language learning by selecting the simplest way of expressing a function or notion.

The various lists of the 'Threshold Level' provide a tentative description of the general learners' communicative needs and of the language needed for satisfying them. They also offer a model procedure which teachers can follow themselves if they wish to carry out their own assessment of learners' needs. It is important to realise that however much we try to match content with communicative needs, the learners will only to be able to communicate successfully in everyday situations if they develop a communicative ability which is sufficiently flexible and creative to go beyond the needs predicted by the syllabus designer or teacher. Pierson and Friederichs (1981:305) have designed a needs assessment work sheet to
Diagonise the language needs of Cantonese speaking first-year students at the Chinese University of Hong Kong who took a compulsory ESL course. It has been included under Appendix 1A. A worksheet to assess the language needs of pre-university students has been included under Appendix 1B.

2.3.8.1.2. Translating the Students' General Needs into a basis for Effective Teaching:

To translate the students' general needs into a basis for effective teaching two things should be done:

1. Construct a realistic program taking into consideration the physical and administrative conditions in which it will have to operate.

2. Adapt the program to be consistent with the most efficient ways of learning languages.

In order to conduct a realistic program the following factors will need to be taken into consideration:

1. The type of program we are concerned with:
   - intensive or regular;
   - short term or long term;
   - the age of the students;
   - the language level of the students.

2. The students' need of the language:
   - in school and out of school;
   - immediate use or unspecified future use.

3. The particular social, political, religious or economic factors which affect relations between students and teachers.
Example: local/foreign teachers; the similarity or dissimilarity of teachers and students backgrounds.

4. The resources available in the school and community which could effect the implementation of the curriculum.

5. The teacher's training and experience and their commitment to their work.

To provide for efficient ways of learning the program should be responsive to three basic requirements:

1. Providing systematic exposure to the basic systems of the language, so that students have enough data available to enable them to build up for themselves the basic patterns of the language.

2. Providing enough opportunities for all students to experience use of the language themselves over an extended period.

3. Organizing the program in such a way as to motivate students to make the maximum use of the opportunities provided in the course of the curriculum.

We teach classes and not individuals and language is a means of operating within a large social group. Thus the curriculum must be based on generalizations about the social process of learning and using language.

The needs survey will serve as a spring board to the next step in the process of syllabus design, i.e., description of purpose.
2.3.8.1.3. **A General Assessment of Language Needs of Pre-University Students.**

Given below are some of the general English language needs of the average pre-university student.

1. Understanding the English on radio and the television.
2. Understanding the English Press.
3. Following Instructions.
4. Understanding signs and notices.
5. Reading for gist (skimming)
6. Reading for detail (scanning).
7. Listening for gist at seminars/lecturers.
8. Listening for detail at seminars/lectures.
9. Note taking at lectures.
10. Note taking from textbooks.
11. Speaking formally (at seminars, debates)
12. Telephoning.
13. Understanding spoken English.
15. Letter writing.
16. Summarizing
17. Report writing
18. Participating in social 'small talk'

2.3.8.2. **Stage II: The Description of Purpose**

Here a distinction is made between courses which have a narrow focus, prepared for a highly homogeneous group of learners who will have clearly defined language needs in an occupational setting, and courses which might be classified as being for educational purposes. In the latter category, courses may either be for study in a specific discipline or
may be given as a school subject in which case language would not be the only subject matter, nor would its mastery be the sole objective of the course.

While describing the purpose of a given course the language program designer will have to work in terms of broadly or narrowly focussed purposes, and the occupational or educational categories.

2.3.8.3. **Stage III: The Choice of a Syllabus Type:**

The third stage pertains to the choice of a syllabus type. No single model of syllabus design has been universally agreed upon and accepted by CLT activists. Models range from a modification of existing structural syllabuses to a completely learner-centred approach which dispenses with all kinds of 'prospective' or 'input' syllabus and envisages syllabus content growing out of the situation as the course progressed. Different kinds of communicative syllabuses demand different methodologies ranging from a focus on structural and functional analytical exercises, to functional and structural activities, to strictly communicative activities based on authentic materials rather than specially written ESL texts.

2.3.8.3.1 **Wilkins' Synthetic and Analytic Strategies**

In examining syllabus types we should begin with Wilkins' original definition of the dichotomy between an 'analytic' and a 'synthetic' approach to syllabus design
(Wilkins, 1976). David Wilkins argued that the numerous pedagogical strategies (methods) in existence could be grouped into two conceptually distinct types of approach, labelled 'synthetic' and 'analytic', and that any actual course or syllabus could be placed somewhere on a continuum between the two.

**The Synthetic Approach/Strategy**

Wilkins defines the first of these two strategies as follows:

"A synthetic language teaching strategy is one in which the different parts of language are taught separately and step-by-step so that acquisition is a process of gradual accumulation of the parts until the whole structure of the language has been built up". (Wilkins 1976: 2)

In planning courses based on this approach, the language items to be taught are ordered into a list of grammatical structures and probably a list of lexical items. The learner is exposed at any one time only to a limited sample of the target language, and the sample is carefully controlled by the teaching situation. The learners' job is thus to re-synthesise language, that has been taken apart and presented to him in small pieces; this synthesis generally takes place only in the final stages of learning, at the so-called 'advanced' levels. The synthetic strategy produces the structural syllabus, and what happens in the classroom is that the teacher, in following the syllabus, may either use a grammar translation method or 'eclectic' approach. Whichever one he uses, the constraints are the same: the content of the syllabus has been determined by giving top priority to
to teaching the 'grammar' or 'structure' of the language. The synthetic approach will thus inevitably produce a grammatical syllabus, whose goal is to lead the learners via one pedagogical strategy or another to as good a command as possible of the linguistic system of the target language.

**The Analytic Approach/Strategy:**

There is another route which Wilkins describes as the 'analytic approach'. Broadly speaking, within such an approach a semantic, meaning based syllabus is produced, which leads (again via various pedagogical strategies) to a somewhat wider goal; that of communicative competence.

In his initial discussions of analytic syllabus types, Wilkins commented that global or general courses were not the best field of application for the notional approach, since general courses were regarded more as an investment for the future. In specialized courses, he felt the notional syllabus to be highly appropriate. Whatever was learned could be used at once, in contrast to the delay customary in a general course, where the learner had to wait until he had absorbed a considerable amount of structure before he could attempt to use the language for effective communication.

Many syllabus designers have come to the conclusion that what is now required is a more flexible approach to syllabus construction. One should feel free to emphasise those elements or components which any given teaching situation demands. Syllabus designed for providing a classroom experience which closely approximates an environment of real
language use is termed a communicative syllabus. There are many forms or types of the communicative syllabus depending upon the learners objectives.

2.3.8.3.2. Types of Communicative Syllabuses:

In her book Yalden (1983:110-119) discusses six communicative language teaching design alternatives, ranging from a model in which communicative exercises are grafted into an existing structural syllabus to a learner-generated view of syllabus design. Prabhu (1983) advocates the task-based or procedural syllabus and Crombie (1985) a relational syllabus.

2.3.8.3.2.1. The Structural-Functional Syllabus:

This type of syllabus demarcates and separates the two components of form and communicative function. Thus this syllabus is fairly easy to implement. At what point the teaching of communicative function should commence vary. However, this model assumes that linguistic forms had been treated quite thoroughly before work on language functions was introduced. This format implies the adding of a further component to an already existing syllabus, rather than integrating communicative teaching with teaching linguistic forms and will prove useful in reorienting an existing structural course. The main features of this syllabus are:

- focus on grammar and other formal features of language;
- controlled grammatical teaching techniques;
Here the main emphasis is to encourage students to establish fluent speech habits and to ensure that they acquire a knowledge of basic sentence structures and vocabulary. Some degree of formal structural control is maintained in the presentation of material. In a typical textbook designed on a structural-functional syllabus the reading passages will be simplified structurally by omitting more difficult sentence patterns in the early stages. Later these patterns are introduced step-by-step in a carefully graded series. Most of the exercises will focus on providing ample practice in the structural, formal aspects of language proficiency which many people view as a necessary initial step in the development of communicative competence. Structural practice set in meaningful context is a form of communication, though limited in scope. Though materials emphasise the systematic acquisition of language under the guidance of a good teacher the classroom activities will revolve around worthwhile tasks and oriented towards discourse. The main advantage of the structural/functional syllabus is that initially students cannot be expected to communicate in a second language until they have mastered the underlying principles of sentence structure, and acquired a basic vocabulary. This type of syllabus provides a coherent structural foundation on the basis of which a genuinely spontaneous use of language can be developed. As a result a relatively high degree of structural control is maintained but at the same time it is important that the methodology and the exercise material be kept flexible and meaningful so as to correlate with the communicative aims of the overall curriculum.
2.3.8.3.2.2. The Functional-Structural Syllabus:

Littlewood (1981:79) expounded the Functional-Structural organisation. Structural grading of the language is still maintained but the course is organised into units based on important communicative functions. The learners progress from function to function rather than from structural pattern to structural pattern. Care is taken to see that the linguistic forms for the different functions are at first kept simple, and the sequencing of the functions is maintained so that the learner still works through a graded structural progression. The teacher focuses on presenting the learner with sequences of communicative functions rather than structural patterns. In this type of syllabus the teacher can re-cycle functions, each time with more complex language to suit the learners' developing linguistic competence. Here it is assumed that the learners are still engaged in acquiring the basic structural patterns of the language. Therefore it is necessary to keep some form of structural progression in the organisation of the course.

2.3.8.3.2.3. Structures and Functions:

The third communicative syllabus type represents a structural progression in a communicative framework, Brumfit (1985) proposed this syllabus as a panacea to counter the drawbacks of Wilkins' notional syllabus. He argues that Wilkins' syllabus does not address the question of learning theory and therefore it is difficult to see on what grounds he proposes the reorientation of second-language teaching.
Brumfit (1985:70) comments that "whatever criterion we use [in syllabus design] ... principles of organization must be answerable to a view of how language is learnt. It is on the basis of a view of language learning that systematizability and motivation are seen as important criteria for the selection and ordering of items".

Brumfit argues that it is more sensible and useful to provide language users with the tools, i.e., the linguistic system, whereby they could negotiate cultural and linguistic meaning rather than teach them what to do with the tools. He proposes that we retain form (grammar and pronunciation) as the organizing principle since we can successfully generalize about it, but not about what people should do and mean. Brumfit describes his model as follows:

"The simplest proposal is to use the grammatical system as the core of the syllabus in a ladder-like series of stages and to be prepared to relate all other essential material to this series. Thus notional, functional, and situational specifications can be conceived of as a spiral around a basically grammatical core". (Brumfit, 1985:66)
Such a design has the advantage that functions and notions can be related appropriately to grammatical exponents. This provides scope for the development of both accuracy (the grammatical core) and fluency (notional, functional and situational language use). Syllabuses have to take into consideration both accuracy and fluency. In Brumfit's view, in other communicative syllabuses it is not possible to develop both fluency and accuracy in the initial stages. He advocates the development of communicative methodology to help develop fluency as well as accuracy, while maintaining structural progression as to the organising principle of his syllabus type. Brumfit proposes that all components of meaning be included from the start—none are to be postponed. Thus Brumfit's treatment is complete and consistent.
Johnson (1977a,b) also argues for a communicative rather than primarily functional syllabus. He believes:
- that functional organization implies structural disorganization:
- that assigning functions to utterances is difficult, as more than one may occur in any given utterance, thus making the production of functional units of teaching materials difficult;
- and that choosing suitable examples and illustrations can be daunting, given the large numbers which are possible for each function.

Johnson suggests that gradually small amounts of functional material could be integrated with existing language programs in general courses. "Under such a scheme coverage of the common core might be provided by a series of teaching units each containing theme-specific and language practice materials ... alongside materials with a functional orientation. Each unit would cover a separate theme area, and the theme specific source text would serve as the point of departure for both language practice and functional materials". (Johnson, 1977a:77)

Units can be given functional, notional or structural direction, all used in conjunction with a structural core. This approach also enables the teacher to move increasingly towards a functional emphasis, while retaining a structural progression, and at the same time producing a richly varied series of units.
2.3.8.3.2.4. The Variable Focus Syllabus:

In the fourth type of syllabus emphasis would shift according to level in a progression from elementary to advanced, rather than in a given unit. Structural progression as well as structural exercises and activities would dominate at the first level, and the emphasis would then change to communicative function and finally to situation or subject matter. (Allen (1980) explains the concept as follows:

Although the structural foundation model has a useful role to play in ESL curriculum, we believe that it should be interpreted in a way which allows for the maximum amount of flexibility in materials design. This can be provided by making use of the concept that 'grading should be the focus rather than exclusion' (Allen and Widdowson, 1974). Thus at level one the main emphasis is on structural practice, and functional and instrumental practice will be, relatively speaking 'out of focus'. Similarly the second level emphasises functional practice, and the third level instrumental practice, but at both levels the other types of practice remain in the background ready to be utilised as the need arises. By making use of a variable focus technique we give recognition to the fact that there are three types of practice (structural, functional, instrumental) which interrelate, which are interdependent and which co-exist at all levels of language learning. At the same time, the notion of 'primary focus' ensures that at all times the lesson content remains under control and adaptable to the needs of the student at any given level of proficiency.
Levels of Communicative Competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structural</strong></td>
<td><strong>Functional</strong></td>
<td><strong>Instrumental</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on language (formal features)</td>
<td>Focus on language (discourse features)</td>
<td>Focus on the use of language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Structural Control</td>
<td>a) Discourse Control</td>
<td>a) Situational or topical control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Materials simplified structurally</td>
<td>b) Materials simplified functionally</td>
<td>b) Authentic language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Mainly structural practice</td>
<td>c) Mainly discourse practice</td>
<td>c) Free practice practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2.3.8.3.2.5. Functional Organization/Syllabus:

In this type of syllabus, objectives are stated primarily in terms of linguistic items or in terms of ideational content. Here the objectives determine the functions needed, and the functions determine the selection and sequencing of grammatical materials. Language practice derives from the objectives. The unit of organization is functional in this kind of syllabus and as such it is quite easy to develop such units. Many ESP courses and materials are based on the functional approach. This kind of syllabus has been criticised for providing 'phrase-book language', or for teaching only 'language-like behaviour' rather than developing communicative competence. But it is very useful in situations where rapid progress to a highly functional variety of the target language is essential.

The main features of this syllabus are:
- focus on discourse features of language;
controlled communicative teaching techniques;
- medium and message oriented practice. (Allen, 1986)

This type of syllabus aims at extending and activating the students' previously acquired grammatical knowledge, and serve as a preparation for wholly spontaneous language use at the later stage. The syllabus assumes that the learner has an extensive (though imperfect) knowledge of the basic principals of sentence structure, and the teacher can consider going on to a form of organisation that reflects directly the potential communicative uses of the foreign language. Each of the units of the course is based on important communicative functions (eg. offering, asking permission, giving reasons). Each function is represented by a range of linguistic forms, chosen on the grounds of their communicative usefulness and social appropriacy rather than for their structural make up. This will result in language of widely varying grammatical complexity being grouped together for functional reasons. Students will be expected to acquire an understanding of the rules of use which govern the development of spoken and written discourse in the target language, with emphasis on the functional aspects of language proficiency. This syllabus concerns itself with the ways the learners' formal linguistic knowledge is made use of in accomplishing a variety of communicative tasks: establishing social relations, seeking and giving information, determining the most effective fit between language abilities and subject matter knowledge and so on. The prime focus is on the teaching of communicative functions and grading consists of the grouping of similar message types or rules of discourse.
2.3.8.3.2.6. **The Notional Syllabus:**

One of the first communicative syllabus models to be proposed was described as a notional syllabus (Wilkins, 1976) which specified the semantic-grammatical categories and the categories of communicative function that learners need to express. In 1972 Wilkins proposed that two categories of 'meaning' and 'use' might be suitable for the purposes of syllabus design. The first category he terms 'semantico-grammatical' and this is composed of items which corresponds to what in everyday speech we call 'concepts'. Examples of these categories, taken from Wilkins' list are: frequency, duration, location and quantity. They are 'semantic' categories because they are items of meaning. Wilkins' second category is the 'communicative function', i.e., the uses to which we put language. Wilkins' lists the following examples: requesting information, expressing dissapproval, greeting and inviting. These categories of communicative function have come to be known as 'function'.

Wilkins proposes that his semantico-grammatical and functional categories be used as a means of listing concepts and uses in the syllabus which he terms 'notional syllabus'. He uses the word 'notional' as an umbrella term to refer to his two categories. This terminology has been illustrated below.

**Notional Categories or 'notions'**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantico-grammatical Categories</th>
<th>Functions (Categories of communicative function)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(Johnson and Morrow, 1981:4)
The Council of Europe expanded and developed Wilkins' proposals into a syllabus that included descriptions of the objectives of foreign language courses for European adults, the situations in which they might need to use a foreign language (e.g., travel, business, etc.), the topics they might need to talk about (e.g., personal identification, education, shopping), the functions they need the language for (e.g., describing something, requesting information, expressing agreement or disagreement), the notions made use of in communication (e.g., time, frequency, duration) and finally the vocabulary and grammar needed. The result was published as 'Threshold Level English' (van Ek and Alexander, 1980) which attempted to specify what was required in order to be able to achieve a reasonable degree of communicative competence in the foreign language, including the language items needed to realise this 'threshold level'.

Munby (1978) expanded and elaborated the work of Wilkins and van Ek to provide a more complete model for generating a fully notional syllabus, suitable for learners whose proficiency in the second language has to be specified for very particular and essentially narrow purposes.

In Wilkins' model three meaning components are to be considered in preparing a syllabus as shown in the figure given below:
Possible Components for a Syllabus

1. The Semantic
   Basic concepts
   What to Communicate

2. The Functional
   Interactional aspect
   Why we communicate

3. The Formal
   'Grammatical' knowledge
   How we communicate

The notional syllabus rests upon the belief that 'context' or 'situation' determines what we mean when we speak or write or interpret speech or writing. This 'context of situation', as Firth calls it, in turn is conditioned by the society in which our speech act takes place.

Critiques of Wilkins Notional Syllabus:

Wilkins' original notional syllabus was soon critised by British applied linguists as merely replacing one kind of list (e.g. a list of grammar items) with another (a list of notions and functions). It specified products, rather than communicative processes. Widdowson (1979) argued that notional-functional categories provide "only a very partial and imprecise description of certain semantic and pragmatic rules which are used for reference when people interact. They tell us nothing about the application of these rules"
when they are actually engaged in communicative activity. If we are to adopt a communicative approach to teaching which takes as its primary purpose the development of the ability to do things with language, then it is discourse which must be at the centre of our attention". (Widdowson, 1979:254)

Brumfit (1985:69-72) attacks Wilkins on the ground that he (Wilkins) in neither of his books 'Notional Syllabuses' (1976), nor 'Notional Syllabuses Revisited' (1981) addresses himself to learning theory, it is difficult to see on what grounds he really proposes his reorientation ... Wilkins'...claim that notions establish a fundamental organizing principle for the language system that has to be mastered... entails a view that notions are definable and that the relations between them are specifiable... . If notions include 'categories of communicative function'... we (have) a list which is in principle infinite, because there are as many ways of doing things with language as people can invent... until we have some way of saying 'X is a notion and Y is not and we can test them in the following ways', we are talking about a vacuous concept... . Without being clearer about what exactly a notion should be, it is difficult to assess the claim that learning a language is learning notions ... we can generalize to some
extent about grammar ... we cannot generalize helpfully about what they (learners) should do and mean... . Even if we accept ... that there is a 'tendency of a structural approach to defer effective communicative ability until the later stages of language learning', there is a methodological solution available which does not require a notional or functional organization, however these are defined. (Ibid.:70-71)

2.3.8.3.2.7. The Fully Communicative Syllabus:

This is a learner-generated or fully communicative view of syllabus design where there would be only the most minimal input syllabus or maybe even none at all. The main features of this syllabus are:

- focus on the natural unanalysed use of language;
- fully communicative, experiential teaching techniques;
- message oriented practice. (Allen,1986)

This syllabus does not attempt to draw attention to any particular aspect of language structure or function. The aim is to achieve a fully spontaneous use of language in real-life social interaction. Classroom language practice and activities are designed to promote "experiential aspect of language proficiency", (Allen,1986) where learners are expected to make use of their language abilities and the resources of the target
language to achieve their own personal, social or academic goals. The emphasis is on the free, unrestricted use of language as an instrument of communication. A textbook of this type syllabus will contain reading passages and exercises drawn from authentic language data. Classroom and out of class activities will include plenty of practice based on the personal interests of individuals, the main motivation being the learners' desire to communicate. "At the experiential level of authentic language use the lesson content will be selected according to situational factors and the choice of topic, rather than by any language-internal features of grammar or discourse". (Ibid) However some form of control may still operate in teaching, since communicative tasks can be analysed and graded on the basis of their intellectual abstractions or in terms of the complexity of the interpersonal relationship involved. For example, asking the way in the street or being interviewed for a job both involve the authentic use of language, but the latter task involves a higher degree of experiential language proficiency. In this kind of syllabus there is close proximity between the objectives of programmes for second language learners and those meant for students of the mother tongue.

2.3.8.3.2.8. **Topic Based Organization/Syllabus:**

The different topics the learners will have to speak about in a real life situation can provide another kind of communicative framework for a course. The teacher can take an
important area of meanings such as sports or politics and develop teaching programs within this specific area, present useful language and engage the learners in a variety of practice activities. The lesson units are organised around suitable topics such as teaching, holidays, houses, food, speech, jobs, etc. Each unit presents language and includes various activities related to its topic area. The activities include reading, listening comprehension, discussion and role play. Though structural selection and grading will have a minimal role to play in this type of syllabus, none the less, initially the teacher will have to use simpler structures before going on to more complex ones. So some form of grading is still maintained.

2.3.8.3.2.9. Prabhu's Task Based or Procedural Syllabus:

Prabhu (1982) has chosen task specifications and task organizations as the appropriate criteria for syllabus design.

The only form of syllabus which is compatible with and can support communicational teaching seems to be a purely procedural one which lists in more or less detail, the types of tasks to be attempted in the classroom and suggests an order of complexity for tasks of the same kind (Ibid:4)

The task based approach claims a strong communicational basis in that it focuses attention on meaning and not the structure of the language. (Ibid.82) Teaching is organized around a specification of communicative tasks. The learner
Prabhu rejects the linguistic syllabus because in performing the task the "language needed to perform the task will not be systematic in any way which we usually systematise language (i.e., in structural, functional or notional terms)" (Johnson, 1982:136).

It is assumed that imposing a structural or notional syllabus on the classroom takes away "the teacher's and the students' freedom to interact in a way natural to the task in hand". (Johnson, 1982:136; Brumfit, 1984) This type of syllabus rejects all kinds of formal teaching activities such as drilling, instant error correction, etc. Brumfit who monitored the Project in 1981 says that:

The programme is constructed around a series of problems, requiring the use of English, which have to be solved by the learner. The problems are introduced as specific tasks in which students have to interpret language data - for example, a timetable or a set of rules or a map with its rubric - and use the data for particular purposes. Tasks are usually preceded by pre-tasks, in which the teacher performs a task similar to the one that students will be asked to perform themselves, in interaction with the class, using whatever language seems appropriate for the purpose. (Brumfit, 1984:104)

The task is presented:

a) in the form of a dialogue which students are to read aloud:

b) the teacher asks questions on the dialogue with a view to encourage students to communicate with the language at his disposal (pre-task);

c) the main task is given in the form of a home-assignment wherein students have to answer true-false statements (five in all) and bring to the next class. They have to state
reasons for their choices. Marks are then given to correct answers "so that they provide feedback in terms of the task" (Prabhu, 1982)

The tasks are graded "in order of conceptual difficulty beginning with very simple tasks like labelling and moving to more complex ones such as map-making". (Howatt, 1984:288) Materials are not selected on linguistic basis but capitalize on:

- the student's willingness to solve a task (i.e., his desire to be able to do it):
- his total engagement with the meaning involved in doing a task;
- his struggle with the language that he would need in solving the task.

(Prabhu, 1982: Johnson, 1982; Brumfit, 1984)

In the organizational framework broad communicative objectives are broken down into more specific objectives determined on the basis of a needs analysis. These objectives are organised into learning areas, for each of which a number of outcome goals or products are specified. The product may be a piece of comprehensible information, written, spoken or presented in a non-linguistic form such as a letter, a map, a graph, etc. The product is the result of the successful completion of the task but the process whereby the product is realised provides ample scope for learners interaction and the realisation of communicative skills.
2.3.8.3.2.10. **Crombie's Relational Syllabus:**

The Relational syllabus derives from the dissatisfaction that other syllabuses (structural, notional, etc.) generated. The relational syllabus finds the other above mentioned syllabuses inadequate in developing the learners' communicative competence. This type of syllabus does not consist in organising the teaching program in discrete items-structural or notional-but in "coherent discourse which gives adequate recognition to language as dynamic interaction generated by co-operative principles according to which participants in a discourse give different values to the same linguistic context (co-text), and the general situational context in which they occur". (Crombie, 1985:1) This syllabus proposed by Crombie provides a more ambitious and sophisticated approach than other syllabuses. The relational syllabus does not eschew the linguistic content but it "aims to present a specific linguistic system in terms of relational values which that system encodes and signals". (Ibid:83) Crombie claims that her syllabus is decidedly superior to other communicative syllabuses on the ground that it is ahead of other syllabuses because it forms its basis on the already available knowledge that the learner has of his mother tongue (as a meaning creating system) and linguistic universals (i.e., relational values). What the learner is expected to do is to learn the particular ways in which the linguistic system which constitutes his target language encodes and signals these values. (Ibid:83) She claims that communicative competence should be conceived of in terms of linguistic units in context but "as a series of frameworks,
each of which is made up of a group indicating the various discoursal relationships between units which are given prominence". (Ibid:8) As an illustration of her hypothesis, Crombie (1985:18) offers the following frames - involving two sets of binary values: General Causation and Condition-Consequence:

Relational Frame I

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{CONDITION} \\\\
\text{EFFECT (RESULT)} \\
\text{CAUSE (REASON)} \\
\text{CONSEQUENCE}
\end{array}
\]

Relational cues:

If \( \ldots \ldots (\text{then}) \ldots \ldots \) because \( \ldots \ldots \)

If \( \ldots \ldots (\text{then}) \ldots \ldots \) The reason (is) (being) \( \ldots \ldots \)

If \( \ldots \ldots (\text{then}) \) \( \ldots \ldots \) \( X \) will result in \( Y \) because \( \ldots \ldots \)

If \( \ldots \ldots (\text{then}) \) \( \ldots \ldots \) \( X \) will result in (my) doing \( Y \) because \( \ldots \ldots \)

Relational Frame II

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{CONSEQUENCE} \\
\text{CAUSE (REASON)} \\
\text{CONDITION} \\
\text{EFFECT (RESULT)}
\end{array}
\]

Rational cues:

Because \( \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \) if \( \ldots \ldots \)

\( \ldots \ldots \) so \( \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \) if \( \ldots \ldots \)

\( \ldots \ldots \) so \( \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \) in the event of \( X \)

\( \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \) so \( \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \) in the event of (his) doing/not doing \( X \)

Relational Frame III

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{CONDITION} \\
\text{CAUSE (REASON)} \\
\text{EFFECT (RESULT)} \\
\text{CONSEQUENCE}
\end{array}
\]
Rational cues:

Because ...........if.........(then).......... Because ...........if.........(then) X will result in Y Because ...........unless....(then).......... Cromble takes into consideration grammatical, semantic, syntactic, intonational, morphological and other aspects of linguistic communication in order to provide a rationale for her syllabus. She enumerates the advantages of the relational approach thus:

"The great advantage of a relational approach is that it allows for the gradual introduction of various components of the linguistic system within a framework in which these components are immediately put to use in the creation and understanding of coherent discourse".

(Crombie, 1985:106)

Crombie's approach is essentially an 'eclectic' one that offers valuable insights in how linguistic code is used to realise communicative functions.

2.3.9. The Communicative Curriculum and Content:

Curriculum generally implies the substance of the teaching program of an institution. A syllabus merely provides a list of contents to be learnt but does not suggest methods, activities, and measures for evaluation. A curriculum, on the other hand, means not only the subject matter or content of a teaching program but also the entire instructional process materials, methods, equipment, evaluation. The curriculum specifies the knowledge, skills and insights the student is expected to acquire via
successive in-class and out-of-school tasks and activities designed to foster learning. It also specifies the degree of perfection the student will be expected to demonstrate through different types of oral and written measures.

2.3.9.1. The Requirements of a communicative Curriculum:

A well designed curriculum will start with an attempt to specify the needs of the learners because the communicative curriculum starts from the question 'What do learners need to do with the language?'

According to Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983:49) a communicative curriculum will have to fulfil the following requirements;

1. An analysis of the general aims of the program (i.e., the terminal behaviour to be achieved by students at the end of the course).

2. A progression of units which guides the teacher by indicating what aspects of the language are to be concentrated on at any given stage.

3. A list of items (functional, notional, or grammatical items, as well as points of pronunciation or of relevant cultural information) to be isolated within each unit.

4. A description of the situations, tasks and activities through which language items and skills will be introduced and practised.

5. Suggestions for evaluation (testing) of the pupils' growth.

6. Sources for teacher reference and pupil texts.
2.3.9.2. The Characteristics of the Content of a Communicative Approach.

1. At each unit and level the learner is made to understand the social roles and psychological attitudes of the speakers towards each other perhaps through an introductory paragraph in his native language. This helps students to choose language which is appropriate to a particular situation.

2. It is impossible to teach the whole of language and culture in one unit, year or level. Hence selection and gradation of language items or notions within the communicative function is imperative. The communicative approach advocates flexibility in selection and gradation. The selection will depend on such factors as the functions and notions, the learners' needs, the linguistic knowledge they already have, the complexity of the grammatical structure they are about to learn, and the length of the stretch of speech necessary to express their communicative purpose.

3. A unit will not deal with just one structure but several structures because the structures in the various utterances of a dialogue may be dissimilar as they would be in real-world communication.

4. A variety of structures implies a number of different functions grouped together in one unit. For example, an invitation may be extended, accepted gracefully, arrangements made about time, place and transportation, and thanks extended before conventional parting remarks are made. A refusal of the invitation would indicate the use of an entirely different range of functions and notions.
5. The curriculum emphasises the fact that students should first be made aware of the function found within the complex, diversified, sociocultural situations of our daily lives, and then enabling them to express these functions correctly and appropriately in the language they are learning.

6. The students' native language is utilized to facilitate the presentation of new language items, materials and concepts in the target language.

7. Selection and gradation of grammatical structures within the function to be expressed will depend on the age of the learners, their linguistic cultural needs, the complexity of the grammatical items, the learners' knowledge of both the native language as well as target language structures and notions which will clarify the new structures.

8. The communicative approach makes provision for the teaching of the notions and expressions needed in other disciplines both in a second language and in a foreign language situation. Concepts and language needed in social studies, geography, mathematics, art, music and the native language and literature, besides those needed for professional and vocational use, are interwoven in the curriculum at all appropriate levels.

9. Language teaching programs meant for adults will have units which contain linguistic and cultural materials the learner will need immediately for sociocultural or socio-vocational purposes.
Communication being the crux of human relationships, a humane basis to the content is absolutely essential. The units will provide much interaction between students as well as teacher and students, fostering a democratized relationship.

2.3.9.3. The Communicative Teaching/Learning Materials:

CLT uses a variety of teaching materials from a number of sources. In Maley's words (1986:89) "The teaching materials will need to reflect the wide range of uses of the language. Almost inevitably there will be a preponderance of authentic over simplified materials".

Practioners of CLT view materials as a way of influencing the quality of classroom interaction and language use. Materials thus have the primary role of promoting communicative language teaching. Recent developments in technology have given the teacher access to a much wider range of classroom facilities than were available a few years ago. Language teaching today uses a variety of audio-visual materials-cassette recordings, video materials, etc. Yet it is likely that teachers will still need to rely on the most accessible device, the textbook. It is impossible to do away with the textbook entirely as it is a source of much linguistic security especially to the non-native teacher.

It is a necessary requirement of the language learning/teaching process that both teachers and learners have access to an extensive range of different materials. According to Peter Strevens (1977:27) all teaching materials need to possess certain characteristics. They need to be:
1. **realistic:**
- capable of being used by the teachers and learners;
- capable of being learned from;
- cheap enough to be available;
- actually in hand, not empty entries in an official list which never reach the learners;

2. **relevant:**
- to the particular point in the learner's progress:
  - to his aim and age-group;

3. **interesting:**
- varied;
- on topics of interest to the learners;
- intellectually satisfying;

4. **encouraging:**
- having the quality of making the learner feel he is progressing or at least enjoying his learning;

5. **compatibility:**
- with the approach being followed;
- with the teacher's attitudes.

Richards and Rodgers (1986: 79-80) have discussed three kinds of materials currently used in CLT. They have labelled these as (i) Text based (ii) Task based (iii) Realia.

1) **Text Based Materials:**

Textbooks have been streamlined in keeping with recent innovative approaches. Innumerable textbooks ranging from those that have kept some mooring in structural procedures to
those that are purely communicative have been designed to direct and support CLT. Morrow and Johnson's 'Communicate' (1979) dispenses with the usual dialogues, drills and sentence patterns and makes ample use of visual cues, taped cues, pictures and sentence fragments to initiate a conversation. Watcyn-Jones' 'Pair Work' (1981) makes use of two different texts for pair work, each containing different information needed to enact role plays and carry out other pair activities.

(ii) **Task Based Materials:**

Task based materials focus on games, role plays, simulations, and task-based communication activities. These materials comprise of exercise handbooks, cue cards, activity cards, pair-communication materials and student-interaction practice materials.

(iii) **Realia:**

Many proponents of CLT actively support the use of 'authentic' 'from life' materials in the classroom such as signs, magazines, memos, notifications, advertisements and newspapers, or graphic and visual sources around which communicative activities are devised such as maps, pictures, symbols, graphs and charts. Authentic radio and T.V. broadcasts would also be included here.

2.3.9.4. **The Distinguishing Features of CLT Textbooks:**

1. First, textbooks have been made more attractive and interesting with plentiful colour, illustrations, diagrams, photographs, etc.
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direct and support CLT. Morrow and Johnson's 'Communicate'
(1979) dispenses with the usual dialogues, drills and
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1. First, textbooks have been made more attractive and
   interesting with plantiful colour, illustrations, diagrams,
   photographs, etc.
2. In tune with contemporary ideas of communication, many textbooks are now more dependent on tasks (involving such activities as filling in charts, interviewing, interpreting various forms of popular journalism etc.). The stolid reading of the past has been relegated to the background.

3. There is an enormous wealth of original, authentic material and creative ideas available in CLT textbooks.

4. The textbook does not limit itself to the formal linguistic system. They may include exercises for relaxation, material for mime or suggestions for mother tongue reading.

5. The textbook concentrates on interaction/communication at the expense of subject matter.

6. The textbook teaching material is not only more interesting and imaginative but more flexible as well. It enables teachers to pick and choose materials to suit immediate learner/classroom needs.

7. The textbook makes considerable demands on the teacher, for their very flexibility forces teachers to make choices of principle about their classroom procedures all the time.

8. Learners learn both consciously and with effort and unconsciously without effort. The textbook would need to offer scope for both kinds of learning. (Maley 1986:92)

9. Language processing proceeds from top down, not from bottom up. Meanings are first apprehended as 'wholes' and only later analysed into parts if necessary. The tasks in the textbook would need to develop holistic processing. Atomistic processing would only rarely be used (Ibid. 92-93)
10. To mirror real communication the major language skills need to be integrated. The communicative tasks in the textbooks should take cognizance of this fact.