Chapter Two

General Review of Literature
2.0 Overview

This chapter presents a historical overview of language teaching methodology. In general, it gives a brief discussion of the principles of the Structural Approaches to language learning and teaching. In particular, it elucidates the Communicative Approaches to language teaching, called Communicative Language Teaching (henceforth CLT) and the different views of some linguists and sociolinguists, e.g. Chomsky and Hymes, on the communicative competence and its components. It ends with a sketch of the pedagogic implications for language teaching and learning.

2.1 ELT Methods

ELT methods are ways of teaching English with a specific set of objectives leading to successful teaching/learning of English in ESL/EFL classrooms. We can distinguish between the various ELT methods and approaches by describing or applying each one, but we cannot say which method is the best. Each approach has its own features, which attract teachers. One could say that there is no single best method for ELT. Each teaching method is a function of each distinctive situation, of the teacher’s theoretical learning and personality and of the learners’ needs. A method which is successful with one set of individuals (teachers/learners) in a particular ELT context may be unsuccessful with others, in entirely different situations. So a method/approach, which works for a teacher in a particular situation and satisfies students’ needs, is the best one for the situation, for those learners, and for that teacher. Chastain (1976), as cited in Tainayya (1992: 85), puts it the best way when he says: “The important point is not which method of teaching is better, but which method is better for which students. Education should concern itself with determining the most efficient fit between the teaching-learning situation and the learner”
The well-known approaches/methods in ELT are the Grammar-Translation Method (GM), the Direct Method (DM), the Audio-lingual method (AM), the Structural-Situational Method (SM), the Structural Approach (SA) and the Communicative Approach (CA).

Here, the focus is on the Communicative Approach or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method, which is current, because of the following reasons:

- It has been in vogue for the last forty years and demonstrates its superiority over the other methods that it intends to replace.
- It has the backing of the most recent research in Psycholinguistics and Sociolinguistics.
- It underlies the series “Crescent English Course For Yemen 1-6” which is now being used in government schools in Yemen in which student-teachers are going to teach English.
- It establishes the foundation on which this exploratory study stands i.e. focusing on the student-teachers’ inadequate oral communicative competence to use English appropriately.

The different ELT methods, which are aforementioned, stem from two basic approaches: Structural Approach and Communicative Approaches. For example, Grammar-Translation, Situational and Audio-lingual methods are based on the Structural Approach.

Any approach to language teaching requires two sets of assumptions to be made: firstly, assumptions about what language is and, secondly, assumptions about how people learn languages.

To have a clear overview of the communicative approach that contrasts with the orthodox methods, we have to throw light on the assumption underlying the Structural Approach and upon which most pre-CLT methods are based.
According to the Structural Approach:

(a) Language is considered as a set of rules of grammar or a bundle of structures and learning a language means learning these rules one after another. The learner must master these rules, which determine how sentences are constructed. Therefore, what the language learner must learn, and what must be taught, are the rules of grammar.

(b) Learning is a habit-formation process and language learning is no exception. The learner must learn the rules of grammar through involving him in the automatic drills in which he just repeats what is said to him. Mechanical practice through drills is therefore a successful way of learning a language.

It is clear that in this method that the learners’ experience in the target language is restricted only to classroom practice. It does not ensure that students could make sentences correctly in other situations in spite of the fact that they seem to learn each structure well at the time it is taught. Generally, the students’ command of the language structure at the end of structurally graded courses, lasting several years, was very unsatisfactory, requiring a good deal of remedial teaching.

As a result of this, some methodologists have turned their attention to the Communicative Approach, which was introduced in the 1980’s, in an attempt to work out a plan of teaching foreign languages for communicative purposes.

2.2 Dramatic Shifts

The Notional-Functional Communicative approaches were introduced in the 1980s. In these years, there have been some dramatic shifts in attitude towards both language and learning. While teaching structures and vocabulary is an important part of English language teaching, especially in the Structural-Situational method, this in itself does not prepare the learners to communicate adequately in the target language.
Generally, language has been accepted as simply a system of rules (SA). But it is now seen as a dynamic resource for the creation of meaning (CA).

2.3 The Impact of Linguistics and Psychology

In the mid-sixties, there was a radical upheaval in Linguistics and Psycholinguistic theories. In Noam Chomsky’s “Syntactic Structures” (1957) and “Aspects of the Theory of Syntax” (1965), Chomsky shows that Bloomfieldian Structural Linguistics, which looked upon language as a set of discrete items, had neglected a fundamental aspect of language: its creativity, “… ordinary linguistic behaviour, avers Chomsky (1966) as cited in Richards and Rodgers (1986: 59), characteristically involves innovation, formation of new sentences of great abstraction and intricacy.” He suggests that a native speaker has, somewhere in his brain, a set of a finite number of rules, which are capable of generating an infinite number of sentences, which he has never encountered before, spoken or heard.

In a review article (1959) Chomsky criticizes Skinner’s “Verbal Behaviour”. He challenges the popular notion that language is a habit formation (see 2.1). He argues convincingly that language is stimulus-free, is discretely infinite, and works with displaced reference. A stimulus-response mechanistic, behavioural theory of language cannot account for this infiniteness. Nor does it account for the various things that the child acquires during language learning without any formal instruction. This is called Cognitivism or Mentalism.

Also, there were changes in the educational realities in Europe. With the increasing interdependence of European countries came the need for greater efforts to teach adults the major languages of the European common market and the council of Europe (Richard and Rodgers 1986).
2.4 Emergence of the Communicative Approaches

The contribution of some applied linguists and sociolinguists such as Wilkins, Widdowson, Brumfit, Firth, Halliday and Hymes to the theoretical basis of a communicative or functional approach to language teaching and the acceptance of the new principles gave prominence nationally and internationally to what came to be called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

What follows is a sketch of the theoretical basis that underlies CLT, answering the questions of what is language? and how do people learn the language?

2.5 Theories Underlying CLT

2.5.1 The Theory of Language

The Communicative Approaches (CA) in language teaching start from a theory of language as communication, in which meaning is the focus and is sought. What is meant by communication in this context?

Communication is a two-way process. It is the exchange and negotiation of information between two individuals through the use of verbal (written or oral) symbols i.e. sounds and words, and non-verbal symbols e.g. facial expressions, gestures, use of space and distance.

The goal of CLT is to develop what Hymes (1972) called Communicative Competence. Hymes coined this term to contrast with Chomsky’s theory of competence.

2.5.2 Chomskyan Theory of Competence

Chomsky holds that linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention,
interest and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of
the language in actual performance (Chomsky 1965: 3).

For Chomsky, the focus of linguistic theory is to characterize the
abstract abilities speakers possess that enable them to produce
grammatically correct sentences in a language.

Chomsky's concept of 'competence' is the tacit knowledge of grammar
rules internalized by the speaker and 'performance' is the actual use of
language in concrete situations. It turns out that Chomsky doesn't have
much to say on whatever happens in language over and above grammar,
about all kinds of language use, ethnography of speaking, linguistic amenities
and so on.

2.5.3 Hymesian Communicative Competence

Hymes holds that Chomsky's linguistic theory is sterile, that linguistic
theory needs to be seen as part of a more general theory incorporating
communication and culture. His definition of linguistic competence matches
with the term as used by Chomsky: “Linguistic competence”, says Hymes
(1971: 5) citing from Chomsky, “deals with the knowledge that enables the
speaker to produce and understand an infinite set of sentences: this is the
meaning of 'creative' when applied to language”. But the Hymesian linguistic
competence of the native speaker-listener is in a completely heterogeneous
speech community, not of an ideal speaker in a completely homogeneous
speech community.

Hymes' theory of communicative competence is a definition of what a
speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a
speech community. What Hymes has done, is to 'extend the notion of
competence as a tacit knowledge of grammar to speaking as a whole'
(Hymes 1971, as in Taylor 1988). For Hymes, competence is viewed as the
overall underlying knowledge and ability for language use, which the
speaker-listener possesses.
It thus involves not only the knowledge of grammar, but also the ability for use. This is clear when he says, “rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless” (Hymes 1972, as in Das 1989).

If a speaker were to produce grammatical sentences without regard to the situations in which they were being used, he would certainly be considered deranged. So, competence includes concepts of appropriateness and acceptability. Hymes then lists four sectors of communicative competence.

*The first,* whether or not something is formally possible, is roughly equivalent to Chomsky’s restricted notion of competence as grammaticality. It is concerned with whether a language permits a structure as grammatical (possible) or rejects it as ungrammatical (impossible).

*The second* sectors concerns feasibility. A sentence like ‘the mouse the cat the dog the man the woman married beat chased ate had a white tail’ is grammatically possible, but hardly feasible.

*The third* sector covers ‘appropriateness to context’, the speaker-listener’s underlying competence includes ‘rules of appropriateness’ and a sentence can be grammatically possible, feasible but inappropriate.

Hymes’ *final* sector concerns ‘whether or not something is in fact done’. A sentence may be possible, feasible, and appropriate but does not actually occur.

It seems to us however that Chomsky and Hymes are speaking about parts of what is a single statement. Chomsky is right and so is Hymes. Noam Chomsky is not saying that language is not a cultural object that is not used for communication. All he is saying is that language is a mathematical object at some level of its existence and that grammar and grammatical competence constitute the heart of human language. That grammar is basic and everything else about language is derivative. The sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence, are all built on
the speakers’ grammatical competence, which is the understructure of language (see 2.7.1). Hymes’ averral of the uselessness of formal grammatical rules in the absence of rules of language use doesn’t quite engage what Chomsky is saying.

2.6 FL Teaching and Learning

When Chomskyan and Hymesian descriptions of competence of the native speakers are transferred into the description of the aims and objectives of foreign language teaching and learning, this transfer is misleading because it implicitly suggests that foreign language learners should model themselves as L1 speakers. Hymes does not write for FLT profession. He is concerned with analyzing social interaction and communication within a social group using one language.

Others undertook the interpretation of the concept ‘Communicative Competence for FLT’. Canale and Swain (1980) in North America and Van Ek (1986) in Europe develop it working independently of each other. Canale and Swain develop their work from Hymes, so the focus will be narrowed to give a description of their model of communicative Competence.

2.7 Communicative Competence and Actual Communication

In Canal and Swain (1980) ‘communicative competence’ is understood as the underlying system of knowledge and skill required for communication (e.g. knowledge of vocabulary and skill in using the sociolinguistic conventions for a given language). Like Hymes, they lay emphasis on the sociolinguistic rules in using the language in actual communication.

A distinction is also drawn between ‘communicative competence’ and what is here labelled ‘actual communication’ - the realization of such knowledge and skill underlimiting psychological and environmental conditions such as memory and perceptual constraints, fatigue, nervousness, distractions and interfering background noises. The term ‘actual
communication’ is an alternative to the term ‘performance’ used by Chomsky and others such as Canale and Swain (1980).

Canale and Swain view ‘communicative competence’ as an essential part of actual communication but it is reflected only indirectly, and sometimes imperfectly (e.g. in random and inadvertent slips of the tongue, mixing of registers).

The stress here is on the communicative competence that includes both knowledge and skill in using this knowledge when interacting in actual communication. ‘Knowledge’ refers to what one knows (consciously and unconsciously) about the language and about other aspects of communicative use. ‘Skill’ refers to how well one can perform this knowledge in actual communication. The view here is that both knowledge and skill underlie actual communication in a systematic and necessary way and are thus included in communicative competence. Since it indicates how well one can perform knowledge in actual situations, the notion of skill i.e. the core of the language use warrants a distinction between underlying capacities, viz. competence, and their manifestation in concrete situations, viz. actual communication (Richards and Schmidt 1983).

2.7.1 Components of Communicative Competence

The theoretical framework for communicative competence (CC) proposed by Canale and Swain (1980) includes four areas of knowledge and skill: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. It is assumed that this theory of CC interacts in as yet unspecific ways with other systems of knowledge and skill (e.g. world knowledge) as well as with a theory of human action (dealing with such factors as personality and motivation). This proposed framework is based on the research reported in Canale and Swain (1980) and other current work in this area.
Now let us sketch briefly the contents and boundaries of each of these four areas of competence and to discuss this theory in the light of other recently proposed theories of CC.

2.7.1.1 Grammatical Competence

This refers to what Chomsky calls 'linguistic competence' and what Hymes intends by what is 'formally possible'. This type of competence remains concerned with mastery of the language code (verbal or non-verbal) itself. It includes features and rules of the language such as vocabulary, word-formation, sentence formation, pronunciation, spelling and linguistic semantics. Such competence focuses directly on the knowledge and skill required for understanding and expressing accurately the literal meaning of utterances. Grammatical competence will be an important concern for any second language programme.

2.7.1.2 Sociolinguistic Competence

In Canale and Swain (1980), this component includes both sociocultural rules, which specify the ways in which utterances are produced and understood appropriately, and rules of discourse in terms of cohesion (i.e. grammatical links) and coherence (i.e. appropriate combinations of communicative functions) of groups of utterances. Sociolinguistic competence thus addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participants, purposes of interaction and norms or convections of interaction (Richards and Schmidt 1983).

Appropriateness of utterances refers to both (a) appropriateness of meaning and (b) appropriateness of form.

(a) Appropriateness of meaning concerns the extent to which particular communicative functions (e.g. commanding, complaining and inviting), attitudes (which includes politeness and formality) and ideas are judged in a given situation. For example, it would generally be inappropriate for a waiter
in a restaurant to command a customer to order a certain item regardless of how the utterance and communicative function (a command) are expressed grammatically.

(b) Appropriateness of form concerns the extent to which a given meaning (including communicative functions, attitudes and proposition ideas) is represented in a verbal or non-verbal form that is proper in a given sociolinguistic context. For example, a waiter trying to take an order politely in a posh restaurant would be using inappropriate grammatical forms (here register) if he were to ask, 'o.k. , chump, what are you and this board going to eat?'

This appropriacy of form includes what Richards (1981) and others have called 'interactional competence', which addresses questions of appropriacy of 'kinesics' which has to do with human body movements in their relation to communication, and 'proxemics' which has to do with physical interpersonal spaces and how they relate to communication.

It is clear that Hymes' notion of 'probability of occurrence' (see 2.5.3) can also play an important role in determining the appropriateness of meaning and form.

According to Canale (1981), the tendency in many L2 programmes to treat sociolinguistic competence as less important than grammatical competence seems odd for two reasons. First, it gives the impression that grammatical correctness of utterances is more important than appropriacy of utterances in actual communication, an impression that is challenged by evidence from first language use (Terrell 1980) and second language use (Jones 1978). Second, this tendency ignores the fact that sociolinguistic competence is crucial in interpreting utterances for their 'social meaning'. For example, sociolinguistic competence is crucial in interpreting communicative functions and the speakers' attitudes in certain situations when this is not clear from the literal meaning of utterances or from non-verbal cues (e.g. sociocultural context and gestures). Thus, there is no doubt that these
universal aspects of appropriate language use are needed and should be emphasized in any L2 programme.

2.7.1.3 Discourse Competence

This type of competence concerns mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres. By genre is meant the text type. For example, oral or written, narrative, an argumentative essay, a scientific report, a business letter and a set of instructions, each represents a different genre. Unity of a text is achieved through ‘cohesion’ in form and ‘coherence’ in meaning (see 2.7.1.2) and facilitates the interpretation of a text.

2.7.1.4 Strategic Competence

This component is composed of mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies (CSs). It refers to ‘the means that speakers use to solve their communicative problems’ (Paribkht 1982).

CSs may be called into play for two reasons: (a) to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to limiting conditions in actual communication, e.g. memory inability to recall an idea or grammatical form, or to insufficient competence in one or more of the other areas of CC, e.g. grammatical competence, and (b) to enhance the effectiveness of communication, e.g. deliberately slow and soft speech for rhetorical effect. For example, when one does not remember a given grammatical form, one compensatory strategy that can be used is paraphrase. Thus, if a learner does not know the English term ‘train station’, s/he may try a paraphrase such as ‘the place where trains stop, or the place for trains’. Of course such strategies need not be limited to resolving grammatical problems. Actual communication also requires learners to handle problems of a sociolinguistic nature (e.g. how to address strangers when unsure of their social status) and of a discourse nature (e.g. how to achieve coherence in a text when unsure
of cohesion devices). According to Canale and Swain (1980) communication strategies are likely to be of two sorts:

1. Those that relate mainly to the grammatical code (e.g. how to avoid certain forms that one has not mastered or can not recall).

2. Those that relate more to communicative interaction (e.g. how to indicate that one intends to continue or stop speaking).

Although the fragmentation of the concept of 'communicative competence' has limitations (cf. Byrnes 1977), it does not provide a framework in which to shed light on the varying needs of students in different contexts (for example, in an FL context) as they progress to different levels of proficiency or skills in using the internalized knowledge of a language.

While all students at all levels of proficiency need to develop all components of communicative competence, FL students in general and student-teachers in particular, who are the focus of this study, appear to need the compensation aspects of 'strategic competence' most of all for the following reasons:

First, the student-teachers' use of English is restricted to the classroom so they don't have sufficient exposure to the English language.

Secondly, they are going to teach English to students in real classrooms, so they should have an effective command of English that requires them to know how to begin teaching, giving excuses to the pupils and explanations, how to continue conversations, how to argue and negotiate etc. while presenting the new language to their pupils.

Finally, they are rarely involved in communicative activities in English classrooms through which actual communication may be promoted and through which they can practise the use of communication strategies.
Though work on ‘strategic competence’ is scanty, there has been some work on it. The contributions of Littlewood (1984) and Paribakht (1982) are merit to mention here. What these two scholars say applies very much to the Yemeni situation.

2.7.1.5 Communication Strategies

When L2 learners are engaged in communication, they often have communicative intentions, which they have difficulty expressing because of gaps in their linguistic (grammatical) competence. An L2 learner may have problems communicating while s/he is speaking the L2. In such a situation, s/he must try to find an alternative way of getting the meaning across. The selection of the communication strategy thus depends on the learners’ communicative needs and his/her level of proficiency reflecting the Hymesian behavioural perspective. The Hymesian behavioural perspective is “proficiency in skills ... (which) is what is required for the manifestation of communicative competence” (Wiemann and Blacklund 1980, as in Taylor 1988).

Littlewood (1984) presents some of the communication strategies (CSs), which learners have been observed to use. They are as follows:

Avoiding Communication

When learners are already aware of gaps in their linguistic/grammatical competence (see 2.7.1.1), they will tend to avoid occasions that may present difficulties in communication. For example, many L2 learners find it difficult to present arguments in persuasive ways.

Adjusting the Message

When an exchange is actually taking place and L2 learner encounters a problem, it is usually too late to use avoidance. So, they try to adjust their message. They may, for example, omit some pieces of information, make the ideas simpler or less precise or say something slightly different.
Using Paraphrase

A learner may take recourse to paraphrase, circumlocution or description in order to express the meaning that he wants to put across.

Using Approximation

A learner may use a description, a descriptive phrase that expresses the meaning of words, which he may not know. This may mean using words, which are less specific than the intended meaning (e.g. juice of a mixture of fruits instead of cocktail juice).

Creating New Words

A learner may create new words or phrases, which s/he hopes will express the desired meaning. The new words/phrases may be created literally by translating the elements in a native language word. For example, an Arabic learner of English who does not know the word for a ‘processor’, may coin the phrase “mixing machine”, which is a literal translation of the Arabic word /xalaːt/.

Switching to the Native Language

A learner may not create a new word/phrase with second language material, s/he may alternatively use a word/phrase from his own native language. For example, an Arab learner of English may say ‘from my eyes’, which is the literal English translation of the Arabic idiomatic expression ‘men-ooyuni’, is the equivalent of the English ‘with pleasure’. This strategy is most likely to succeed in situations where the listener has knowledge of the speaker’s native language.

Using Non-linguistic Resources

We use paralinguistic resources in any language we have already acquired, be it L₁, L₂, or FL to make our meanings clearer. For example, mime, gestures or imitation.
Seeking Help

Finally, a learner may seek help from outside (e.g. using a bilingual dictionary) or asking the listener for cooperation.

According to Paribakht (1982), a study that is carried out in an attempt to clarify the nature of the relationship between the speaker’s proficiency level in the target language and their use of the CSs, Paribakht emphasizes that an increase in the speaker’s level of L2 proficiency will make it possible for him to rely more often on adopting CSs. However, the target language knowledge may provide the learners with the type of knowledge they would need to utilize in a given strategy. It does not seem to affect their underlying strategic competence in L1.

Also, the development of the speakers’ target language knowledge, e.g. grammatical knowledge, affects the surface realization of their CSs. Although the speakers may share strategic competence, they differ greatly in implementing that competence, simply because their strategies interact with their different levels of knowledge sources. While the communicative strategies of native speakers exploit their limited competencies of fully proficient speakers, those of the learners (L2 learners) exploit their limited competencies in the target language, resulting in the production of deviant interlanguage forms i.e. the type of language produced by L2/FL learners who are in the process of learning a language (as in Longman’s Dictionary of Applied Linguistic 1985).

Thus, the learners’ limited target language knowledge may not merely preclude, in terms of type or reduce, in terms of frequency, the adoption of certain CSs, which require that knowledge, but may also affect the surface realization of their strategies in terms, for example, of grammatical accuracy and informative value. These differences may cumulatively affect the speakers’ success and effective use of CSs in the conveyance of their meaning.
Paribakht (1982, 1983) further suggests that the notion of strategic competence should be broadened to include all language-related strategies, e.g. learning strategies that can be defined as the approaches used by the learners to learn the materials of the language (see 3.2.1- B) to expand the speakers’ competence.

Having explicated the theories of language underlying CLT, we conclude that the primary goal of the communicative approach must be to facilitate the integration of the different components of communicative competence, an outcome that is not likely to result from overemphasis on one area of competence over the others throughout an SL or an FL programme. However, in some specific contexts and according to the learners’ communicative needs (see 2.7.1.4) it is advisable to practise one competence (e.g. strategic competence) more than the others.

2.8 Theories of Learning

In CLT, learning in general is not a process of habit-formation but it involves the learners’ mind. Learning is better facilitated when the learners are involved in communicative activities using the language being learnt. Mere mechanical practice through drills is thus discouraged as it does not involve the learners in the real sense. Underpinning CLT are cognitive activities in which learners are encouraged to think before communicating. Learners are encouraged to negotiate, argue, persuade and solve problems rather than simply imitate and repeat (see 2.1). Learners should be given opportunities to use the language in genuinely communicative situations in the belief that it is in the process of such activities that effective and efficient language learning takes place.

In contrast with the quantum that has been written in CLT literature about the communicative dimensions of language, little has been written about learning theory. However, elements of an underlying learning theory can be discerned in some CLT practices. One such element might be described as communication principle: ‘activities that involve real
communication and promote learning'. A second element is the **task principle**: ‘activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks to promote learning’ (Johnson 1982). A third element is the **meaningfulness principle**: ‘language that is meaningful to the learners and supports the learning process’ (Richards and Rodgers 1986). It is clear that all these principles focus on the communicative activities that promote communication and center on meaning, not form, through which language learning takes place.

The principles, we suggest, can be inferred clearly from CLT practices such as those mentioned in Littlewood (1981). He assumes that communicative learning is not the same as language learning. It is something more. He also suggests two models of language learning and accordingly two types of activities.

Also, there are more recent accounts that are not directly associated with CLT, but they have attempted to describe theories of language learning processes that are compatible with the Communicative Approach, e.g. Stephen Krashen’s hypotheses (1982) and the Comprehensible Output Hypothesis of Swain (1985).

A brief sketch of such theories/hypotheses that can be transferred and applied in a CLT classroom is what follows.

### 2.8.1 “Communication Learning is not the Same as Simply Language Learning”

Littlewood (1981) suggests that the goals of L₂ teaching should be oriented to achieving the professed goal of a communicative approach to language teaching, which is ‘to equip learners with the ability to communicate’. The focus in CLT is on ‘communicative ability’, which was typically not stressed in pre-CLT methods. But, as Littlewood points out, the main feature that characterizes the communicative approach is: the realization that ‘communication learning’ is not the same as simply ‘language
leaning’ and accordingly there are other dimensions to be considered. The following are those dimensions:

(a) New dimension with respect to the goal, which is related to the skills that learners need to acquire and are not limited to using the structure of the language, but also include other skills that are concerned with how to relate these structures to their communicative function in appropriate ways and real situations.

(b) New dimensions with respect to the kinds of learning activities that are needed in order to achieve this goal viz. ‘learning to communicate’, which involves much more use of language for communication in real situations that was often assumed earlier. Also, learning not only takes place through conscious, controlled processes, but also through subconscious acquisition, when people use language for communication (Littlewood 1981).

Littlewood’s view thus presents a communicative approach with a wider goal and a range of appropriate activities. This view implies that the emphasis is on communicative functions rather than on language forms. In other words, in a broad sense, it is not the functions themselves that a learner needs to master, but new ways of expressing these functions by means of a new language system. This does not mean that the structural system of the language is neglected, but one of the most characteristic features of CLT is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combining this into a more fully integrated communicative view.

Learners need practice in communicating and this may not take place through traditional activities, e.g. drills and question-and-answer practice. The point to note is that these activities do not themselves involve communication. It is realized that these traditional activities must be replaced by activities that involve learners in ‘real communication’.
Littlewood (1981) presents some assumptions with regard to two models of language learning, which are 'skill-learning model', and 'natural learning model'.

2.8.2 Two Models of Language Learning

2.8.2.1 The Skill-Learning Model

According to this model, language use is a performance-skill that can be divided into 'part-skill' and 'whole-task'. Part-skill is a skill, which can be trained and practised separately in addition to 'part-skill'; learners must be given opportunities for 'whole-task' practice in which the parts are integrated with each other in the performance of the total skill.

In language teaching, part-skill training would include isolating items such as structures or sounds for separate practice. Whole-task practice would involve actual communication (see 2.7). Wilga Rivers (1975, 1987) alternatively uses expressions like 'skill-getting' and 'skill-using'.

2.8.2.2 Natural Learning Model

According to this model, communication skills are acquired without conscious teaching, simply as a result of involvement in communication. The term 'creative construction' is often used to describe how learners create a system of rules for themselves from exposure to the language and when they are involved in spontaneous communication. See 2.8.3, which is an explication of Stephen Krashen’s Acquisition learning hypothesis of 1982. This model attaches no importance to the step-by-step assimilation of separate bits of the language, which is 'skill-learning/training’ but to the 'whole-task' practice, a global process through which the learners construct their own rules to account for all the language input they receive.

These two models can be integrated in the sense that the 'whole-task' practice includes 'skill-learning' and it is also an opportunity for natural learning to take place. Littlewood then assumes a framework in which he integrates the requirements of both models:
1. Part-skill training, which he also calls ‘pre-communicative activities’.

2. Whole-task practice or ‘communicative activities’, which provide opportunities for the kind of natural acquisition envisaged by the Natural Learning model.

**Pre-Communicative Activities** seek to give the learners fluent control over linguistic forms without actually requiring them to use this system for communicative purposes. The teacher isolates specific elements of knowledge or skill and provides the learners with opportunities to practise them separately through different types of mechanical drills. The learner is thus trained in the part-skills of communication rather than in the total skill to be acquired.

**Communicative Activities** in which learners have to activate and integrate their pre-communicative knowledge and skills in order to use them for the communication of meanings. The production of linguistic forms becomes subordinate to higher-level decisions, related to the communication of meanings. The learners are expected to increase their skill in starting from an intended meaning, selecting suitable language forms from their total repertoire and producing them fluently. The teacher needs to provide communicative feedback and this need not exclude structural feedback altogether. S/he provides activities through which communication takes place.

Learners are thus practising the total skill of communication. This is the ‘whole-task’ practice (Littlewood 1981). For more discussion on communicative activities see 2.9.2.

**2.8.3 The Language Acquisition Theories**

Terrell and Krashen (1983) view communication as the primary function of language and since their approach focuses on teaching communicative abilities, they refer to the ‘Natural Approach’ as an example of a communicative approach. The Natural Approach is similar to other
communicative approaches being developed today (Krashen and Terrel 1983: 17). They reject earlier methods of language teaching (see 2.1) e.g. the Audiolingual method in which grammar is viewed as the central component of language. According to Krashen and Terrell, the major problem with these methods is that they are built not around 'actual theories of language acquisition, but around theories of something else, for example, the structure of language' (Krashen and Terrel 1983, as cited in Richards and Rodger 1986).

Krashen’s views of language learning are presented in Krashen (1982) and they concern language acquisition. So, we refer to his theory as the theory of language acquisition. The tenets of this approach are compatible with those of the communicative approach. The tenets are:

2.8.3.1 The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis

This hypothesis is perhaps the most fundamental, and has been extremely useful in explaining many experimental findings in second language use and acquisition. It states that adults have two different and independent means for developing ability in second languages. Those are: (i) acquisition and (ii) learning. Acquisition is a subconscious process and requires meaningful and communicative use of the target language while learning is learning language through a conscious knowledge ‘about language’. Other equivalent terms for learning are, as Krashen uses, ‘grammar’, ‘explicit knowledge’ and ‘formal knowledge’.

2.8.3.2 The Monitor Hypothesis

This hypothesis shows the relationship between acquisition and learning. It states that our fluency in second language performance is due to what we have ‘acquired’, not to what we have ‘learned’. Learning is only available as a monitor. We ‘initiate’ utterances with our acquired competence and refer to conscious learned rules later and we use the conscious rules to
correct the output of the acquired system. This can occur before we speak or write or after, which is termed ‘self-correction’.

An important research finding of Krashen (1975-77) is that monitor use is light or absent in most conditions involving communication, in which the focus is on the message/content, not on the forms of the language.

2.8.3.3 The Input Hypothesis

This hypothesis attempts to answer the question of ‘how people acquire language.’ It states that a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for language acquisition to occur is that the acquirer understands (via hearing or reading) the input language that contains structure ‘a bit beyond’ his or her current level of competence. By ‘understand’, Krashen means understanding the meaning and not form, or focusing on the message. This hypothesis thus presumes that acquisition happens in the opposite way: we first go for meaning and acquire the structure as a result of understanding the message, not in the traditional way that is we master the structures first to convey the meaning.

2.8.3.4 The Affective Filter Hypothesis

This hypothesis is propounded by Dulay and Burt (1977) and it is about the relationship between ‘affective variables’, e.g. motivation, anxiety, confidence and ‘second language acquisition’. Briefly, researchers have concluded that certain personality characteristics such as extroversion, self-confidence predict success. Also, certain types of motivation relate to success in language acquisition, ‘integrative motivation’ being more suitable for some situations and ‘instrumental motivation’ for others (see 3.2.1-A).

Krashen (1982) hypothesizes that affective variables relate more directly to acquisition than to learning. Acquirers with more self-confidence and motivation will interact more and thereby obtain more input for acquisition. Also, their affective filters will be weaker or lower.
The Affective Filter hypothesis states that the effect of the ‘affect’ (which is not the same as ‘affective variables’) is not directly on the Language Acquisition Device (LAD). Here, ‘affect’ means one’s needs or purposes and its resulting effect on one’s emotions (Dulay, Burt & Krashen 1982). Rather, affective variables act to block input from the LAD. Two acquirers receiving equal amounts of comprehensible input may acquire language at different rates depending on strength of the filter, which can vary according to the personality, the relationship between the acquirer and the source of the input and according to the acquisition situations.

Krashen also hypothesizes that filter strength increases at about puberty. This means that the adult’s filter is higher than the child’s. Filter strength is a quiet variable and we can do a great deal to keep the filter as low as possible.

2.8.3.5 Comprehensible Output Hypothesis

This hypothesis states that learners develop by producing the target language more frequently and more correctly. It follows the traditional notion that acquisition of a skill result from the productive practice of the skill. This idea has received its most recent expression in the ‘comprehensible output hypothesis’ discussed by Swain 1985: “One function of output” he says, “is that it provides the opportunity for meaningful use of one’s linguistic resources. [Frank] Smith … has argued that one learns to read by reading, and to write by writing. Similarly, it can be argued that one learns to speak by speaking” (Swain 1985, as in Chaudron 1988).

Swain goes on to suggest that the learner’s output should be “pushed towards the delivery of a message that is not only conveyed, but that is conveyed precisely, coherently and appropriately …” (Swain 1985: 249).

Swain offers evidence for this position from research comparing the proficiency of grade 6 French as an SL immersion student with 10 grade native French speakers in Ontario and Quebec, respectively. The L2 learners had seven years of French from Kindergarten through grade 6 (average
about 80% each year). On most measures in a range of tests of oral and written proficiency, the learners proved to be significantly less proficient than natives, understandably enough, given the small number of contact hours with the target language compared to L₁ peers: “... There appears to be little social or cognitive pressure, as Chaudron (1988) puts it, to produce language that reflects more appropriately or precisely their intended meaning: there is no push for them to be more comprehensible than they already are.” However, the L₂ learners’ written scores in this research tended to surpass the scores of the native learners. On the basis of ‘factor analysis’, Swain argues that the L₂ learners’ performance, and the relative superiority of the L₂ learners is attributable to the greater amount of writing tasks that they had had. See Chaudron (1988).

2.8.4 Other Points of View

What follows is an exposition of theories of language learning and teaching in general and of second and foreign language learning/teaching in particular.

2.8.4.1 Transfer

This is otherwise known as ‘Transfer of Learning’ or ‘Transfer Features in utterances’. It focuses on the role of the first language in second language acquisition and is underpinned by the theories underlying much current L₂ teaching methodology and materials.

A. Transfer of Learning

The fact that most learners seem relatively inefficient at applying their grammatical competence (see 2.7.1.1) or are unable to use language generally outside the classroom does not mean that they don’t have the necessary skills. They have those skills in abundant measure in their native languages. These skills, the knowledge and skills in L₂ learnt in the classroom could be made use of, i.e. transferred to real-life situations and to new contexts and situations outside the classroom. As Nunan (1988) points out
that artificial situations don’t facilitate language learning as well as and as efficiently as real-life situations.

But the transfer of skills from classroom contexts to other contexts does not occur as readily as it is hoped. This transfer is noticeably limited. The result has been the development of activities, which are meant to approximate in the classroom what happens in genuine communication or the behaviors that learners will be required to use outside.

According to Rivers (1964), one point that stands out very clearly from the research on transfer is that in order for the transfer from the classrooms to real-life situations to be really effective, classroom practice must stimulate the requirement of an actual language interchange as closely as possible. An abstracted, academic study of FL, as many unfortunate students testify, does not lead to transfer. “We learn what we practise”, as has rightly been averred.

B. Linguistic Transfer

L₁ has long been considered as the major cause of the learners’ problems with the new language viz. an SL or FL. In recent years, however, data have accumulated that L₁ is no longer considered an annoying interference in a learner’s effort to acquire an L₂ and the availability of both the first and second languages is recognized as recourse of enrichment of the individual’s communicative repertoire.

As far as the learners’ utterances are concerned, we should have an outline of the most prominent hypotheses of Contrastive Analysis (CA). The CA hypotheses have held sway in the field of Applied Linguistics and L₂ teaching for over two decades. They take the position that a learner’s L₁ ‘interferes’ with his or her acquisition of an L₂ and that it therefore constitutes a major obstacle to successful mastery of the new language. They hold that where structures in L₁ differ from those in the L₂, errors that reflect the structure of L₁ would be produced. Such errors are said to be due to the influence of the learner’s L₁ habits on L₂ production. These hypotheses are
drawn from the principles of ‘behaviorist (stimulus-response) psychology’ that were accepted at that time, but which have since been shown to be inadequate in explaining language learning.

In Lado (1957), Fries states: “Learning a second language therefore constitutes a very different task from learning the first language. The basic problems arise not out of any essential difficulty in the features of the new languages themselves, but primarily out of the special ‘set created by the first language habits’ (Fries 1957, as cited in Dulay et al. 1982).

**B1:** When the structures in the L1 are different from those in the L2, their automatic and interchangeable use results in wrong or incorrect utterances. This process has been labelled **Negative Transfer.** For example, in Arabic, adjectives occur after nouns. Arabic-speaking learners (tend to) say ‘*the girl beautiful’ instead of ‘the beautiful girl’ when they speak in English.

**B2:** If the structures of both L1 and L2 are the same, the automatic use of L1 structure in L2 performance will result in correct utterances. For example, the structure of the future tense in English is the same in Arabic i.e. the use of will + (bare) infinitive form of the verb e.g. he will go tomorrow. So Arabic-speaking learners should produce correct sentences in English. This process has been labelled **Positive Transfer.** “We know from the observation of many cases that the grammatical structure of the native language tends to be transferred to the foreign language ... we have here the major source of difficulty or ease in learning the foreign language ... Those structures that are different will be difficult” (Lado 1957 as quoted in Dulay et al. 1982).

The term ‘transfer’, as mentioned earlier, refers to any underlying process and not to a characteristic of the learner’s performance. And the two terms ‘negative’ and ‘positive’ transfer are clearly associated with their technical definitions from the ‘theory of habits’ in Psychology.

**B3:** Yet another use of transfer refers simply to a characteristic of the learners’ performance. Errors that reflect the structure that L1 also happens to have are often referred to in the literature as **Transfer Errors,** no matter
what the real source of these errors might be i.e. either a negative or a positive transfer. Errors that reflect the learners’ L₁ structures have been labelled *Interlingual Errors*. Studies conducted on the speech and writing of adults learning English as an L₂ e.g. the study conducted in the USA reported in White (1977) have reached the conclusion that approximately 8% to 23% of the adult errors may be classified as interlingual. Though this proportion is larger than it is for children, it still represents a minority of the total errors that adults make. Also, other pieces of research on error-correction (Hendrickson 1977, Plann 1977, Cohen and Robbins 1976) suggest that neither correction techniques nor heavy drilling does much to affect the quality of student speech. Thus, the correction or drilling procedures suggested by contrastive analysis tenets (see 2.8.4.1-B) are not likely to lead to much change in the students’ verbal performance.

Heidi Dulay, Marine Burt and Stephen Krashen (1982), in their research on the L₂ acquisition, suggest the factors that interlingual errors are occasioned by. Let us mention two of these factors that are likely to be related to FL contexts.

1. **Limited L₂ Environments**

Ervin-Tripp (1974) notes that L₁ influence in learner performance has been found for “learning conditions in which the second language was not the language of the learner’s larger social milieu so that the learning contexts were aberrant both in function and frequency structures” (as quoted in Dulay et al. 1982: 121). Environmental factors that apparently limit the scope and quality of second language learning include (i) the absence of peers who speak the language natively and (ii) limited and often artificial conditions under which the language may be learned. Trying conversation with native speakers for two hours a week is not the same as trying with speakers who themselves are not proficient in the language, for example. These conditions are often inevitable in FL learning contexts because the target language is not used for communication. See 1.1. The total burden is not to provide a target language environment falls on the teacher in the often difficult
environment of the classroom. In this condition, learners have little recourse but to fill the vacuum of second language knowledge with the structures of their first language.

2. Monitor Use and The Use of The L₁

Learners use first language structures in second language performance. They think in the L₁ and use words from the L₂ much as one would handle word-for-word translations. In case the surface structures of both languages are similar, there is no problem. The use of L₁ can be considered here an asset. When learners use L₁ structures that are not identical to L₂ structures, however, they make interlingual errors and consequently the monitor plays a great role in repairing these errors.

The ability to monitor allows some learners to speak L₂ with little, if any, naturally acquired competence. Even if it allows for very early performance (a good student begins to speak the L₂ early), it has real limitations since it requires the learner to care about the form. To have, in other words, a conscious knowledge.

After presenting the theoretical hypothesis and views that are likely to underlie the CLT, let us search for answers to the following questions drawn from the previous theories: How can teachers develop the L₂ learners’ competence, either linguistic competence as Chomsky termed it (see 2.5.2) or communicative competence, as Hymes called (see 2.5.3)? How can the L₂ learners be equipped with ‘communicative ability’ (Littlewood 1981)? How can L₂ learners practise the use of the target language and be involved in communication? How can the L₂ learners be effectively exposed to the target language? How can language input, either linguistic input or content/meaning/functions input, be presented effectively?

We have one answer for all the above questions. We can develop L₂ learners’ competence, equip L₂ learners with communicative ability, give learners a chance to communicate, focusing on the meaning and giving enough exposure or input to use the target language through communicative
activities. We will now sketch the activities to be engaged in the classroom in
general and communicative activities in particular. We will lay out some
examples to elucidate their importance and characteristics.

2.9 Activities in The Classroom

The term activity is defined in a broad sense. Activities are the things
that learners and teacher are doing during the lesson. It is also defined, in a
narrow sense as “a procedure with a particular objective and generally used
to facilitate language learning” (Shavelson and Stern 1981: 418).

Activities could be analyzed according to some general bases. They
are: (a) Authenticity which means the extent to which they require learners
to rehearse in class the behaviours and skills they might be expected to
display in their real-life, (b) Learning input (see 2.8.3.3), (c) Learning output
(see 2.8.3.5) and (d) Accuracy which means saying what one should say or is
told to say, and fluency which means saying with a smooth flow what one
wants to say.

If the activities are analyzed on the basis of authenticity and
accuracy/fluency, we will get two kinds of activities that are ‘real-world’ or
‘communicative’ activities and ‘non-communicative’ or ‘pedagogic’ or ‘pre-
communicative’ activities (Littlewood 1981). Also, if the activities are
analyzed according to learning input or output and skill-learning or skill-
using, we will get the same broad kinds of activities even though we use
different terms to call them viz. ‘input’ or skill-learning’ activities and ‘output’
or ‘skill-using’ activities.

2.9.1 Non-Communicative Activities

They can also be called, as was mentioned earlier, ‘pedagogic’, ‘non-
authentic’, ‘input’, ‘skill-learning’ or ‘skill-getting’ and ‘pre-communicative’
activities (See 2.8.2.2).
2.9.2 Communicative Activities

They can also be called ‘real-life’, authentic’, ‘output’, ‘whole-task’ or ‘skill-using’ activities. See 2.8.2.1. They have a real-world rationale requiring learners to approximate, in the class, the different sorts of skills required of them in their real-world beyond the classroom. They are not designed for teaching a language, but for the native speakers of the target language. They are concerned with the meaning of a language rather than its form. They have clear communicative purposes that should be set from the beginning. As Clarke and Silberstien (1977), as cited in Nunan (1989), put it: “Classroom activities should parallel the real-world as closely as possible since language is a tool of communication, methods and materials should concentrate on the message, not on the medium”.

These activities should promote interaction between learners who exchange information from each other either in pairs or groups (e.g. information-gap activity). Learners are also occupied with understanding, extending (e.g. through reasoning) or conveying meaning and coping with language forms incidentally, as demanded by that process (Prabhu 1987). These activities should ensure the characteristics of communicative activities. They should not degenerate into mere routines because learners would tend to lose motivation to use the language in this case.

2.9.2.1 Characteristics of Communicative Activities

Any genuinely communicative activity should have the following features:

1. Learners should have a desire to communicate. If they do not want to be involved in communication, then this communication will probably be fake.

2. They should have some kind of communicative purpose. The activities should be purposeful.
3. In communicative activities, the learners’ attention should be centered on the content of what is being said or written and not on the language form that is being used.

4. Learners, however, should have to deal with a variety of language, either receptively or productively, rather than just with one grammatical construction.

5. While the learners are engaged in the communicative activity, the teacher should not intervene, for example, for telling the learners that they have made mistakes and asking them to repeat. This will undermine the communicative purpose of the activity. The teacher can involve in the activity as a communicator and participant, watching and listening carefully to be able to conduct a feedback. Correction can take place later with individuals but if it happens to be a common mistake with the bulk of the learners, then gentle correction can take place right in the classroom.

6. Communicative activities should have no materials control. Learners may not work with materials, which force the use of certain language or restrict the learners’ choice of what to say and how to say it. They should have the opportunity to choose what to say and how to say in the language being learnt.

7. They should be challenging and interesting, promote the learners’ interests. They should involve the learners mentally engaging their minds in solving some problems.

8. They should not be above the students’ level. They should not be too difficult for the students since it is necessary for the learners to understand the input in the language in order to be able to communicate using the language. See 2.8.3.3.
2.9.3 Importance of Communicative Activities

Communicative activities have good effects on both learning and teaching. So they are very important because

1. They are considered as a medium to create situations for communication to take place. In fact, it is likely that many aspects of language learning can take place only through natural process, which operates when a person is involved in using the language for communication. It this so, communicative activity, inside or outside the classroom, is an important part of the total learning process (Littlewood 1981).

2. They make the learners, who are involved in such activities, feel more self-confident because they are free to choose a certain language to communicate in any way they like.

3. They help learners acquire skills and behaviours that they may require in real-world.

4. They relieve the anxieties of the teacher who was responsible to do everything for the learners i.e. presenting the new language, initiating the activities, practising them the language, controlling the class etc. But in these activities the teacher has to share as a participant, while the learners have the responsibility of learning.

5. They prepare the learners to face their real-life challenges that are related with the second/foreign languages.

6. They are considered also as a means for promoting interaction that follows all the direction i.e. learner→learner interaction, teacher→learner interaction and learner→materials interaction.

7. They improve motivation since the learners’ ultimate objective is to take part in communicative activities with others. Their motivation to learn is more likely to be sustained if they can see how their classroom
learning is related to this objective and helps them to achieve it with increasing success (Littlewood 1981).

8. When the teacher engages in the activities as a communicator, it helps him/her to improve a good relationship with the learners even those s/he does not know. They provide opportunities for positive personal relationships to develop among learners and between the learners and the teacher. These relationships can help to ‘humanize’ the classroom and to create an effective and secure environment that supports the individual in his efforts to learn. They thus create a context, which supports learning (Littlewood 1981).

2.10 Implications For Teaching

What we have discussed earlier is the theoretical views/assumptions and the research findings but what is more important is to integrate the theories and practice. In other words, to interpret such theories and apply them in the real environments for which they are meant i.e. the classrooms. From each theoretical hypothesis or view, we can extract some pedagogical guidelines for teaching English as an SL or FL.

We are going to suggest some guidelines for teaching that relate to the objectives of this exploratory study (see 3.1.2). The implications of theory are of course not restricted to these guidelines. Teachers can think up and add more guidelines, which can be augmented, personalized and customized in different ways according to different teachers and techniques in different contexts/situations.

2.10.1 Guidelines For Teaching

The growth of CLT has led to a wider and greater use of communicative activities as ways of creating contexts for the ‘real’ use of English. According to this, teachers should use activities that are intended to provide “throughout the language-learning process occasions on which the learners express what he himself wants to express through the forms of
language that are available to him at particular stages of language learning" (Wilkins 1974, as in Baddock 1981). Also, teachers need to set up frequent situations, which focus on self-expression, on the practice of functions, e.g. agreeing/disagreeing, making suggestions, apologizing, and the freedom of imaginative response i.e. ‘to convey part of the learners’ mental picture, using the FL’ (Baddock 1981).

The learners’ exposure to natural communication, which means the learner is focused on the message being conveyed, and not on the linguistic form of that message, should be maximized. This enhances the creative construction process (see 2.8.2.2). Exposure to natural communication should not be restricted to the communicative activities inside the classroom but learners should be given some more language assignments in which they are involved to communicate with native speakers of the target language i.e. to be pushed to deliver messages (see 2.8.3.5). For example, the teacher may ask the learners to interview one of the native speakers, asking them some questions to know their points of view on specific issues.

Teachers should provide sufficient quantity of language input to promote moderate levels of language acquisition (see 2.8.3.3). It requires more than a few exercises and more than a brief paragraph of input for the requirer to fully acquire a new structure. However, the language input presented by the teacher should focus on functions rather than forms. We cannot expect learners to produce extremely high levels of performance in the classroom alone. We should help learners to improve their language on their own from informal environments (see 2.8.4.1-B).

We should not put the learners “on the defensive” as Stevick (1976) puts it. The way the input is presented should not strengthen the Affective Filter (see 2.8.3.4). It should not put the students on the defensive since the goal of teaching is not to test, not to reveal weaknesses, but to provide input for further language acquisition (Krashen 1985). Teachers should not force learners to speak if they are not ready to avoid excessive error correction
and needless anxiety since errors are something inevitable and natural while learning is in progress.

Teaching should cover all the areas of communicative competence viz. grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competencies since the primary goal of the communicative approach is to facilitate the integration of all the types of competencies for the learner. See 2.8.1

A communicative approach must be based on and should respond to the learners’ changing communicative needs and interests. These must be specified with respect to ‘grammatical competence’: the levels of grammatical accuracy required in different situations, for example. ‘Sociolinguistic competence’: the settings, topics and communicative functions to be handled most frequently, for example. ‘Discourse competence’: the types of text to be dealt with, for example, and ‘strategic competence’: verbal compensatory strategies for paraphrasing lexical items that have not been mastered sufficiently, for example. But if the learners’ needs entail more emphasis on one of the areas of communicative competence, teachers should satisfy the learners’ needs in order to get successful learning outcomes.

To give learners ample opportunities to use the language and develop their communicative competence, teachers should select activities that satisfy the requirements of and have features of various communicative situations and contexts (see 2.9.2.1). When language learners communicate in an FL, they find that the demand of communication often exceeds their knowledge of the grammar of English, so teachers should abandon the old notion of a competence in language (see 2.5.2) which is based strictly on grammar and they should encourage the learners to use the linguistic forms in different social contexts, also to help the learners to develop their communication strategies (see 2.7.1.5) which they need to use in communicative situations.
We can thus define the goal of teaching language in FL and SL settings in the following terms: to extend the range of communicative situations in which the learner can perform with focus on meaning, and without being hindered by the attention s/he must pay to linguistic form (Littlewood 1981).