

# COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT)

## 3.1. Historical Background

Introduction: Language education has always been influenced by theories in linguistics and other related fields, e.g. sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, anthropology, etc. As a result, with the advent of new theories, new approaches and methods have shaped language teaching and learning. Richards (2006:6) classifies trends in language teaching in the following three phases.

*Phase 1:* traditional approaches (up to the late 1960s)

*Phase 2:* classic communicative language teaching (1970s to 1990s)

*Phase 3:* current communicative language teaching (late 1990s to the present).

## 3.2. Traditional Approaches and Their Limitations

- 1) ***Grammar Translation Method (GTM):*** It focused only on written skill of learners. Translation under specified techniques of deductive style was the main language activity. The goal in GTM was to develop learners' ability to read and appreciate the literature of the target language. Therefore, there was little concern for the ability to communicate orally. The focus was on grammar and vocabulary and there was little attention to listening and speaking skills (Rivers, 1981).
- 2) ***Direct Method:*** It focused more on oral skills and teaching inductively with no use of L1. However, it had its own flaws, for example trained teachers with native like fluency and other necessary equipment like realise not readily available in every situation. Direct method demanded great energy from the teacher. Despite its success in private schools (which were financially supported by students), the Direct Method met a lot of criticism in other schools due to scarcity of native teachers or teachers with native – like command over the language (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).
- 3) ***Reading Approach:*** It stressed on reading skill and thus it is close to GTM in this regard. Reading approach did not address all language skills and areas.

- 4) ***Audio-Lingual Method:*** It demanded native like pronunciation which is almost an unrealistic goal. One of the most widely accepted points of criticism toward this method is that, the learners lacked engagement in meaningful language use and had only limited opportunities to use the target language creatively while interacting with their peers. As Willis (2004:4) points out, “This was because the emphasis was on eradication of errors and accurate production of the target forms, not on communication of meanings”. Due to overcorrection of students’ errors by the teacher, learners’ anxiety levels were often quite high.

In Audio-lingual method students may make progress like well-trained parrots –able to repeat whole utterances perfectly when given a certain stimulus, but uncertain of the meaning of what they are saying. They are unable to use memorized materials in contexts different from those in which they have been trained (Rivers, 1981).

- 5) ***Oral or Situational Approach (SA):*** SA emerged in Britain. This approach, like ALM, placed primary importance on the spoken language. In fact, the two new approaches were similar in many ways, but British linguists were not as heavily influenced by behaviorism as were their American counterparts. Situational approach focused on the meaning of language in a given context.
- 6) ***Cognitive Approach:*** It may be said to be a modern approach, for it views language learning to be a natural process. It centers on teaching all four skills in a natural process. It overlooks errors as inevitable happening and de-emphasizes pronunciation (Celce-Murcia, 1991).
- 7) ***Affective Humanistic Approach:*** It is actually a modification of Cognitive Approach.
- 8) ***Comprehension Based Approach:*** It tries to teach through a more natural process that is it offered a great deal of listening and did not integrate listening with speaking in earlier stage of learning. In fact, it is a step forward on the cognitive approach.

Many of traditional approaches and methods never became widely adopted and had only a short life due to their impracticalities and inadequacies. Richards (2001:3) states: “Many methods have come and gone in the last 100 years in pursuit of the best method, as the following chronology illustrates, with dates suggesting the period of greatest dominance:

Grammar Translation Method	:	1800-1900
Direct Method	:	1890-1930
Structural Method	:	1930-1960
Reading Method	:	1920-1950
Audio Lingual Method	:	1950-1970
Situational Method	:	1950-1970
Communicative Approach	:	1970- present”

The growing demand for language as communication on one hand and the failure of traditional approaches in addressing the communicative needs of learners on the other, paved the way for the rise and popularity of the Communicative Approach in 1970s.

### **3.3. Communicative Approach**

Communicative Approach, which is also known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), mushroomed in the 1970s. Despite common misunderstanding, CLT is not a method per se. CLT has accommodated various methods and techniques (which will be discussed in this chapter). It does not prescribe a single text or a single model that is universally accepted as authoritative (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). It uses materials and utilizes methods that are appropriate to a given context of learning.

CLT is a broad and modern approach. It views language learning more as a system for communication. Therefore, it revolves to teach a system by means of authentic materials, authentic activities and meaningful exchanges in replication of real life situation (Celce-Murcia, 1991).

CLT appealed to those who sought a more humanistic approach to teaching because it gives priority to the interactive processes of communication. The rapid adoption and implementation of the communicative approach also resulted from the fact that it won

the approval of British language teaching circles and it was supported by language specialists, publishers and institutions like the British Council (Richards 1985).

CLT advocates and promotes language teaching and learning while taking into consideration the nature of language, language learning and teaching. It helps students develop global proficiency through learning to communicate, using appropriate social language and expressions. Unlike traditional approaches (including the more recently developed approaches: e.g. cognitive approach, affective-humanistic approach, and comprehension approach), CLT does not favour a structural syllabus. In language courses with structural syllabus, students learn a lot about grammar but cannot communicate effectively in the culture of the target language. Johnson and Morrow have mentioned the large numbers of students in traditional grammar-based courses who are “structurally competent but communicatively incompetent.” (Johnson and Morrow, 1981, cited in Chastain, 1988).

### **3.3.1. The Theoretical Basis**

CLT is based on the theories of British functional linguists such as Firth and Halliday. The theory of language teaching underlying the Communicative Approach emphasizes importance of all the four language skills and their interdependence. It is rooted in the theory of language as communication (Richards & Rogers, 1986). It implies knowledge of the grammatical system as well as performance, that is to say, the knowledge of usage and the ability to use language (Widdowson, 1984).

CLT draws on multidisciplinary perspective that includes, at least, linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and educational research (Savignon, 1991).

According to CLT, the goal of language acquisition is to develop learners' communicative competence. Communicative competence is the central theoretical concept in CLT. Dell Hymes (1972) introduced it and it was discussed by many others. Any discussion on CLT will be more straightforward and illuminating if communicative competence and its components are elaborated first.

### **3.3.2. Communicative Competence**

Communicative competence refers to the ability not only to apply the grammatical rules of a language in order to form grammatically correct sentences but also to know

when and where to use these sentences and with whom. Communicative competence should not be confused with linguistic competence since linguistic competence can only contribute to communicative competence. It is possible to be linguistically competent, yet communicatively incompetent.

The relation between linguistic and communicative competence is also significant. Linguistic competence is the spontaneous and correct manipulation of a language system. Communicative competence relates to appropriateness and readiness on part of the learner to use relevant strategies in coping with certain language situations. Although communicative competence encompasses more than just linguistic competence, linguistic competence is nevertheless an essential element in communicative competence (Hutchinson and Waters, 1984)

Linguistic competence is the basis of communicative competence. But communicative competence does not automatically result from linguistic competence. Authentic interaction and classroom activities such as role play, pair work and group work should be used to provide as much practice as possible for students to develop communicative competence while practicing linguistic competence (Rao & Zhenhui, 1999).

*Widdowson notes:*

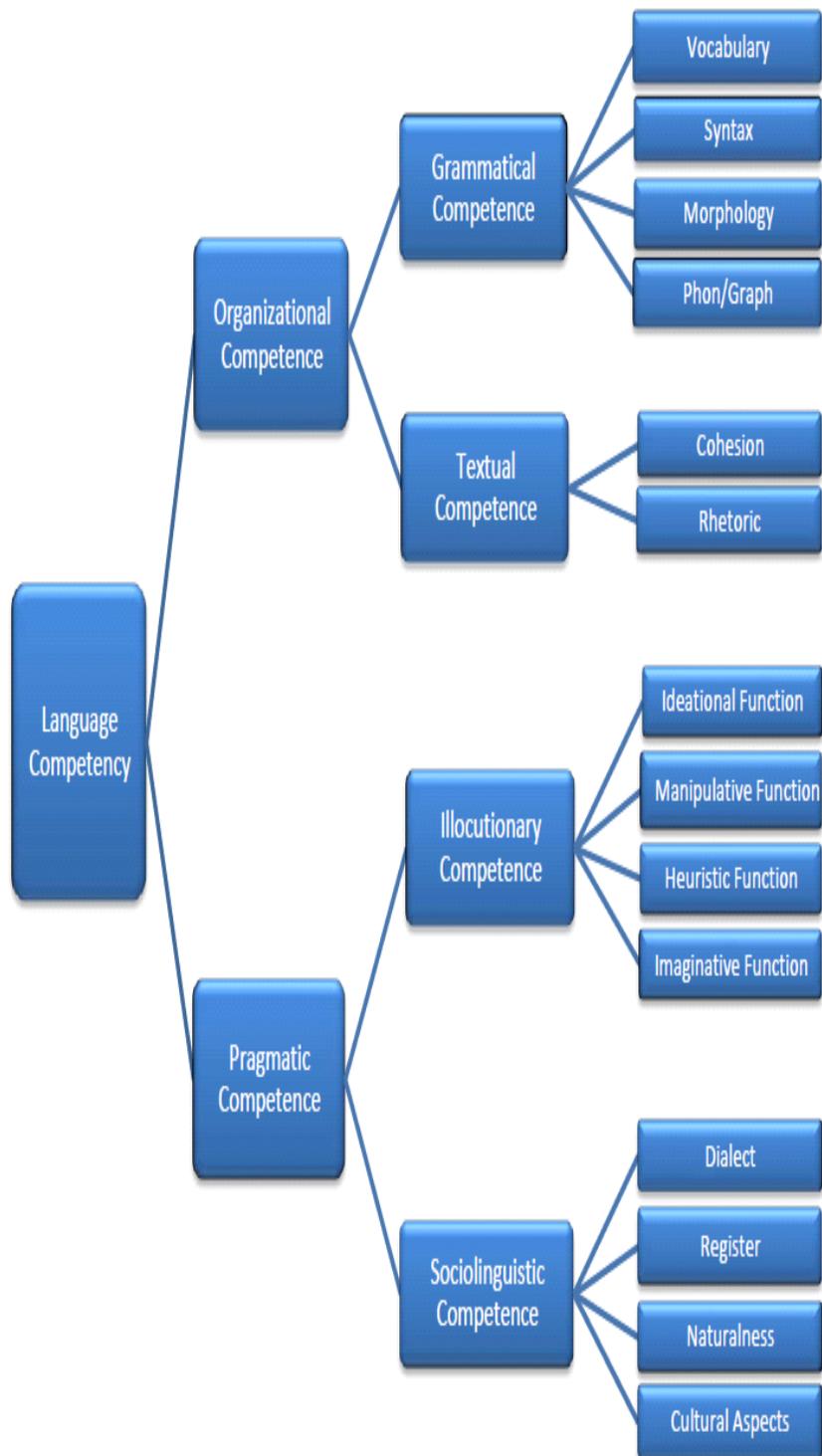
“Communicative competence is not a compilation of items in memory, but a set of strategies or creative procedures for realizing the value of linguistic elements in contexts of use, an ability to make sense as a participant in written or spoken discourse by shared knowledge of code resources and rules of language use.” (Widdowson, 1979, cited in Celce-Murcia, 1991).

Different notions of communicative competence have also been proposed by other linguists. Canale and Swain (1980) proposed an influential and comprehensive review of communicative competence for language instruction and testing. The three components of the first model were grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic competence. Pragmatic ability is included under *sociolinguistic competence* which is called rules of use. Canale (1983) expanded the earlier version by adding discourse

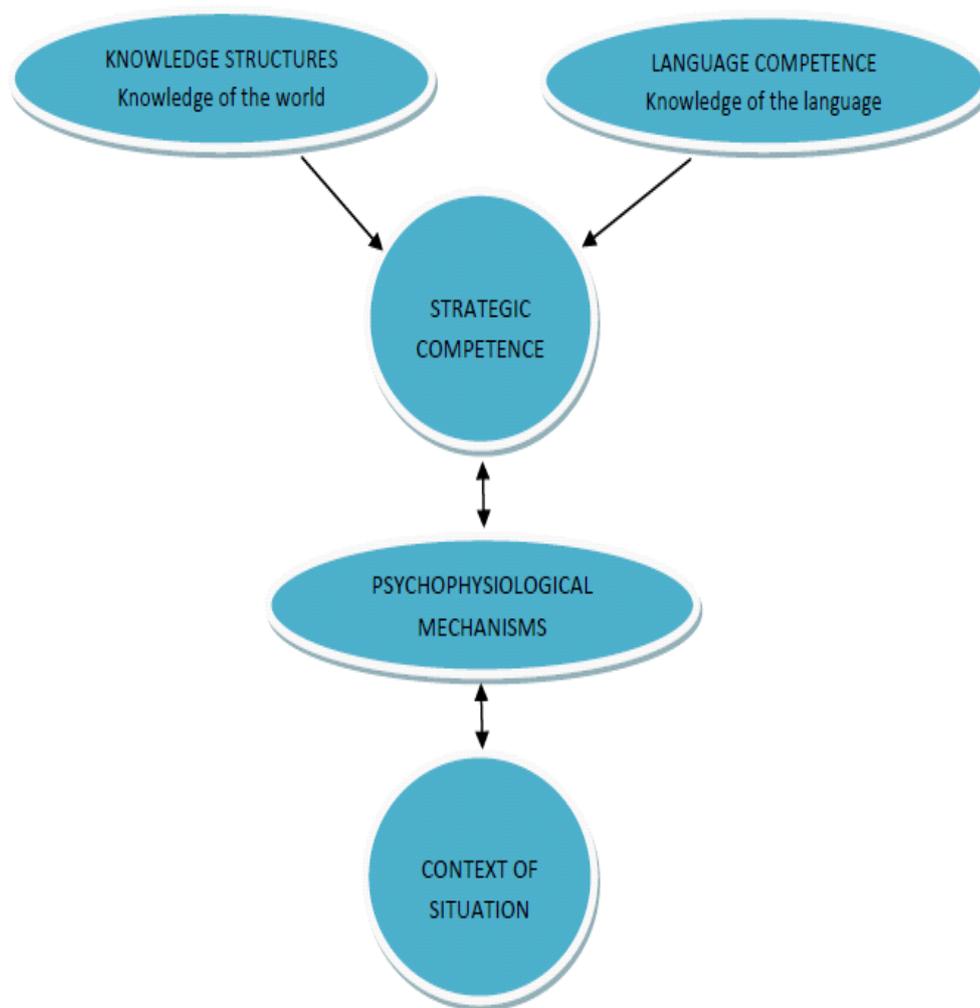
competence as a fourth component of communicative competence. (Rose & Kasper, 2001).

A decade later, Bachman (1990) incorporated ideas from models of Michael Canale, Merrill Swain and Sandy Savingon and suggested a model of communicative competence which was called Communicative Language Ability (CLA). Bachman's model of communicative competence is an expansion of earlier models. However, it is different from them in two ways: (i) It clearly distinguishes between what constitutes *knowledge* and what constitutes a *skill*. (ii) It explicitly characterizes the processes by which the various components interact with each other and with the context in which language is used (Bachman, 1990:81).

CLA has two main components, (a) *organizational competence* (b) *pragmatic competence*. (See the chart given below shows various components)



**Figure 1.** Components of Language Competence (Bachman, 1990, p.87)



**Figure 2.** Components of communicative language ability in communicative language use (Bachman, 1990, p. 85)

*(a) Organizational competence* comprises knowledge of both linguistic units and the rules of joining them together at the levels of sentence (grammatical competence) and discourse (textual competence). Grammatical competence which has also been called formal competence is the knowledge of syntactical, lexical, morphological, and phonological features of the language, as well as the ability to manipulate these features to produce well-formed words and sentences. It is usually associated with the rules of usage which normally result in accuracy in performance. Discourse competence is the ability to understand and create forms of the language that are longer than sentences, such as stories, conversations, or business letters. Discourse competence includes understanding how particular instances of language use are

internally constructed. In other words, discourse competence deals with the extended use of language in context. It is the ability to connect a series of sentences or utterances to form a meaningful whole. These connections are usually implicit, i.e., ideas are linked together on the basis of world knowledge as well as familiarity with particular context (Alptekin, 2002).

**(b) Pragmatic competence** has two components: *illocutionary competence* and *sociolinguistic competence*. *Illocutionary competence* can be described as *knowledge of communicative action* and how to carry it out. The term *communicative action* is often more accurate than the more familiar term *speech act* because communicative action is neutral between the spoken and written mode, and the term acknowledges the fact that communicative action can also be implemented by silence or non-verbally. *Sociolinguistic competence* comprises the ability to use language appropriately according to context. It thus includes the ability to select communicative acts and appropriate strategies to implement them depending on the current status of the *conversational contract* (Fraser, 1990, cited in Kasper, 1997).

### 3.3.3. Features of CLT

CLT is an extension of Wilkin's notional-functional syllabus. CLT also places great emphasis on helping students use different forms of the target language in a variety of contexts to perform different functions or to express different meanings. CLT is usually characterized as a broad approach to teaching with a clearly defined set of classroom practice. Given below is David Nunan's (1991) list of features of CLT which is one of the most recognized of these lists:

1. Emphasizing student-student interaction in target language for learning the language.
2. Providing learners with opportunities to focus not only on language but also on the learning process itself.
3. The introduction of authentic materials into the learning situation.
4. An enhancement of the learner's own responsibility and contribution to learning the target language.
5. Creating a link between classroom language learning and language activities outside the classroom.

These features can be summarized as: i). enhanced learner-centeredness and interaction among students. ii). Emphasis on authenticity through authentic materials and authentic activities.

### **3.3.3.1. Learner-Centredness and Interaction among Students**

An important dimension of Communicative Approach is students' active involvement in learning process because there is consensus that those who actively participate in the learning process learn better than those who do not. Communicative approach views the classroom as a social organizations with its own structure. Students assume responsibility for their learning. With the consolidation of responsibility, students are given opportunities to become active participators and discussants in the classroom and learning process (Weaver & Qi, 2005).

Students are also given opportunity to express their ideas and opinions. Exercises are not tightly controlled. They have the choice over 'what to say and 'how to say it'. They are not restricted to use certain forms dictated by the teacher or materials (Larsen- Freeman, 2000).

High degree of student-student interaction is one of the most obvious characteristics of communicative classroom. Students use the target language a great deal through communicative activities such as games, role play, pair work, group work and problem solving activities. Student-student interaction is facilitated by teacher who does not talk at length. The teacher sets the scene, i.e. establishes situations likely to promote communication among students (ibid)

### **3.3.3.2. Authentic Materials**

Another important feature of CLT is the use of authentic materials. Peacock (1997) defines authentic texts as materials that have been produced for some social purpose in the language community. Authentic materials are produced for native speakers' use in society and for functional purposes and not for language education. Authentic materials help bring the real world into the classroom. They can play instrumental as well as motivational role in language teaching and learning by creating a strong link between in- classroom learning and functional use of language beyond the classroom (Shuja and Bameri, 2012).

The main advantages of using authentic materials are:

- i. Learners' motivation enhancement
- ii. Genuine cultural information
- iii. Real language exposure
- iv. Close relevance to learners' needs
- v. Adding creativity to teaching (Philips and Shettlesworth 1978; Clarke 1989; Peacock 1997, cited in Richards, 2001)

### **3.3.3.3. Authentic Tasks and Activities**

In addition to authentic materials, authentic tasks and language activities are some other characteristics of CLT. Task authenticity bridges the gap between classroom language learning and language activities outside the classroom. Willis (1996) distinguishes these kinds of activities, which she calls tasks, from activities where the language learners are simply producing the language forms correctly. Grammar exercises, drills, and practice activities in which the emphasis is on particular linguistics form, are all example of the latter. In tasks, on the other hand, the emphasis should primarily be on meaning and communication, and this is something which replicates the process of communication in real world (Willis, 1996, cited in Guariento and Morley, 2001).

Rechards (2006) has distinguished two phases in the development of communicative language teaching: (i) *classic communicative language teaching* (ii) *current communicative language teaching*.

### **3.3.4. Classic Communicative Language Teaching (1970s to 1990s)**

Classic CLT was developed in the form of a reaction against traditional language teaching approaches and became popular in many countries. The communicative dimension of language was emphasized and the centrality of grammar in teaching and learning was questioned. While grammatical competence was needed to produce grammatically correct sentences, focus shifted to the knowledge and skills needed to use grammar and other aspects of language appropriately for different communicative purposes, such as making requests, giving advice, making suggestions, describing wishes and needs and so on. During this period several new syllabi of CLT were proposed. For example:

#### **3.3.4.1. A Notional- Functional Syllabus**

This is organized around functions the learner is expected to carry out in English, such as expressing likes and dislikes, offering and accepting apologies, etc.

In this syllabus a secondary role is assigned to vocabulary and grammar. They are not taught in and of themselves, but only insofar as they help express the notions and functions that are in focus (Celce-Murcia, 1991).

#### **3.3.4.2. A Skill-Based Syllabus**

As the name signifies, it focuses on the four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and breaks each skill into its micro skills. Advocates of CLT stress an integrated-skills approach to the teaching of the skills since the skills often occur together in real life situations. Skills are things that people must be able to do to be competent in a language, relatively independently of the situation or setting in which the language use can occur (Reilly, 1988).

#### **3.3.4.3. English for Specific Purpose (ESP)**

Richards (2006) notes that Advocates of CLT has also recognized that many learners need English in order to use it in specific occupational and educational setting. For them preference is given to the teaching of the specific kinds of language and communicative skills needed for particular roles, (e.g. that of nurse, engineer, flight attendant, pilot, biologist, etc.) rather than just to concentrate on more and more general English. This gave rise to the discipline of need analysis. The focus of needs analysis was to determine the specific characteristics of a language needed for specific rather than general purposes. According to John Munby (1978), growing demand for ESP is the obvious attraction to client or learner of custom-built courses in the English that will enable him to do his job or pursue his studies.

#### **3.3.5. Current Communicative Language Teaching (1990)**

Communicative language teaching has been widely implemented since the 1990s and it has continued to evolve. Different educational paradigms and traditions have shaped the theory and practice in communicative language teaching. Since it draws on a number of diverse sources, there is no single or agreed upon set of practices that characterise current communicative language teaching.

According to Richards (2006) some of the core assumptions of current communicative language teaching are:

- Interaction and meaningful communication facilitates the target language learning.
- Effective tasks and exercises provide opportunities for students to negotiate meaning and expand their language resources in the classroom.
- Meaningful communication is the outcome of students' focus on the content that is relevant, purposeful, interesting and engaging.
- Communication is a holistic process that often entails upon the use of several language skills or modalities.
- Language learning is a gradual process of creative use of language based on trial and error.
- Language learning is facilitated through activities that involve inductive or discovery learning of underlying rules of language (language analysis and reflection).
- Learners are different in terms of needs, motivations and progress for language learning and they develop their own routes to language learning.
- Successful language learning is the product of using effective learning and communication strategies.
- The role of teacher has the role of a facilitator in the language classroom.
- The classroom is characterized with collaboration and sharing.

### **3.3.5.1. Extensions of CLT: Process Based Instruction (PBI) and Task Based Instruction (TBI)**

Process based and content based instruction are two current methodologies that are considered as extension of the CLT movement, but they take different routes to develop Learner's communicative competence. PBI and TBI share a common starting point which is a focus on creating classroom processes that are believed to best facilitate language learning (Richards, 2006).

#### **3.3.5.1.1. Content-Based Instruction (CBI)**

Content based instruction has become increasingly popular in recent years. CBI advocates a holistic approach to language instruction and has strong connections to

project work and task based learning. The focus of a CBI lesson is on the topic or subject matter. During the lesson students use the target language to learn about the subject. The subject could be anything that interests them from a serious science subject to a topical news story or film. This is considered as a natural way of developing language ability. In CBI, students use the target language to fulfill a real purpose. (Peachey, 2003)

In CBI approaches, the second language is not the immediate object of study, but is the medium to convey informational content of interest and relevance to the learner. As noted earlier, contemporary views of language learning argue that language learning is associated with processes. Advocates of CBI believe that the best way to create processes in the classroom is to use content as the driving force of classroom activities and to link all the different dimensions of communicative competence, including grammatical competence, to content (Richards, 2006).

#### **3.3.5.1.2. Task-Based Instruction**

Task-based teaching or Task-based instruction (TBI) is another methodology that can be regarded as developing from a focus on classroom processes. In TBI, the claim is that language learning will result from creating the right kind of interactional tasks. Proponents of TBI believe that grammar and other components of communicative competence can be developed as a bi-product of engaging learners in interactive tasks (ibid).

Willis (2007) notes, that proponents of TBI argue that the most effective way to teach a language is through engaging learners in real language use in the classroom. This is done by doing tasks-discussions, problems, games, and so on. These tasks require learners to use the language for themselves. When the learners are offered formalized activities to facilitate their participation in meaningful activities, they are engaged in task-based learning. Instead of relying on the learners' spontaneous interest and reaction, activities are designed to promote interest and interaction of the kind described. From the point of view of TBI, two kinds of tasks can usefully be distinguished:

- **Pedagogical tasks** are specially designed classroom tasks that aim at the use of **specific interactional strategies** and may also require the use of specific types of language skills, grammar, and vocabulary. A task in which two learners have to try to find the number of differences between two similar but not exactly identical pictures is an example of a pedagogical task.
- **Real-world tasks** are tasks reflecting real-world uses of language and might be considered a rehearsal for real world task. A role play in which students practice an interview would be a task of this kind. Willis proposes six types of tasks as the basis for TBI:
- **Listing tasks:** For example, students might have to make up a list of things they would pack if they were going on a beach vacation.
- **Sorting and ordering:** Students work in pairs and make up a list of the most important characteristics of an ideal vacation.
- **Comparing:** Students compare ads for two different supermarkets.
- **Problem-solving:** Students read a letter to an advice columnist and suggest a solution to the writer's problems.
- **Sharing personal experience:** Students discuss their reactions to an ethical or moral dilemma.
- **Creative tasks:** Students prepare plans for redecorating a house (Willis,1997, cited in Richards, 2006).

### 3.3.6. Form vs Function

Unlike traditional approaches which dwell on form, CLT views language as a system actualized both in form and function. The emphasis on form and function had important methodological effects on communicative curriculum design (Candlin, 1980).

There is almost general consensus that acquisition requires learners to attend to form as well as function. Indeed, according to some theorists, such attention is necessary for acquisition to take place (Schmidt, 2001). The term *focus on form* means different things. First, it might refer to language as form or structure. Second, it might indicate that learners are required to attend only to the forms and not to their meanings. However, theorists insist that focus on form refers to form function mapping—that is, interdependence of a particular form and the meaning(s) it realizes in communication.

Third, focus on form might suggest awareness of some underlying abstract rule and meaning.

Wilkins makes a sharp distinction between different levels of meaning. His list of categories of communicative function accounts for pragmatic and discoursal meanings of utterances. Therefore, a matter of close relevance is to look at meaning as a multi-level rather than a single level phenomenon (Richards, 2006).

A sentence with particular form can serve various functions and one function can be performed by using different forms. 'What is the time?' might be a question or a rebuke. A person who wants to know about the time, might, say, 'What time is it?', 'Can you tell me the time?' or 'Excuse me, have you got the time?'

### **3.3.7. Fluency vs. Accuracy**

Fillmore proposed that fluency includes the abilities to:

- Fill time with talk [i.e., to talk without awkward pauses for a relatively long time]
- Talk in coherent, reasoned, and "semantically dense" sentences [Fillmore's emphasis]
- Have appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts
- Be creative and imaginative in using the language

(Fillmore, 1979, cited in Brown, 2003).

Greater emphasis on fluency rather than accuracy refers to the emphasis on the use of the target language with appropriate fluency than structural correctness. The focus on fluency is achieved through application of certain strategies such as low emphasis on error correction and explicit grammar teaching, classroom tasks and exercises that encourage spontaneous use of the target language. And, students' trial-and-error and activities that foster negotiation of meaning between students and students and teachers develop fluency (Mangubhai, Marland, Dashwood & Son, 2004: 292, cited in Abdul Hadi, 2007).

CLT does not favour accuracy at the cost of fluency. Brumfit (1984) first made a distinction between accuracy and fluency as well as activities aiming at either of

them. Pattern drills, intensive reading and multiple-choice items of grammar are usually used to teach accuracy. Contextualised exercises, extensive reading and information gap activities are usually used as fluency-oriented activity. However, classification of activities into fluency type or accuracy-oriented is not always possible or appropriate, and both should be focused.

"It is now very clear that fluency and accuracy are both important goals to pursue in CLT." (Brown, 2001: 268).

### **3.3.8. Treatment of Errors**

Communicative approach views errors as inevitable and natural part of learning language. The Learner who tries to use the language creatively and spontaneously is bound to make errors. Constant correction of errors is considered as unnecessary and even counter-productive.

Integration of skills and error treatment: Today, meaning-oriented communicative language teaching methodology has the overarching principles of focus on real communication, providing learners with opportunities to exhibit their linguistic knowledge. Errors are considered as healthy sign of progress in developing communicative competence integrating the different skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing), and allowing students to discover grammar rules inductively (Richards, 2006:13).

### **3.3.9. Activity Types in CLT**

Littlewood distinguishes between two major types of activities:

(a) Functional communication activities and

(b) Social interaction activities

(a) Functional communication activities include certain tasks, for instance:

i. Compare set of pictures and note similarities and differences

ii. Work out a likely sequence of events in a set of pictures.

iii. Discover missing features in a map or picture

iv. One learner gives instructions to another learner as how to draw a picture or complete a map, etc.

(b) Social interaction activities include conversation and discussion sessions, dialogues and role plays, simulations, skits, improvisations and debates (Littlewood, 1981, cited in Bhushan, 2010).

CLT takes students from mechanical to meaningful and communication practice. Perhaps the central characteristic of CLT is that almost everything is done with a communicative intent. (Larsen-Freeman cited in Rao 2002, p.87). Therefore, controlled practice activity, such as repetition drill and substitution which students can successfully carry out without necessary understanding of the language they are using is avoided in CLT classroom activities.

The range of exercise types and activities compatible with a CLT approach is unlimited, provided that such exercises enable learners to attain the communicative objectives of the curriculum and engage learners in communication. (Brown, 2006). Activities entailing pair work, group work are essential for EFL learners who are rarely exposed to the target language use in their immediate environment. These activities are meaningful. That is to say, they require learners to make meaningful choices when carrying out practice. Some of these activities are:

#### **3.3.9.1. Information-Gap Activities**

The notion of information gap is an important concept in CLT. In real communication people normally have a genuine purpose. They seek information they do not have. In order to practice information activities, certain tasks are used. For example, students are divided into A-B pairs, teacher provides students with two set of pictures slightly different from each other, then asks students to compare and explain the differences to each other. (Richards, 2006). Teacher can also provide one group of students with information about an interesting individual, place or event and ask other group to get information from their peers.

#### **3.3.9.2. Jigsaw Activities**

Jigsaw activities are based on the principles of information gap. The class is divided into groups and each group has part of the information necessary for completion of an activity. The class must fit the pieces together to complete the whole. Students must use their language resources to communicate meaningfully and, thus, take part in

meaningful communication practice. Students Listen to and audio or video discussion of an interesting issue by three or four people and then students, who have already been divided into three or four groups, take notes. Finally the representatives of groups reproduce the discussion using the information they obtained.

#### **3.3.9.3. Information Gathering Activities**

Students conduct survey, interviews, etc. During these activities students need to use their linguistic resources to obtain new information (ibid).

#### **3.3.9.4. Opinion Sharing Activities**

These are useful activities which involve students in comparing opinions or beliefs, e.g. a task of listing the qualities of an ideal job in the order of importance.

#### **3.3.9.5. Information-Transfer Activities**

In these activities learners transfer information that is presented in one form into another form. For example, they look for information given in graph and then explain in a piece of writing.

#### **3.3.9.6. Reasoning Gap-Activities**

In these activities learners derive some new information from the given one through the process of inference, practical reasoning, etc. For example, working out a teacher's schedule on the basis of a given class timetable (Richards, 2006).

#### **3.3.9.7. Role-Plays**

There are certain activities in which students are assigned roles and improvise a scene on exchange based on some given information or clue. In these activities emphasis is laid on pair work and group work. (ibid)

#### **3.3.10. Teacher's Role**

In the communicative approach, unlike traditional approaches, the teacher is not an authority. The teacher is a facilitator of his students' learning. S/he has many roles to fulfill. He is a manager of classroom activities.

According to Breen and Candlin (cited in Richards & Rodgers (2001:167) teacher has two main roles in CLT. First, to facilitate the communication process between all students in the classroom, and between the students various activities and text. Second, to act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group. CLT teachers play the role of a need analyst, counselor, and group process manager. Medgyes (1986) argues that CLT demands too much on teachers in comparison with GTM and lesson are less predictable. Teachers' interaction with students should be as natural as possible. They should have wider management skill than in the traditional teacher-centered classroom.

In this role, teachers' major responsibilities are to establish situations likely to promote communication. During the activities, he acts as an *advisor, counsellor and monitor*. At other times, he might act as a *co communicator* engaging in the communicative activity along with the students (Littlewood, 1981).

### **3.3.11. Student's Role**

CLT is learner-centered rather than teacher or subject-centered. Learners get much attention. Students are less passive. They are communicators who are actively engaged in negotiating meaning and trying to make themselves understood. Brown (1991) reveals that a language learner is able to take control of his/her own language learning and assume responsibility for his/her success or failure and, therefore, he must do so.

According to Snow (1996), effective learning is the outcome of active participation in the communication with language rather than only accepting what the teacher said.

Jacobs and Farell suggest that the CLT refer to eight major changes in approaches to language teaching. One of the changes is learners' autonomy, i.e., learners have greater choice over their own learning. Their choice is over content as well as the process they might employ. Self-assessment and free-writing are examples of this autonomy. Moreover, students are not bound to certain structure presented in the lesson, and they are free to choose the form to express their intended meaning.

### **3.3.12. The Role of Context and Culture**

Words and grammatical forms can have more than one meaning, it is the context that determines which of meanings is being referred to (Harmer, 1997). CLT holds the view that context plays major role in resolving ambiguity of sentences. One of the principles of CLT is the presentation and practice of meaningful language in relevant context. The teaching of language in a real context is a move beyond language as a set of examples. Therefore, the four language skills as well the areas of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation are presented through relevant context.

CLT also highlights the importance of culture. Language and culture are interrelated. Most students of a foreign language are interested in the culture of the places where that particular language is spoken. “The increasing prevalence of multilingual, multiethnic multicultural classrooms in varied contexts worldwide points to the importance of cultural factors in language education and education in general. In the EFL/ESL classroom of this century, ELT is seen as including much more than purely linguistic aspects as it focuses also on broad literacy issues which acknowledge the importance of global economic, social, historical, and cultural factors in language learning and teaching.” (Porto, 2009: 45).

The significance of cultural factors in foreign language education is reflected in the notion of ‘in-betweenness’ (Sarroub, 2002, cited in Porto, 2009). Man lives in multiple world. He occupies the ‘in-between’ spaces of two or more realities or cultures. Therefore, both home culture and target culture should be integrated.

One way to present culture effectively to beginners and intermediate students is to recycle topics from other lessons and expand those topics in a cultural context. Real-world, interesting cultural information teaches students something new. It also leads to increased motivation (Brown, 2006).

### **3.3.13. Communicative Teaching of Language Skills and Areas**

#### **3.3.13.1. Skills**

##### **(i) Listening**

In the past, listening material was usually based on a series of post-listening comprehension questions (*What time does the train leave? How much does the ticket*

*cost?*). This type of listening activities mislead the students as they do, not know why they are listening, because they were not provided with the purpose of listening in the beginning. Listening can be taught effectively if the purpose of listening is presented. In the pre-listening activities simple dialogues can be used in these activities. There should be three types of listening activities:

First, listening for main idea. For example: “What’s the most important idea in this conversation? What are they mainly talking about?”

Second, listening for specific information. The same dialogue is used, but this time the task is based on questions like “What are they eating?”

Third, listening for drawing inferences. Speakers do not always explicitly say what they mean. That is to say, important aspects of meaning are sometimes implied rather than stated. Listeners have to “listen between the lines” to figure out what really is meant. Sometimes people do not say exactly what they mean. Practice in listening for making inference based on what has been said implicitly is very useful. (Brown, 2006)

Willis states a series of micro-skills of listening which she considers *enabling skills*.

They are:

- “predicting what people are going to talk about
- guessing at unknown words or phrases without panic
- using one's own knowledge of the subject to help one understand
- identifying relevant points; rejecting irrelevant information
- retaining relevant points (note-taking, summarizing)
- recognizing discourse markers, e. g., ‘Well; Oh, another thing is; Now, finally’, etc.
- recognizing cohesive devices, e. g., *such as* and *which*, including linking words, pronouns, references, etc.
- understanding different intonation patterns and uses of stress, etc. , which give clue to meaning and social setting
- understanding inferred information, e. g., speakers' attitude or intentions.”

(Willis,1981:134).

### **Some Important Principles for Teaching Listening**

- I. The purpose of listening should be clearly stated
- II. Students should be exposed to pre-listening activities.
- III. Listening for the main idea in a conversation or lecture
- IV. Listening for specific information
- V. Listening and making inferences
- VI. Using contextual clues, and prior knowledge for predicting and guessing
- VII. Note taking and summarizing
- VIII. Recognition of discourse markers

### **(ii) Speaking**

Communicative language teaching does not favour controlled speaking practice where students say sentences using particular piece of grammar or a particular function. Students use of the target language is not restricted to certain form, but they have all the language at their command to say what they want. Students interact a great deal with one another in a communicative classroom. Their communication is authentic, purposeful and uncontrolled, i.e. they have a choice not only about what to say, but also how to say it (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Tickoo states: "A successful act of speech communicates something to someone. It normally involves a speaker, one or more listeners and, importantly, a purpose for speaking. The act becomes real when what it says makes sense to the listener and produces the desired response. What does the above convey to teacher of speech? That training in speaking must produce skills and abilities that are needed for communicating successfully. Effective communication has to be the sole aim of any course in speaking." (Tickoo, 2009: 143).

In a communicative classroom, the class is conducted in the target language and mother tongue can be used as the last resort. Therefore, students use the target language to express themselves and interact with one another through communicative tasks and activities. Chastain states, "The class becomes an example of using language to function in a social situation. Thus, one of the most important roles of speaking is to serve as a vehicle for participating in class activities." (Chastain, 1988:271).

Two-way speaking tasks, which are sometimes called jigsaw tasks, are popular for teaching speaking. An example is a simple pair-work activity in which two students have different pictures and they must find the differences between the pictures. These tasks are interesting and engaging (Brown, 2006).

Surveys, questionnaire and discussion can also be used to provoke meaningful conversation among students.

### **Principles for Teaching Speaking**

- I. Students are free to use different forms to perform different functions or express different meanings.
- II. Speaking practice involves two or more people.
- III. Class is conducted in the target language and mother tongue is the last resort.
- IV. Class plays the role of a social context for language use.
- V. Students interaction is mainly through pair work, group work, and group discussion.
- VI. Speaking serves as a vehicle for participation in classroom activities.

### **(iii) Reading**

Reading is not a passive skill. Reading can provide good models for writing and it can be integrated into interesting class sequences. A good reading text is engaging i.e. students are actively interested in it. Therefore, it can introduce topics, stimulate discussion, excite imaginative responses and further tasks. An important issue in teaching reading is authenticity. People are worried about more traditional language-teaching materials which almost look artificial and oversimplified. A balance is necessary between real English on one hand and students' capabilities and interests on the other. Some authentic written material which are suitable for beginners are: menus, timetables, signs, and basic instructions. Students need to be able to scan the text for particular bits of information. They also need to read for pleasure, to get detailed comprehension, and to skim a text to get a general idea of what it is about (Harmer, 1998).

Another important aspect in teaching reading is the process. Chastain states: "Viewing reading as a communicative process rather than as a language learning process leads

to several important conclusions. Students do not need to know all the vocabulary and grammar to comprehend a major portion of the text and to recreate the author's meaning. They can learn to read at a much higher level of proficiency than in the past when the preoccupation with grammar deprived them of the opportunity to read for meaning." (Chastain, 1988 p: 225).

If the aim of language learning is communication, language learners need to develop the ability to read different types of materials for different purposes just as native speakers do. In real life reading tasks, sometimes people read for pleasure and at other times they might read for general idea (skimming), detailed comprehension or finding specific information contained in a text (scanning). Therefore, reading should provide an opportunity for both extensive and intensive reading.

### **Some Important Principles for Teaching Reading**

- I.** Reading can provide a model and topic for writing and speaking.
- II.** Two important issues in reading are authenticity and process.
- III.** A reading text should be engaging and interesting, but not oversimplified.
- IV.** Reading should provide an opportunity for both intensive and extensive reading.
- V.** Skimming and scanning should be included in reading activities.

### **(iv) Writing**

"Within the communicative framework of language teaching, the skill of writing enjoys special status- it is via writing that a person can communicate a variety of messages to a close or distant, known or unknown reader or readers. Such communication is extremely important in the modern world, whether the interaction takes the form of traditional paper -and pencil writing or the most advanced electronic mail." Celce- Murcia, 1991: 235).

Usually the writing process is not linear, moving smoothly in one direction from start to finish. It is messy, recursive, consulted, and uneven. Writers write, plan, revise, anticipate, and review throughout the writing process, moving back and forth among different operations involved in writing without any apparent plan (Hairston, 1982, as cited in Celce Murcia, 1991).

Communicative Approach gives prominence to the purpose and audience, and mechanics of writing are focused on as they emerge from the task or the context. Writing can perform many different functions in L2 classroom. Learners demonstrate their knowledge of reading, listening, or speaking through writing, or when they engage in more holistic communicative activities. To teach writing, learners are encouraged to express simple and purposeful messages through writing. They write for real or imaginary audience (Moon, 2008).

Linguistic accuracy, clarity and organisation of ideas are crucial in the efficacy of communicative act. It is also important that the product should be acceptable in terms of handwriting, spelling, punctuation and structure. Some writing tasks of communicative nature are:

- Making list of various types (things to do, things completed, shopping lists).
- Notes and messages that are left for another person.
- Filling - in forms and preparation of invitation. (Celce-Murcia, 1991)
- Descriptive and narrative writing.
- Writing application and letter of complaint

### **Some Important Principles for Teaching Writing**

- I.** It is necessary to pay attention to the mechanics of writing.
- II.** Students should learn to communicate through writing
- III.** Writing is not linear, i.e. moving smoothly from start to finish.
- IV.** Students need to learn the process- write, plan, revise, anticipate and review throughout writing process.
- V.** Writing should be integrated with other skills so that it can be used to demonstrate students' knowledge of reading, speaking and listening.

(from Authentic materials)

### **3.3.13.2. Areas**

#### **(i) Vocabulary**

“Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (David Wilkins). Traditional approaches gave greater priority to teaching grammatical structure. With the advent of communicative approach the emphasis

shifted. Recognition of meaning- making potential of words meant that vocabulary became a learning objective in its own right (Thornbury, 2006).

Vocabulary was conceptualised as individual words in the past. Now it is clear that much of lexis consists of sequence of words which operate as single units. In fact, longer sequences of words sometimes pattern together, *e.g. to make a long story short*. This type of sequence is commonly referred to as *lexical chunks* and *lexical phrases*. Lexical chunks are common, because they are typically related to functional use of language. Lexical chunks facilitate clear, relevant and concise language use. Because of their functional usage, knowledge of them is essential for pragmatic competence (Schmitt, 2000).

Given below are some important topics which should be included in the communicative textbooks. Time and date, colour and shape, clothes and fashion, animal and plants, family and relationship, work and employment, crime and punishment, holidays and travels, transport and road, education and learning, politics, war and peace, accidents, health and illness; sports, exercise, entertainment and hobbies, geography, countries and nationalities; describing looks, moods and personality; shopping, economy, food and drinks; home, furniture, housework, and daily routine; the language of the weather, measurement, and statistics; the human body, social class, media terms, etc.

Communicative Approach emphasizes the most common words which have a high frequency of use in English for general purposes such as the vocabulary related to the topics mentioned above. The words are not presented in word- list or are not defined in isolated sentences but they are presented in contexts. That is to say, the words are best introduced and encountered in contexts. They are parts of larger and more meaningful units. This is not only because words have different meanings in different contexts but because contexts, which are both grammatical and semantics, make it easier for learners to gain command over use of vocabulary in a variety of contexts. Context helps learners experience words as interrelating systems: Most words in any language belong to lexical sets or semantic fields. Context can also help readers guess or infer word meanings (Tickoo, 2009).

### **Some Important Principle for Teaching Vocabulary**

- I. Vocabulary is not conceptualised as single words, but it is sequence of words which operates as a single unit.
- II. Vocabulary should include lexical chunks due to their importance in functional language use.
- III. Vocabulary should cover a wide range of topics and concepts.
- IV. Words are not presented as discrete unit, but they are presented in context.
- V. Words are not translated into mother tongue, neither in the textbook nor in the classroom.

#### **(ii) Grammar**

According to Rutherford (1987), teaching grammar has been central to and synonymous with teaching foreign languages for the last 2500 years. Saraceni (2008) also distinguishes three stages in the teaching of grammar: “In the last forty years the role of grammar has gone through three main stages: absolute prominence, exclusion, reintroduction with caution. These three stages have been associated respectively to three different approaches to instruction: ‘focus on forms’, ‘focus on meaning’, and ‘focus on form’. In the third stage, the teaching of grammar is meant to take place as the need arises during communicative activities. Even in such cases, however, there appears to remain a fundamental distinction between form and meaning”. (Saraceni, 2008:164). Centrality of grammar in teaching and material production prior to mid 1970s, might be due to the primary emphasis which had been on writing and reading and not on the spoken language. There was widespread traditional belief that a good knowledge of grammar improves learners’ ability to read, write and translate.

After the mid 1970s, under the influence of Chomsky and those working in the Communicative Approach (e.g. Hymes 1972, Halliday 1973, Widdowson 1978, Wilkins 1976) doubt was casted on centrality of grammar. Many researchers went to the extent of saying that grammar instruction had no place in language teaching, be it foreign or second language.

Experience shows that those who are product of communicative language teaching are fairly fluent users of language but fare badly in the public examinations and places of work where accuracy and precision is valued along with fluency. Some applied

linguists have argued strongly that grammar teaching should be minimised. One line of argument is that grammar teaching is impossible for the knowledge used in a language by a speaker which is too complex (Prabhu, 1987). Another view is that grammar teaching is not so important as knowledge is a kind that can not be passed on with rules, but can only be acquired unconsciously through exposure to the language (Krashen, 1988).

“In the era the Communicative ‘movement’ grammar has also passed through a period in which its importance as the central focus for instruction has been challenged perhaps more fundamentally than any time before. There is no consistent view of the role of form-focused instruction among those claiming to espouse a Communicative Approach to language teaching, or that grammar has been sidelined by the majority of L2 teachers since the 1970s. While teachers adopting what Howatt characterizes as the ‘strong interpretation of CLT (i.e. the ‘focus-on-meaning’ and ‘focus-on-form’ options ...may have de-emphasised the importance of grammar in their classroom, form-focused instruction has certainly retained a role in the classrooms of those teachers who use a ‘weak’ form of CLT.”(Andrews, 2007: 51-52).

Many teachers do not approve of the strong form of CLT because it does not have *concrete and tangible* content. Hence, it cannot be equated with *real* teaching (Hunter, 2012).

Littlewood describes form-focused activities as a useful tool and starting- point for meaning focused activities (i.e communicative activities) especially when teachers wish to focus sharply on an important feature of the structural system (Littlewood, 1981, cited in Andrew, 2007).

Although ‘weak’ form of CLT advocates explicit grammar teaching, grammatical explanations do not take up many pages and the teacher also does not spend most of the class time on grammar teaching. In communicative approach, grammar is handled with care. Grammatical explanations are concrete, concise and comprehensive. One item is given at one time. CLT emphasizes the role of context in the presentation of grammar. CLT advocates believe that semantic factors are crucial for correct application of rules and it is often impossible to decide on their applicability in a

given sentence apart from considerations of meaning, context and knowledge of the world. Therefore, Grammar instruction is contextualised and isolated sentences are not vehicles for presentation and teaching of grammar. For example, discourse or contextual factors can significantly contribute to the teaching of tenses, articles and pronominal references (Petrovitz, 1997).

In CLT classes, the use of grammatical explanation and terminology is approached with care, because students are so busy with learning the language itself that the added load of complex rules and terms is too much to bear. But adults can benefit from occasional explanations.

#### **Some Principles for Teaching Grammar are as follows**

- I.** These explanations are brief, simple and comprehensive.
- II.** Charts and other visuals are used to show grammatical relationship.
- III.** One item is explained at one time. Rules and exceptions are not given at the same time.
- IV.** Grammar is embedded into general language course and is not singled out as a discrete “skill” in a separate course.
- V.** Grammar is contextualized in meaningful language use.

#### **(iii) Pronunciation**

Recent change of emphasis to language function, and communicative competence, demands a new urgency for the teaching of pronunciation (Celce-Murcia, 1987; Morley, 1994; Gilbert, 1994).

Traditionally, pronunciation has either been totally neglected or much of its teaching involved the practice of isolated sounds.

Pronunciation certainly needs strong attention in the English class, especially in classes with a Communicative Approach. Poor pronunciation is highly likely to result in unintelligibility in oral communication no matter how good a speaker’s knowledge of grammar and vocabulary is. Mother tongue influence and bad teaching at schools account for the problem. To address the problem, effective teaching of pronunciation is necessary.

Communicative Approach is also effective in teaching pronunciation of English as second or foreign language. In communicative teaching of pronunciation there is a shift in emphasis from teaching segmental (individual consonants and vowels) to supra segmental (stress, rhythm, and intonation). This shift in emphasis reflects that pronunciation practice must take place beyond the individual sound and word level. English pronunciation is inextricably linked to the meaning at the discourse level and must be presented practiced accordingly. Therefore, it is necessary to include and links between words, consonants and vowels, consonant to consonant links, contracted forms, weak and strong forms, word stress and sentence stress in phrases, tone units and tonic placements, etc. (Hewings, 2004).

### **Some important principles for teaching pronunciation**

- I.** Segmental features should be given due attention.
- II.** Suprasegmental features should be focused.
- III.** Both segmental and supra segmental features should be presented in appropriate contexts.
- IV.** Pronunciation teaching should be linked with meaning at the discourse level. Therefore, focus is required to:

Consonant and vowel links, consonant to consonant links, contracted forms, Links between words, word stress in phrases, weak and strong forms, tone units, tonic placement and tones.