History of English Language Teaching

Anne Mary K. Manavalan “Comprehension and communication in English : a perspective of its problems in the undergraduate classes” Thesis. Department of English, University of Calicut, 2002
Chapter 1

History of English Language Teaching

The Early Years

The weakening of the dominance of Latin and French and the emergence of the Vernacular due to a series of political and social changes gradually led England to be a monolingual nation. This, in its wake, initiated the teaching of modern Vernacular languages at the end of the middle ages. This transition brought about such an influential change in the status of the native tongue that it was now necessary for the children to construe their Latin lessons in English instead of French, which hitherto had been an open sesame to the classical languages.

This trend was strengthened at the end of the 14th century by the contributions of Chaucer, who traditionally represents the waxing mood of English self confidence. The earliest extant Manual for the teaching of French, written before the end of Richard II's reign and a number of similar manuals which appeared during the 15th and early 16th century, were the fore runners of the language teaching text books of the Tudor period. Even the usurpation of the throne from Richard II by the House of Lancaster in 1939 illustrated the break from the past. The order dethroning Richard was read in English, and Henry IV used English in claiming the throne and in his acceptance speech.
This tradition was carried on by his son Henry V. By the end of the 15th century even the statutes of the State were written in English, and the affairs of the state handled through the royal secretariat were conducted in the Vernacular. To the Tudors, English was the language of the nation, spoken by all, from the king himself downwards. Knowledge of French became a sign of prestige and was considered an accomplishment for anyone aspiring high positions. Knowledge of Latin was considered as a sign of properly educated man or woman. Going to school meant learning Latin grammar and in fact, Latin was the only language with a grammar. French was on the way to acquire one, but English had to wait until the beginning of the next century before any serious attempt was made for a proper scholarly description of the language.

In the absence of a grammar, the early language teaching material relied mainly on texts and the dialogue form. The use of dialogues was a long established tradition in the teaching of spoken Latin in the Middle-Ages. The Latin text, with a translation in Anglo-Saxon, consists of questions and answers relating to topics of everyday life. The importance of commerce in the early stages of modern language teaching is emphasized so much so that the first manual of French dialogues named maniere de language was obviously written for merchants and traders.

The first textbooks designed solely to teach English appeared in the late 16th century after the arrival of large numbers of French Huguenot refugees in
the 1570s and 1580s. Double manuals in the maniere tradition aiming to teach English to French speakers, as well as the other way round, started to appear at the end of the 15th century. The customers of these manuals may have included merchants using French as a lingua franca as well as native French speakers. It is also likely that they realized the truth that knowledge of your client’s mother tongue will work wonders in business.

The first of these double manuals was a short book of dialogues and other texts prepared by William Caxton in 1483. Caxton’s assistant, in his printing press, produced another double-manual on similar lines called A Lytell treatyse for to learne Englisshe and Frensshe (1498). The text is laid out in alternating lines of English and French.

There were other signs of growing interest in learning English in the early 16th century. English began to be included along with more widely known languages in the Polyglot dictionaries and phrase books, which were a device for acquiring ‘survival knowledge’ of foreign languages in Renaissance times. The earliest listed is a seven-language dictionary of 1540. It was followed by many others. Double-manuals originating in the continent are perhaps a better guide to the demand for English than those produced in England. An early example is by a Frenchman, who can claim to be the first teacher of English as a foreign language. Meurier’s double-manual was called A Treatise for to learn to speak French and English, published in 1553. The last example of early
handbooks for the teaching of English to foreigners before the advent of the Huguenot refugees was a small manual called *A very profitable Book To learn the manner of Reading, Writing and Speaking English and Spanish* (1554). The development of English language teaching after these humble beginnings was determined by the political, religious events of late sixteenth century.

**Refugee Language Teachers in Elizabethan London**

From about 1560 onwards, as catholic reaction to the Reformation, Counter Reformation power started in the Low Countries, especially in Flanders. Many young and enterprising Flemings arrived in large numbers in friendly neighboring countries including England, as they chose exile to submission. They were later joined by their French co-religionists, to whom Queen Elizabeth made welcome for the skills and conscientious attitudes they brought with them. The St. Bartholomeu Massacre in Paris in 1572 caused still another flow of Protestants from France to the countries of the reformed church.

The French Huguenot and other protestant refugees from Flanders, Italy and even Spain were mainly craftsmen, though some had a more intellectual middle class background, among them teachers also. Jacques Bellot, Claudius Holyband and John Florio are the three refugee teachers who represent a cross-section of the language teaching community of the time.

A striking feature of these refugee teachers is that they were native
speakers of the languages they taught, and continued the traditional bilingual method of the earlier manuals. They were able to see their own language with the eyes of those attempting to learn it and felt the need for reliable linguistic descriptions, from which models, examples and explanations can be drawn. In the sixteenth century there were substantial descriptions of French including Palsgrave’s ‘Lisclairecessement de la langue francoyse’ (1530), but there was no comparable study of English, and this accounts for the inadequacy of the manuals of Bellot and Florio and the absence of native speaking teachers in English.

Even though most of the refugee craftsmen could survive without a detailed knowledge of spoken English, it would have been difficult to maintain the status of a skilled craftsman without some ability to handle the mother language. For wives and members of the family, ability to speak in English would have been more essential than men, in situations such as shopping and getting about the city, and in social contexts as well. Two small English manuals that Jacques Bellot wrote for the French-speaking refugees in the 1580s concentrated on these needs.

Bellot’s School Master starts with an account of the English alphabet and pronunciation, necessary information for those who had picked the language up informally and needed help with reading and writing. The book also contained the discussion of difficult words and homophones with a few odd
grammar points added. Bellot cannot be blamed for the inadequacy of these grammar notes since English had not produced anything substantial. Though Bellot’s English manuals are not as thorough as many contemporary French textbooks, they were of practical benefit to their customers.

Claudius Holyband’s two famous books The French Schoolmaster and The French Littleton are both teaching manuals, which make great use of dialogue work. Holyband’s dialogues are well known to social historians of the period for the details of everyday life they portray. These dialogues are long sequences of scenes and events that follow one another in quick succession, self-contained episodes which not only have an artistic impact, but also serve a more prosaic pedagogical purpose. Each episode contains enough materials for one lesson. The text was read aloud and repeated until the pupils had a thorough grasp of the pronunciation and could produce the sentences fluently. The children also practised the text in writing, following the double translation method. In teaching grammar, Holyband used what was later called an ‘inductive’ approach, starting from the text and consulting the rules only when the pupils were familiar with the new material. Holyband who spent thirty years of his life in England had established high standards for the teaching of languages in England, and his published works survived for many years into the next century.

The work of John Florio (1553 – 1625) shows language teaching in a
rather different light. Though he was an Italian by birth, having had an English mother he was a bilingual speaker of English and Italian. All Florio’s work as a language teacher was as a private tutor to important aristocratic patrons, and the textbooks he wrote for them suited their interests and tastes. His two principal double-manuals, First Fruits and Second Fruits, written in 1578 and 1591 respectively, consists of Italian and English dialogues, dealing with the topics of artistic and intellectual interest. His intellectual and literary talents of the highest order found full expression in his famous translation of Montaigne’s essays (1603).

In the early 1590s the publishing activities of the refugee teachers reached their climax, and the resentment of the native born teachers showed itself in the publication of an extraordinary manual called the Ortho-epia Gallica by John Eliot, in 1593. The local feeling at what was becoming a foreign monopoly in the language teaching business, became evident. Eliot’s attack seemed to have a destructive effect also. Florio himself, the main target in Eliot’s attack never wrote another language manual, and textbooks by other refugee teachers also dried up. Eliot’s assumption that native textbook writers were being discriminated, proved groundless as no native authors came forward to fill the place of the foreigners. After the departure of the refugees, the foreign language teaching seems to have gone into a decline in the early seventeenth century.
Inspite of the attempts made by Holyband and his fellow refugees, the teaching of modern English remained at a low level. The main concern of the schools was the teaching of Latin, and until 18th century the classical curriculum was dominant. Young children arrived at the grammar school at about the age of eight and were forced with a dose of severe Latin grammar rules. The source of these rules was the best-selling language-teaching textbook *A Short Introduction of Grammar* generally edited by William Lily and known as *Lily’s Grammar*. It continued without a serious rival until the middle of the 18th century and was still in occasional use in the 19th century. For over 250 years ‘Lily’ and language teaching was synonymous. Lily’s book begins with a short introduction to the ‘Parts of Speech’ written in English followed by a description of Latin syntax written entirely in Latin.

It is against this background of rote-learning that the reform movements of 16th and 17th century language have to be seen. Though the various movements adopted different philosophies and theories at different times, a common concern for text rather than for rule was evident among them all. There were two schools of thought on the role and function of language studies in late 16th and early 17th century education. The first represented the humanist tradition established earlier in the century by Erasmus and Vives and reiterated in Roger Ascham’s influential book *The School Master* (1570). The other was a more puritanical philosophy set out at some length in Francis Bacon’s
Advancement of Learning (1605), which was elaborately expressed in the work of Jan Amos Comenius. The ‘anti-grammar’ trend in language teaching methodology came to its conclusion in the work of an extraordinary writer called Joseph Webbe who designed a language text book format in the 1620s. While Ascham had made the learning of grammar subservient to the study of original texts, Webbe dispensed with grammar all together. Webbe viewed that grammars were bound to be inadequate as descriptions and their study merely ‘shackled’ the learner’s progress. The proper starting point for language learning, in his view, was the exercise of communication skills, which would lead to knowledge of the grammar through use.

Webbe’s achievement was considerable, but it was isolated from the context of educational thought and philosophy that surrounded it. Meanwhile, the Baconian tradition overrode him and found its fullest expression in the works of comenius. Bacon and the Puritan movement disapproved of the literacy interests of humanists like Ascham. They thought that ‘learning should be directed onwards towards the perceptible world of the senses and experiences, not inwards and their logical or stylistic properties’. Comenius was a genius, whose two major works are Janua Linguarum Resarata (1631), and Great Didactic (1657). His Orbis Sensualium Pictus, the most imaginative language-teaching textbook of the century, was published in 1658. However, it is doubtful whether his methodical ideas exerted much influence until they
were rediscovered in the 19th century. The *Janua* and the *Orbis Pictus* did survive and were widely used. Comenius wanted a system of education in which the mother tongue would play the central role and foreign language would be learnt as and when they were needed for practical purposes. He believed that foreign vernacular languages should be taught as a means of communication with the people of neighbouring countries, and that the classical languages, which were still required for certain academic and professional purposes, should not claim more than their fair share. According to him, content should override form in the learning process. Comenius believed in class teaching with the children grouped round him.

It is difficult to assess the contribution Comenius made to the concern of language teaching. His contemporary influence was powerful, and his two major textbooks the *Janua* and the *Orbis Pictus* continued to be reprinted for a century or more after his death. But neither of them stimulated other writers to emulate his techniques and methods. It is noteworthy that Comenius’s Philosophy of learning presents an abiding challenge to the teacher of languages: how can the teacher come to terms with the fact that language is not the object of learning but the outcome, the product of interplay between the teacher and the great common world.

**Guy Miege and Second Huguenot Exile**

After Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685, the flow of exiles
was greater than that was experienced hundred years earlier. After the
Restoration of 1660, French enjoyed a prestige both as a social
accomplishment and as an essential element in the training of court officials
and diplomats. The case of French was supported by Lord Clarendon, the Lord
Chancellor. The result was a demand for native speaking teachers of French,
some of whom also turned their attention to the teaching of English as a
foreign language to speakers of French. Among the teachers who contributed
to helping the new refugees with learning English were Paul Festeau, a native
of Blois on the river Loire, and a swiss called Guy Miege whose *Nouvelle
Method pour Apprendre l'Anglois* (New method of Learning English) (1685)
raised the standard of teaching of English as a Foreign Language. Miege Came
to England shortly after the Restoration in 1661. His writing career started in
lexicography and he published three dictionaries of French and English
between 1677 and 1684. With the arrival of large numbers of refugees after
1685, which coincided with the Publication of *Nouwell Method*, he became
more closely associated with the teaching of English. *Nouwell Method* brings
together a Grammar, a compact Dictionary and a dialogue manual. His
Grammar Section consists of a description of English Orthography and
Pronunciation as well as a detailed study of the basic paradigms and word
forms in the language. He considered English an easy language to learn once
the student has mastered the complexities of the sound and spelling systems. In
his view there were three main difficulties, first was a small set of troublesome letters, ‘th’ as in ‘think’, ‘ch’ as in ‘Church’ and the soft ‘g’ in Ginger’ and ‘Judge’, the second was the vowels and diphthong system, and the third, difficulty of knowing where to place the stress in individual words. He also had a long vocabulary list, more like a dictionary which is followed by a collection of everyday dialogues.

Miege’s teaching method followed a firm footing in the basics of pronunciation, spelling and grammar followed by practice and language study using the dialogues and phrases. He disapproved of learning a language without grammar rules and he compared such a learning to a building without a foundation. After Miege, there were a few textbooks for English as a Foreign language written and published in England. It is one of the curious features of the subject that native speaking authors of course books for English as a foreign language were almost unknown before the late 19th century.

The Spread of English Language Teaching in Europe (18th Century)

The teaching of English as a foreign language waned in Britain during the eighteenth century than in the seventeenth. But there was no slackening of interest in learning English abroad. It grew slowly, spreading out from Britain to the countries immediately bordering the channel: France, The Netherlands, Denmark and Germany, and then to the Mediterranean and Baltic countries and later to Russia and Serampore in Bengal.
The teaching of English continued strongly in Netherlands throughout the 17th century, reflecting the closeness between the two nations. A number of books, for the purpose, were published in Amsterdam from 1646 to 1705. France was the only other European country besides Netherlands with a history of English language teaching before 1600. The 17th century textbooks such as Festeau’s *Nouvelle Grammaire Angloise* of 1672 and Miege’s *Nouvelle Method* of 1685 were both reissued in the form of double-grammars. Many learners of English acquired the language through the medium of French. Most important works in English were translated into French and gained a wider audience. For some people this was an inadequate way of studying English philosophy and literature and they started to learn the language so that they could read it at first-hand. The members of the French intelligentsia had a fascination for things English and it prompted a healthy trade in French translation of English books printed in Netherlands.

Towards the end of the century, a real break through for the English language occurred in Germany, where an obsession grew up around the works of English Literature, particularly Shakespeare. Interest in learning the English Language quickened and it even began to earn a place for itself in the school at the end of the century as a result of the German fascination for the lyricism and romanticism of Shakespeare, and other English dramatists. There was a strong interest among German textbook writers in English phonology and
prosody. A large number of works devoted to stress, rhythm and Grammar appeared in large numbers from about 1780 onwards. The same trend was found in Denmark, Italy, Portugal and Spain. The principal role of English in Russia was in naval affairs and the earliest books for teaching the language were written for the cadets at the Naval Academy. It is interesting to note a book on English language teaching published not in Europe, but in India, published in Serampore in 1797, and printed by the author John Miller himself. The Tutor is possibly the earliest example of a book written to teach English in what would today be called the third world.

Many reformers believed that the English spelling system was the stumbling block to the spread of literacy in England and to the learning of English as a foreign language. The Roman alphabet inherited from Latin did not match the sound system of English. The desire to reform the orthography also prompted the description of speech and its practical application to problems of everyday life. Most of the leading linguistic scholars in English between 1550 and 1700 were accomplished phoneticians, as well as grammarians. Their work was motivated by the desire to improve linguistic activities such as the spelling reform, and the teaching of English both as a mother tongue and as a foreign language. Among the early contributors to this tradition were Sir Thomas Smith (1513 – 1611), and John Hart (1501 – 1574). Orthographical reform continued as an important objective for linguistic scholarship well into the 17th
century. As the century progressed, the principal centre of interest shifted from orthography to the description and teaching of grammar. The leading grammarians of the period, like John Wallis (1616 – 1703), and Christopher Cooper (died 1698) were also skilled phoneticians. In the 18th century there was considerable enthusiasm for instruction in the arts of polite conversation, public-speaking and elocution. But the interest in spoken English made little impact on the basic education system. One reason for this was that the Renaissance had inherited a framework of linguistic description from the Middle Ages which divided grammar into four components: Orthography, Etymology, Syntax and Prosody.

Traditional grammars have been criticised for the neglect of speech, for the use of arbitrary ‘perspective’ judgments on what was correct in grammar, and also for being Latin-based. Some grammarians (Ben Jonson, for instance) did little more than find English equivalents for Latin categories, but others (including John Wallis and Robert Lowth) were consciously aware of the need to devise descriptions of English that did not just imitate the grammars of classical languages. These faults were virtues in the eyes of the customers for whom the grammar were intended. There were four different groups of customers for grammars and dictionary of English in the period to 1800: foreign students of the language, school pupils, private scholars, and a growing number of socially and professionally ambitious learners. The majority of
foreign students of English were academics and scholars who wished to acquire a reading knowledge of the language.

When we trace the development of English language teaching between the 16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} centuries we cannot ignore the name of John Hart. He was an innovator of the reform of English spelling. The opening of the unreasonable writing of our English tongue, written in 1551, an orthography containing the due order and reason, how to write or paint the image of man's voice, most like to the life or nature (1569), and A method of comfortable beginning for all unlearned, whereby they may be taught to read English in a very short time, with pleasure, (1570) are his important works. Hart's policy on spelling was very moderate. He devised a five new letter shapes and resuscitated others which had been allowed to lapse, the two letters representing the voiced and unvoiced "th" sounds, for example. Hart's teaching material is laid out in eight short steps. First he introduces the five vowels and five selected consonants, chosen because they are easy to sound out. Step 2 introduces the remaining consonants, each with a picture and keyword. Next there are two practice tables. Step 4 introduces the vowel digraphs on a five-by-five table. There is more revision and practice (step 5) before going on to the syllables and exercises contrasting long and short vowels, and the important voiced/voiceless distinction. At the end of the book there are some phonic practice pattern, which carefully exemplify the sounds in different environments.
Unfortunately, Hart’s reformed spelling system was not adopted. The future lay with a new orthography, but with a new consistent version of the traditional one. The main credit for this has to go to Richard Mulcaster, the most famous and influential pedagogue of his day. His two major works are Positions for the Training up of Children (1581) and The First Part of the Elementarie (1582).

The First Part of the Elementarie (1582), outlines Mulcaster’s five branched system of primary education, which comprised reading, writing, drawing, singing and playing. Mulcaster was a serious and idealistic man who believed deeply in his mission to create for England an English education rooted in the use of English language. He called for three great undertakings to prepare the language for its role in the education of the future: a grammar, a dictionary, and a consistent orthography. Mulcaster made a lengthy word list which he called a ‘General Talk’. It does not contain definitions since its principal purpose was to provide a check-list of regular spellings following his system of rules and convention. This table and the principles on which it was based were Mulcaster’s Chief contribution to the history of practical English teaching.

Mulcaster’s intention was not to provide a new, phonetically consistent spelling system, but a stable one derived from tradition, or custom, modified in the light of two further principles: ‘reason’ and ‘sound’. ‘Reason’ should ensure consistency and regularity, and ‘sound’ implied a predictable relationship between sounds and spellings, though not necessarily on the ‘one
symbol, one sound' principle of John Hart. The outcome should be a publicly acceptable compromise between perfection and practicability.

The two influential grammars of the first half of the 17th century were Ben Jonson’s ‘English Grammar’ of 1640 and John Wallis’s Grammatica Linguae Anglicanae of 1653. In the early 17th century, there were two rival interpretations of general grammatical theory, and Jonson made use of both of them in his ‘Grammar’, which resulted in a number of inconsistencies. The first was the traditional theory derived from Aristotle through the Roman grammarians. This theory was represented in post-renaissance England by Lily’s Grammar, which every educated person knew by heart from school. The rival theory originated in the work of a French scholar Pierre de la Ramee, in the mid-16th century. The Ramist belief in ‘reason’ rather than ‘authority’ appealed to the young intellectuals of late Elizabethan and Jacobean times, and inspired Jonson to attempt an application of the theory to the description of English. The Lilyan tradition was, however, too strong and the Jonson Grammar suffers from the mixture of two conflicting approaches. Part I of The English Grammar is concerned with Etymology, and Part II with Syntax. This two-part Ramist structure is one of the many differences between the ancient and modern approaches. John Wallis devoted more than half his book to pronunciation and its complex relationship to the orthography. Wallis’s high reputation ensured a wide circulation of his Grammatica. He is one of the few
authorities consistently quoted in the 18th century.

In the late 17th century, there was considerable interest in the construction of a universal language. The destruction of Latin as the international 'Lingua Franca' due to the protestant revolution, and other reasons, would have made the idea of a universal language philosophically attractive. The Royal Society commissioned one of its members, John Wilkins, to draw up a scheme for further consideration and possible implementation. Wilkins' report, called An Essay towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language was presented to the society in 1668. It was a detailed analysis of the Semantic categories, or 'notions' as Wilkins called them, along with the written symbols which were to realize these categories in his new universal language. But Wilkins's scheme was not taken up by the merchants, traders, and missionaries as he had hoped. However, it had a rather limited influence on the grammar of Christopher Cooper. Wilkins's ideas did not sink altogether into obscurity, they eventually re-emerged in the 19th century in the famous Thesaurus of Peter Mark Roget (1779 – 1869). Roget had almost essentially studied Wilkins's 'Essay' as he was secretary to the Royal Society. However, he did not acknowledge this directly. The 'Thesaurus' was an enormous success.

The Restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660 was a decisive event in the history of English education and English language teaching. The
Cromwellian commonwealth of the previous decade had removed the control of education from the Anglican church, thereby challenging the supremacy of the traditional Latin curriculum and promoting of literacy in the mother tongue. The restoration re-established the old order but failed to kill the reforming zeal of the non-conformist dissenters. The principal contribution of the dissenting tradition was its commitment to a curriculum stressing the teaching of natural science, mathematics and practical skills like accounting, surveying and navigation. This implied the replacement of Latin as the basic educational discipline by English.

The 18th century was on the whole a time of relative calm after the religious and constitutional disturbances of the 17th century. Social ambition and commercial enterprise began to take the place of controversy and religious disputation, and the modern curriculum of the English schools provided an excellent preparation for this. Letter writing became more important and a polished style expressed in correctly spelt grammatical sentences became a sought-after accomplishment. By 1700 the Mulcastrican dream of a vernacular system of education was on the way to realization, but English was still unequipped for fulfilling such ambitions. Joseph Aickins, in the preface to his 1693 English grammar expressed the feeling of national linguistic pride, and desire for improvement and to augment and standardize the language. Neither Aickins’ own Grammar nor many grammars that were published over the next
seventy years attained the status he desired. The Standard Grammar which
approached in the form of Lowth's Short Introduction in 1762 was what the
literate public recognized as what they had been looking for: clear,
unambiguous guidance on what was good English and what was not.

A committee had been set up in 1664 by the Royal Society to improve
the English tongue comprising influential supporters as John Dryden and John
Evelyn. Jonathan Swift, in a letter to the Earl of Oxford in 1712, called A
proposal for correcting, improving and ascertaining the English tongue
suggested the forming of an academy for ascertaining and fixing the language
forever. This proposal was immediately attacked by the opposition party in the
Parliament. The Whigs regarded this as a kind of Tory Plot and the Whig
historian John Oldmixon sarcastically said that it will be vain to pretend to
ascertain language. In spite of his reservations about the Academy, Oldmixon
joined in the general demand for an authoritative work of reference.

The dictionaries of Johnson, Walker and Webster are worth mentioning
in the march of the language towards the formation of Standard English. The
basic desire of Johnson's work was published in his Plan of a Dictionary of the
English Language (1747). He summed up his idea of the perfect English
dictionary by which the pronunciation of the languages may be fixed and the
purity of the language preserved, focussing attention on the golden age of
Elizabethan English. What captured Johnson's imagination was the way in
which English was used by the great authors. Though Johnson did not ‘fix’ the language, he provided a fixed point of reference against which future change could be set and assessed. He established a model for dictionary making, that was emulated and extended by later writers like Webster and the compilers of the great Oxford English Dictionary at the end of the following century. The shortcomings of the introductory grammar in Johnson’s dictionary were rectified in Lowth’s Short Introduction a few years later. And Johnson’s failure to take an interest in phonetics was compensated in the work of his ardent admirer John Walker in his Critical Pronouncing Dictionary, published in 1791. This contains a wealth of information on the pronunciation of standard English as well as advice from Londoners, Irishmen and Scotsmen on how to attain a standard English accent. It is ironic that the attempts to fix the English language ‘forever’ should have coincided with the secession of the American colonies and the establishment of an independent English speaking nation which would seek to develop an alternative standard suited to its own purposes.

Webster’s American Dictionary of the English Language, in 1828, was published in the belief that the American people should have their own national dictionary of English. He retained the spelling changes which had found popular favour and dropped, or compromised on those which had not. For example, he listed both ‘theatre’ and ‘theater’ but gave no alternative for ‘center’.
The grammars of Lowth, Murray, and Cobbett are worth mentioning in the context of tracing the evolution of the language. Robert Lowth’s main aim in the publication of *A Short Introduction to English Grammar*, was similar to that of other 18th century grammarians: to provide a standard work of English grammar, and guide the learner to express himself ‘with propriety’. A novel feature of Lowth’s design was his use of footnotes. The advantage of the footnote device is that it creates a two-level course in a single book with the main text as the elementary material and footnotes as the more advanced commentary. Lowth’s *Short Introduction* was, on one hand, the culmination of the 18th century search for a reliable guide to the structure of the Standard English, and on the other hand it established an authority for the next generation of grammars.

Murray and Cobbett, in particular, represent the transition from the 18th century with its passion for linguistic propriety and elegance to the more vigorous tradition of popular grammars of Victorian times. Both of them based their work on Lowth and aimed to bring the advantages of correct English to a broader audience. Lindley Murray (1745 – 1826) established two new principles in the design of pedagogical grammars. The first was a system of grading with the reference to different classes of learners. He took Lowth’s device of distinguishing between the main text and the footnotes; secondly, he pioneered the technique of providing practice exercises for classroom use.
Like the exercises of the so-called ‘grammar–translation method’ in foreign language teaching, Murray’s were based on sentences which illustrated the basic points in his textbook. The fact that we associate ‘doing grammar’ so closely with ‘doing exercises’ is more or less the result of Murray’s influence on the teaching of English. The next of Lowth’s disciples, William Cobbett published his A Grammar of the English Language in a series of letters in 1819. The book was intended both for the use of schools, and young persons in general, and more especially for the use of soldiers, sailors, apprentices and ploughboys.

There are three major threads in the development of language teaching in the 19th century that twine together in the controversies. The first is the integration of foreign language teaching into a modernized secondary school curriculum. In 1800 very few schools taught foreign languages except as optional extras to the classical languages. But in 1900 most secondary schools had incorporated one or more of the major European languages into their curriculum. The second strand is the expansion of the market for utilitarian language learning related to practical needs and interests. It occurred from about the middle of the 19th century as the European nations came into closer and more frequent commercial contact with each other and with countries throughout the world. Inspite of the lack of interest shown by the schools and universities towards the cause, the utilitarian market existed and was growing.
The evidence for it was the success of writers like Ahn and Ollendorff. Their books flowed on to the market in all the leading European languages. The third strand in the development was that throughout the century there were individuals with new ideas on how languages could be taught more efficiently and easily. There were French writers like Jacotot, Marcel, and Gouin, and there was a very interesting English man called Prendergast whose ideas fore shadow many of the notions later developed in the 20th century by men like Palmer and West. Even though none of them received widespread support in their own time, it has to be remembered that when the Reform Movement actually got under way in the 1880's it was not wholly without precedent.

The Grammar – Translation Method

It began in Germany, or more actually, Prussia, at the end of the eighteenth century. The origins of the method do not lie in an attempt to teach languages by grammar and translation. The original motivation was reformist. The original scholastic approach among individual learners in the eighteenth century had been to acquire a reading knowledge of foreign languages by studying a grammar and applying this knowledge to the interpretation of texts with the use of a dictionary. Scholastic methods of this type were not suitable to school pupils. The grammar-translation method was an attempt to adapt these traditions to the requirements of schools. It preserved the basic framework of grammar and translation as these were already familiar both to
teachers and pupils from their classical studies. The main aim was to make language learning easier. The traditional texts were replaced by exemplificatory sentences. The twentieth century structuralist approach was also founded on the authority of the sentence and the two methodologies have much in common.

The earliest grammar-translation course for the teaching of English was written in 1793 by Johan Christian Fick (1793 – 1821) and published in Erlangan in South Germany. It contained exercises of various kinds, typically sentences for translation into and out of the foreign language. The grammar translation sentences afforded opportunities for practice work and also exemplified the grammar in a more concentrated and clearer way than texts could do. Grammar-translation textbooks were graded, and presented new grammar points one by one in an organized sequence. This was also taken over by the modern structuralists. Although the grammar–translation method started out as a simple approach to language learning for young children, it was distorted by the rivalry between the classicists and the modern language rivals.

The industrialization of the second half of the nineteenth century created a new class of language learner, one that had not followed an academic 'grammar school' education. A new approach was needed which suit their particular circumstances, and consequently the 'direct methods', which required no knowledge of grammar.
The Reform Movement

The late nineteenth century Reform Movement is unique in language teaching history. For a period of about twenty years many of the leading phoneticians of the time co-operated towards a shared educational aim and attracted teachers and others to the field. From 1882 onwards publications began to appear, first in the form of pamphlets and articles, and later, more subtracted works like Sweet's 'Practical Study of Languages (1899).

Professional associations and societies were formed, notably the International Phonetic Association (IPA), and there were new journals and periodicals, of which the best known was the IPA's Le Maitre Phonétique, first published under that title in 1889.

The movement was remarkable as an example of international and interdisciplinary co-operation in which phoneticians took as much interest in the classroom as the teachers did in the new science of phonetics. Three out of the four principal phoneticians - Victor in Germany, Passy in France, and Jesperson in Denmark - began their careers as school teachers, though they went to other works later. The fourth, Henry Sweet, whose teaching was limited to individual students, was respected as the intellectual leader of the movement.

On the teaching side, the main figure was Klinghardt, a teacher from Silesia, who followed up a review of Sweet’s 1884 paper On the Practical
Study of Languages with a carefully documented study of a year's work with the new methods which helped to increase the confidence of teachers.

The Reform Movement began suddenly with the publication of Victor's pamphlet Der Sprachunterricht muss umkehren (Language teaching must start afresh) in 1882. Its impact on teaching at the time, and its later influence, make it one of the most significant documents in recent language teaching history. However the absence of a published English translation hindered the widespread popularity of its content. In an attempt to remove this hindrance, a translation (made in collaboration with David Abercrombie and Beat Buchmann) has been included as an appendix to this book. In 1886 Victor acknowledged his authorship of Der Sprachunterricht, and a Quousque Tandem Society was formed in Scandinavia, borrowing the famous pseudonym of Victor. In the same year Passy set up the Phonetic Teachers Association. Jespersen became one of its first members. The collaborative tradition of the Reform Movement was continued, as a result of which a number of pamphlets and a series of articles were published. Journals also played an important role, publishing articles, reviews, conference reports, and so on. The movement continued to expand and at the turn of the century, reached its climax with the appearance of two works, which provide a statement of its aims, principles and practical classroom methods. The first was Sweet's classic The Practical Study of Languages, published in 1899. It was followed by Jespersen's How to Teach
a Foreign Language, published in 1904. Victor contributed to the movement by holding a series of summer schools and starting a language teaching institute in his home town of Marburg. Daniel Jones was one of his summer students, who later took up a years study under Passy in Paris.

The Reform Movement was founded on three basic principles: the primacy of speech, the centrality of the connected text as the kernel of the teaching–learning process, and the absolute priority of an oral methodology in the classroom. Victor also dealt with the issue of overwork in the schools and the consequent ill health and mental stress. He was convinced that, if teachers adopted better methods based on the spoken language, the children would learn the language more effectively and could do away with the written homework and ‘overwork’. Part I of Victor’s Der Sprachunterricht, discusses the linguistic nonsense that had become an epidemic in the classroom through the neglect of speech. If speech was taught at all, it was badly done by teachers whose own pronunciation was inadequate. Partly as a result of the emphasis on writing, much of the grammatical information in the textbooks of the time was misleading. To writers like Victor and Sweet, it was essential that the learner’s pronunciation should be correct before moving on to texts, and that these texts should be printed in a scientifically accurate system, not in the fairly traditional orthography. The principle of connected text was accepted and the use of translation was discouraged. The issue went deeper and raised
significant questions concerning the philosophy of language learning. From an educational point of view, connected texts on worthwhile topics were clearly preferable to the pointless sentences of traditional text books.

The last major principle of the Reform Movement was the importance of oral method in the class room, especially in the early stages of learning. The teacher was expected to speak foreign language as the normal means of class room communication.

The next reform milestone was the decision by Klinghardt to try out the new ideas using Sweets’ Elementar buch des gesprochenen Englische (1885). The experiment began in the spring of 1887 and continued until the March of the following year. The work was divided into two semesters, and the pupils were 14 year old boys, all beginners in English, though they had done French for three years. He began his course with a two and a half week introduction to English pronunciation, including a listening and speech exercise, during which he began to introduce the non-phonetic notation. Klinghardt’s instincts as a teacher told him that it was time to move on to the texts, and he began the first one in the third week of the course. The pronunciation was of central importance, so the class listened while the teacher read the sentence aloud a couple of times and repeated it until they could say it fluently. They also copied it down in the new notation. The meaning was glossed with an interlinear translation, and when it was thoroughly familiar, the new grammar
point was discussed and taught.

Though Sweets's sentences contained a large number of potential grammar points only one was selected for teaching purposes.

After the first month, Klinghardt began to teach the children how to ask and answer comprehension questions on the texts and also how to extend them to topics in their own lives and experiences. Klinghardt made the transaction to traditional orthography at the beginning of the second semester. The class was introduced to writing for the first time: copying, writing answers to questions and so on. By the end of the first year they had made good progress in their knowledge of the language, but the really remarkable difference was the confidence with which they used the spoken language.

The Reform Movement offered language something it could hardly refuse – a scientific approach. The leaders of the movement were concerned with the educational implications of the appalling teaching methods of the time, and phonetics offered both a scientific foundation for their reformist zeal and practical technique for bringing about the improvements in the classroom that they were looking for. The Reform of language teaching was a moral issue for all the members of the reform movement, but in particular for Paul Passy, a devout Christian and a dedicated teacher. During his early years as a teacher Passy devised a private phonetic alphabet, and impressed by its usefulness in the classroom drew together a small group of other like-minded
language teachers to discuss how such ideas could be expanded for the general good. The group called themselves the ‘Phonetic Teachers Association’.

Jesperson, Victor and Sweet joined the association in 1886, only a few months after its formation. They published a joined journal called *The Phonetic Teacher*, and in 1897 the association took its final title, the International Phonetic Association (IPA).

Henry Sweet proved his pursuit of excellence with the publication of a paper on old English by the prestigious philosophical society, in his first year at Oxford in 1869. He later became President of the society, and was closely involved in the early history of *Oxford English Dictionary*. Sweet’s greatest contribution to the development and reform of language teaching grew out of a paper with almost the same title, delivered to the philosophical society on the occasion of the presidential address by James Murray, the first editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, in May 1884.

Sweet’s overall aim in *The Practical Study of Languages* was to devise a rationally progressive method of practical language study. It included the teaching and learning of foreign languages in schools and was also intended as a comprehensive general view of the whole field. The first section deals with the teaching of phonetics and its practical application in pronunciation teaching and the use of transcription. The next part deals with the methodological principles and practices covering the five major areas of practical language
learning: grammar, vocabulary, the study of text, translation and conversation.

The book closes with a series of essays on specific topics such as the study of a foreign literature, the learning of classical languages and the investigation of unwritten languages.

It is well known that Sweet is the starting point for Shaw’s Henry Higgins in *Pygmalion*. There were two passions in Sweet’s life: Phonetics and England. Sweet was uncompromising in that all study of language must be based on ‘Phonetics’.

At the heart of Sweet’s approach was the partnership between Linguistics and Psychology that he had announced at the close of his 1884 paper. Sweet adopted the theory of psychology which was dominant at the end of the 19th Century, namely ‘associationism’. Following the associationist principle meant that the learner’s central task was to form and maintain correct associations both between linguistic elements within the language, and between these elements and the outside world. Fluency in the spoken language implied the establishment of well-practised associations along the stream of speech in the production of intelligible utterances. Only a connected, coherent text allowed the learner to form and strengthen the correct association, and only after it had been thoroughly studied and assimilated, the teacher should draw generalizations, grammar points and vocabulary items out of it.

Sweet’s system of grading was based on a functional typology of texts,
starting from descriptive ones, moving to narrative, and finally, dialogues. Descriptions fulfilled his four criteria for good teaching texts: they were direct, clear, simple, and familiar. Sweet drew his methodology in a graded curriculum consisting of five stages. First, there was the ‘mechanical stage’ during which the learner concentrated on acquiring a good pronunciation and becoming familiar with phonetic transcription. During the second stage, ‘grammatical stage’, the learner began to work on the texts, gradually building up his knowledge of the grammar and acquiring a basic vocabulary. The third, ‘idiomatic stage’ dealt almost exclusively with the learner’s lexical development. This completed the basic course, while stages four and five, ‘literary stage’ and ‘archaic stage’ were university level studies devoted to literature and philology. In modern eyes, Sweet’s curriculum seems excessively linguistic. Sweet’s work established an applied linguistic tradition in language teaching which has continued uninterruptedly to the present day.

Natural Methods of Language Teaching from Montaigne to Berlitz

The communication language teaching methods which have attracted a great deal of interest recently had appealed to the imagination of teachers for a very long time, and were revived about one and a half centuries ago by the native speaking immigrant teachers in America. These ideas have been known by a variety of names: natural Methods, Conversation Method, Direct Method, Communication Approach, and so on.
The class room technique associated with them have also changed from time to time, but the underlying philosophy has remained constant. Learning how to speak a new language is not a process which can be organized in a step-by-step manner following graded syllabus. It is an intuitive process for which human beings have a natural capacity that can be awakened, provided only that the proper conditions exist. There are three such conditions, some one to talk to, something to talk about, and a desire to understand and make yourself understood. ‘Interaction’ is the basis of natural foreign language acquisition.

The early example of natural foreign language teaching is the story of Michael de Montaigne in the 16th century. His father, in order to bring him up as a native speaker of Latin, put him under an inviolable rule that none should utter in his presence anything but Latin words.

Natural language learning was common place before 1800 because of the preference of having children educated at home. The application of ‘natural methods’ to the teaching of larger groups presents different problems.

J.S. Blackie, a nineteenth century Scots professor of Latin and Greek, included the account of an early 16th century ‘direct method’ lesson in an article he wrote for the Foreign Quarterly Review in 1845. Blackie’s four points sum up everything that has been said about natural or direct methods of language teaching. Teach the spoken language first, relate the words of the new language directly to their referents in their outside world, practice, and work as hard as
possible to gain and keep the learner's interest. Having pointed out where existing methods fall down on each of the four points, Blackie outlines his eighteen-step syllabus for a well-ordered system of language study.

The modern tradition of natural approaches originated in the work and example of a teacher of genius, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746–1827). For many people the famous 'object lessons' represented the Pestalozzian 'method' which was not what he had in mind, but it was at least a concrete idea that could be used. They provided a workable system for elementary classes (this is a book It is red. It is on the table etc.), but it was difficult to know what to do once the objects failed to provide sufficiently complex stimuli for linguistic activities. Claude Marcel (1793–1876) was attracted to the notion, but considered it suitable only for younger pupils, and the Direct Method gradually comes to end around the intermediate level. One of the most valuable contributions of modern communicative methodology has been to provide a framework for the development of more advanced linguistic activities, to pickup where the direct method leaves off.

In South Germany, a school teacher called Gottlieb Heness applied the object lesson technique to the teaching of standard German to his dialect speaking pupils. His success encouraged him to think of broadening the method to the teaching of German as a foreign language. He set up a language school of his own. For commercial reasons he needed to offer French as well
as German and looked around for a native-speaking Frenchman to join him in the venture. He found an extraordinary man called Lambert Sauveur, who had immigrated to the United States some time in the late 1860s. He ran a French course along Heness’s lines for faculty members at Yale. Sauveur and Heness moved to Boston in 1869 and opened a school of modern languages in the city. It prospered, and five years later they described their ideas and experiences in two related publications, one by Sauveur for French and the other an adaptation for German by Heness. It is Sauveur’s work, *An Introduction to the Teaching of Living Languages Without Grammar or Dictionary* (1874) that has survived. Sauveur’s ‘Introduction’ was originally intended as a kind of ‘Teacher’s manual’ to accompany his ‘course book’, *Causeries avec mes eleves* (1874). ‘Causeries’ was not what we would now understand by a textbook. It consists of a series of idealized conversations such as might have taken place in Sauveur’s classroom during the course of a lesson. Sauveur’s students did not start the book until they had spent at least a month entirely on intensive oral work in class. Sauveur was a gifted and immensely enthusiastic language teacher, utterly committed to his vocation.

The Sauveur–Heness School of Modern languages caused a great deal of interest, locally at first and then nationally. Within a decade or so, the Natural Method, as the Sauveur approach was known, had become the most seriously considered new development in language teaching in America.
'Natural Method' had started well and attracted professional interest and support. What they needed now was a vehicle, which would bring them to the customers. The ordinary schools would never have adopted 'Natural Methods'. The teachers would not have known what to do, and the parents would not have been able to compromise with the loss of prestige that 'ordinary conversation' implied. Natural method required schools of their own and someone who could feel the need of the moment. Immigrants were pouring into the United States, but they were the ordinary people. Like the Huguenots in the 16th century England, they needed to survive in their new environment and to cope with the problems of everyday life in a new language. The moment found the man in the person of Maximilian Berlitz, an immigrant. Without Sauveur, the direct method would not have happened when it did; without Berlitz, very few people would have benefited from it.

During the next thirty years, Berlitz built up a network of language schools, first in America and then back in Europe. His textbooks provided a framework that all Berlitz schools followed. He began with French and German (both in 1882), and English as a foreign language followed shortly afterwards. Berlitz was not an academic methodologist, but he was an excellent systematizer of basic language teaching materials organized on direct method lines'. The teacher's directions are very clear and straight-forward: no translation under any circumstances, a strong emphasis on oral work, avoidance
of grammatical explanation until late in the course, and the maximum use of question-and-answer techniques.

The best account of the Berlitz approach and the important role it played in the late 19th century adult education is contained in an article written by Pakscher for *Englische studies* (1895). Pakscher was the director of the Dresden School. The Berlitz English course was in two parts: each subdivided into two sections. The opening section of part I began with the objects in the class room. The second section of part I introduced simple texts, which were continued along with everyday dialogues, in part II. Most of the class work consisted of question-and-answer activities in a foreign language. Compared with Sauveur's initiative style, the Berlitz Method was simple, systematic, and ordered.

**The Teaching of English as a Foreign or Second Language since 1900**

During the first half of the 20th century, the teaching of English emerged as an autonomous profession. In due course, further distinct specializations came up, notably the teaching of English as a second language. The foundation for this autonomy rested on the two reforming traditions inherited from the previous century; the applied linguistic approach of the Reform Movement and the monolingual methodology of the direct method. The force behind it was the work of Harold Palmer, in the Department of Phonetics at University College, London, between 1915 and 1922.
During the nineteenth century there was an assumption that English should be taught in Colonial Schools in the same way as in the mother country. There was no provision for language work specially designed to help the non-native learner, and school grammars like those of J.C. Nesfield, which were meant for British youngsters to get through Oxford and Cambridge Local Examination, were exported in large numbers to the Colonies. By the twenties an idea emerged that English was a second language, though it was not until the fifties that the modern distinction between English as a ‘foreign’ and a ‘second’ language became widespread.

The use of a monolingual approach to language teaching was so distinct that it set apart ELT from foreign language teaching in Britain. There was a general consensus that translation should be avoided as far as possible, but that it was helpful from time to time.

It was only after 1960, with the sudden growth of EFL and ESL activity in Britain, that a sense of unity and confidence began to merge in English language teaching. There are four phases of professional development since 1900; a foundation phase, a research and development phase, a phase of consolidation and a final phase in which there has been variation, and adaptation to rapid changes of circumstance.

The first steps towards the new profession was taken in 1906 when Daniel Jones persuaded the University of London to permit him to give a
series of public lectures on the phonetics of French. The success of these lectures led to further courses for local school teachers and others, with an additional one in phonetics of English. Courses specifically for overseas students of English started next, and in 1910, the programme was expanded to include spoken English grammar. This was the course Harold Palmer was invited to take over in 1915. Daniel Jones published the series of works which became indispensable source-books for every English language teacher. The Pronunciation of English (1909), The English Pronouncing Dictionary (1917), and the Outline of English Phonetics (1918) are some of them. In 1917, Palmer published The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages. Palmer had started his career at London University with a series of lectures to local school teachers on language teaching methodology, the content of which formed the basis for the ‘scientific study’.

Broadly speaking the twenties were a decade of research, the thirties of development. Palmer spent seven years in Japan working towards two objectives. The first was the realization of principles of the Oral Method. He devised various types of oral drills and exercises which he tried with the help of his daughter Dorothee and published through the Institute for Research in English Teaching (IRET) of which he was the Director. At the same time, Palmer was working on his vocabulary research. Vocabulary research was also the principal objective of Michael West who was working in Bengal, in India.
West carried out the most extensive study of English language needs, the results of which were published in a lengthy report, *Bilingualism,* with special reference to Bengal, in 1926. Palmer and West worked together to produce the so-called *Carnegie Report* on vocabulary selection in 1936, thereafter, there was a rush of publications.

Though Palmer and West dominated the inter-war period, there were others whose work, while less prolific, was important. The first was a teacher and textbook writer called Lawrence Faucett, whose career followed a similar pattern to Palmer's. Faucett, taught English as a foreign language in a number of countries overseas, in particular, China. He collaborated with Itsu Mabi on a study of word-frequency counts for English which was published in Tokyo in 1932 under the title *A study of English Word-Values.* At the same time, in the late twenties, he developed the first large-scale direct-method course for English as a foreign language, which was published by Oxford University Press as *The Oxford English Course* (1933). It established a pattern which was widely copied later.

On his return from overseas, Faucett joined the staff of the Institute of Education at London University and, in 1932 he started the first training course for teachers of English as a foreign language. The institute played an important role three years later by hosting the London meeting of the Carnegie Conference, Faucett himself being one of the principal contributors, along
with West, Palmer, and Thorndike. Then came C.E. Esckersley (1893 – 1967) who came into English as a foreign language part time evening class teacher at the associated Polytechnic Institute. He began his publishing career with a literary anthology (England and the English, 1932) and a grammar (A Concise English Grammar for Foreign Students, 1933). His reputation rests on the course he began in the late 30’s Essential English for Foreign Students. His success encouraged him to leave school teaching in 1943 and devote himself full-time to material writing.

Eckersley was engaged in the teaching of English to foreign residents in Britain, or visiting the country temporarily. His classes were in the main multilingual groups of European adults who needed English for a variety of utilitarian purposes. His students provided Eckersley with the situation round which Essential English was constructed. In the thirties, the political developments brought a growing stream of refugees from countries in central Europe. A large number of them were well-educated, literate adults who needed the practical spoken language of everyday life in England which was not reflected in the simple reading materials of the new method or in the vocabulary research that underlay them. The vocabulary of Essential English included everyday items. Essential English in various editions stood the test of time and remained one of the leading EFL courses for around thirty years. There is a striking similarity between authors like Eckersley and the refugee
textbook writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Both were attempting to help learners in similar unfortunate circumstances.

Another example of a writer whose research in the twenties developed and continued in the following decade was C.K. Ogden whose principal publication in the field, *Basic English*, appeared in 1930. By the time war broke out in 1939, the first steps towards a professional organization in English as a Foreign language had been taken. The establishment of the 'British Committee’ for relations with other countries, renamed the British Council the following year, was of great significance.

The existence of the council and its network of British Institutes and other centres played an important role in re-establishing a sense of purpose and direction after 1945.

One of the achievements of the British council was the publication of a professional journal. The first issue appeared in October 1946 under the title *Enghish language Teaching*, a periodical devoted to the teaching of English as a foreign language. The journal became a quarterly from volume VI (1951) onwards and in 1961 the responsibility for publications was shared with Oxford University Press. Since 1972 it has been published under the slightly different title of *English Language Teaching Journal* (ELTJ). Even though the postwar years was a difficult period for the British council, its future was assured by the intervention of the government. The council was able to play a
more active role, including the provision of advanced training. It assisted in the setting up of a school of Applied Linguistics at the university of Edinburgh under the directorship of J.C. Catford, and with the close involvement of David Abercrombie of the Department of Phonetics. The Edinburgh example was followed at Leeds University, and many other universities followed suit in the late sixties.

The innovative initiative in the teaching of English passed to the United States, in particular to Fries’s English Language Institute at Michigan University. The impact of American thinking was not felt in Britain till the late fifties. In the meantime West published his General Service List of English Words in 1953, based on the Carnegie project. Palmer died in 1949, but his tradition was carried on by Hornby with a number of publications, including the famous Advanced Learner’s Dictionary.

In Britain, signs of change started to appear, which would hit the profession in the sixties. There was, for example, the notion that adult learners with specific purposes in learning English would benefit from courses written specially for them. The special purpose idea itself was familiar enough from the many Commercial English manuals that had been a feature of the language teaching scene since the Nineteenth century. Now the principle was to be taken further into technical English and other specializations. Mackin and Weinberger’s course for Spanish speaking doctors was an early example.
Though the emphasis was on the linguistic characteristics of medical texts rather than the use of language for professional purposes, which is the current focus in English for specific purposes, a start has been made.

The advancement of technology also brought changes in the teaching techniques. The gramophone had played a role in language teaching for sometime. The arrival of long playing records in the early fifties solved some of the problems. With the coming of the tape recorders in the mid-fifties any extensive use of recording in class became practical. The language laboratory itself did not arrive in Britain till the next decade, but the pioneer work had been carried out in America long before that. By 1949, Kiddle had developed a laboratory at Michigan in which six students could work together, each using two machines, one for listening and the other for personal recording. By the end of the decade laboratories were sufficiently common in America for Edward M. Stack to publish his immensely influential manual on the subject, *The Language Laboratory and Modern Language Teaching* (1960), and three years later A.S. Hayes prepared a technical report for the United States Government called *Language Laboratory Facilities* (1963).

A start had also been made in other areas of communication technology. ‘English by Radio’, for instance, had been set up during the war with the short five-minute lessons that began transmission in 1943. It expanded into an important service in the years that followed. Of the audio-visual system only
film offered anything substantial, but it was expensive and there were practical difficulties in arranging for its use in schools. The real breakthrough in language teaching technology came from France with the development of the audio-visual courses, which used the tape recorder and the film strip in a system that required a minimum of classroom description. In the sixties, then appeared a phase of controversy when the Palmerian tradition was faced with a theoretical challenge. The absence in Britain, of professional associations and the journals other than ELT meant that new ideas in linguistics, applied linguistics, the psychology of learning, and so on, were relatively unknown outside specialist circles. American developments were reported in the Michigan based journal *Language Learning*, but its circulation was limited, and they were largely ignored in ELT. The sudden unloading in the sixties of advanced training in applied linguistics, such as pattern practice, the structural syllabus, the language laboratory, and programmed learning, all pioneered in America in the fifties created excitement in Britain.

Far-reaching changes affecting the relationship between Britain and the rest of the world began to gather force from the late fifties onwards, bringing a radical shift in priorities for English language teaching. Of the greatest importance was the transformation of English from the language of imperial power and administration to a new role which was more localized and more pervasive. Each newly independent nation was to work out for itself a status
which the former colonial language would be given in the new nation. The basic contrast between learning English as a foreign language for external communication and as a second language for specialized internal functions became sharper. The crucial decision was whether to retain English as the medium of secondary and higher education: some countries such as Nigeria maintained an English-medium policy for reasons of national unity, while others such as Malaysia, pursued a national language policy.

Another outcome of the post-colonial change in the third world was the emigration of a substantial number of people to Britain, attracted by opportunities. An important step was taken in 1966 with the decision to set up materials development project at the university of Leeds Institute of Education to design a programme of English for immigrant, primary school children. The resulting materials, called ‘scope’ pioneered new ideas in the integration of language teaching with the purposes of educational development and became the forerunners of many activity-based techniques.

Such projects set the Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESL) along a path which was quite distinct from that of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). By the late seventies TESL had formed a National Association for the Teaching of ESL to adults (NATESLA 1978).

As Ogden and others had recognized forty years earlier, English was the lingua franca of modern science and technology. The redefinition of English in
the common wealth, and the expansion of English as a world auxiliary language required a more precise definition of those aspects of English language education. But in 1970, English was also the language of transnational commerce, finance and practical communication, generally. With the assistance of sponsoring bodies such as the British council, high-level training was made possible for both commonwealth and non-commonwealth students to gain specialist qualification. There was a marked increase in students for whom specialized courses of English were required which would relate to their particular need. This led to the rapid development in the seventies of English for special, more recently, specific purposes (ESP).

ESP in the modern sense could be said to have begun in 1969 with the publication of a conference report called Languages for Special Purposes. Mackin’s book for doctors’, A modern course in Business English (1963/66), by Howatt, Webb, and Knight, Close’s The English We use for Science (1965), the BBC’s project The Scientist Speaks (1967) and Ewer and Latorre’s course in Basic Scientific English (1968), are all significant contributions.

The communicative philosophy of the seventies encouraged different approaches to ESP. One was the stress on the communicative activities and skills. This approach concentrated on the importance of training useful communicative strategies for reading, listening to lectures etc. Although ESP has been largely a British initiative, there has also been interesting work in
America, notably by Trimple and Selenker in the occupational purposes field.

**English Language Teaching Methods in India**

No proper document is available which makes a detailed survey of ELT methods in schools and colleges in India during this century. An idea of the general situation can be attained from certain sources like government reports, popular texts on the teaching of English in use in training colleges, and the personal experience of those who went to school in twenties and thirties.

The methods most popularly used in Indian schools at the beginning of the century was The Grammar Translation method. The teaching of formal grammar was emphasized during this period. Memorising the rules of grammar through drilling and translating a passage given in the students' mother tongue into English, and vice versa, was very common.

Another important method of teaching English in Indian Schools was the Direct Method. The first book advocating the use of this method in India was P.C.Wrenn's (1913) *The Direct Teaching of English in Indian Schools*. Otto Jesperson (1956), H. Palmer (1964), and M.S.H. Thomson and H.G.Wyatt (1960) popularized the direct method in training colleges. The direct method was accepted at the official level also. Some of the characteristics of this methods were oral work, complete exclusion of the use of the students' mother tongue, the sentence as a unit of speech and inductive teaching of grammar. The exclusion of the mother tongue was looked upon by the teachers
as the most useful technique. The successful implementation of this technique required competent teachers, those who had themselves good command of written and spoken English. The direct method brought about the weakening of the teaching of formal grammar. It encouraged speaking skill but other skills like reading and writing did not receive the desired attention.

During the years 1920–1940 a great deal of work was done in America and Europe in the field of vocabulary selection. Lists ranging from Thorndike’s Teachers Word Book (1921) to the Carnegie Interim Report on Vocabulary Selection (1930) were compiled. In the field of reading, Michel West published his Bilingualism in 1926; and the Experiments and Studies in Modern Language Teaching by Coleman and Fife was published in 1934. Both these publications emphasized the importance of reading. Michel West also published his New Method Readers based on his ideas on vocabulary selection and the importance he gave to the systematic teaching of reading. The period was marked by innovative work in the fields of vocabulary selection and reading.

In the 1930s the methods of Michael West and H. Palmer were steadily gaining progress. The second world war and the independence of India, naturally checked the pace of progress of English teaching.

The development in the field of foreign languages teaching that took place during the forties in the USA and UK had far reaching influence on ELT
in India in the following decades. In America during the Second World War the first widespread application of structural linguistics to foreign language teaching was made in the Army Specialised Training programme (ASTP). The ASTP provided intensive courses in various languages, emphasizing the ability to speak the language and understand it when spoken by native speakers.

At the University of Michigan Charles Fries developed his Oral Approach. The underlying principles of this approach are clearly enumerated in his book *Teaching And Learning English As a Foreign Language* (1945). Apart from the emphasis on oral use of the language, the approach also developed the idea that the structure of the mother tongue and English should be compared to determine the points where they differed. These differences, which can be called the mother tongue interference, were considered to be the chief source of difficulty in learning a second language.

I.A. Richards and C.M. Gibson came out with The Graded Direct Method during the same period. According to I.A. Richards language teaching method was an arrangement of graded sentence-situation units forming an organic sequence in which each step was defined as one in which it was used. In Britain, at the Institute of Education, University of London, a methodology similar to Richards graded-Direct Method was developed in the late forties. The methodology laid emphasis on the selection and grading of structures and formed specific criteria for grading. It encouraged oral drilling of graded
structural items within a limited vocabulary.

After Michael West left India, there has not been any systematic thinking in the field of English-language teaching in the country during the next two decades. Until the mid-forties most of the principles associated with the various movements had made little impact on the ELT situation in the country. Until then, courses and examination remained unaffected by the principles and practices associated with the pioneering work of Jesperson, Palmer, West and their successors. It is surprising that Michael West with his *Bilingualism* and *New method Readers* failed to have any impact on either the construction of ‘Readers’ or the methods of vocabulary teaching. Officially the Direct Method was advocated, but everywhere, except in English medium schools, Grammar—Translation was the method practised.

In 1950s, however, as a result of the changed position of English in the country, the need was felt for the improvement of materials and methods of teaching English at all levels. As a recognition of this need, the Central Institute of English at Hyderabad and other English language teaching institutes were established to train teachers and produce modern teaching materials.

The structural approach to the teaching of English received wide acceptance, upheld the principles of structural grading, vocabulary control, oral situational presentation, and repeated practice for establishment. Through
rigorous control it led to systematic organization of language materials. This period has been the most eventful in the history of ELT in India. New syllabuses and new instructional materials, organization of systematic in-service training and the setting up of English language institutes were all introduced during this period.

The seventies brought new challenges to the ELT methodologists. The changed context and the consequent reassessment of objectives and syllabus reforms demanded fresh and realistic thinking on the choice of a method.

The efficiency of a method depends upon factors, which vary from place to place and situation to situation. The challenge today is to give consideration to priorities and to base new strategies in the realities of the situation. Emphasis has to be given to the achievement of various skills depending on the objectives to be achieved.

Note: The historical information was invariably cited in A.P.R. Howatt