

# Eclectic Approach to Language Teaching for Effective Language Acquisition of EFL Learners in India

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**Abstract:** Language is essential to human perception, thinking and awareness. Competence in a language is being proficient in all the four skills – LSRW. Yet, it is the speaking skill which is predominant. Spoken language is a product of a person's environment and is acquired during prolonged interaction with others who can already converse. This is based on a study conducted among post graduate students who have had their entire school and undergraduate education in English. It was found that in spite of fifteen years, (not including kindergarten) of studying in English medium, students were unable to communicate effectively in English. This scenario is the result of the education system, where, the teaching, learning and evaluation process assesses mostly rote learning. Moreover, speaking skills are not taught and assessed as most Indian curriculum does not give room for that in the syllabus. While, all the subject teachers have a responsibility to teach and communicate in English because the medium of instruction is English, the role of the English teacher is extremely important. An eclectic approach by English teachers can definitely be very effective in teaching English as a foreign language especially in a heterogeneous class.

**Keywords:** eclectic, heterogeneous class, Indian education system, EFL, language acquisition

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is an art of successfully conveying a message by means of an interchange of experience. The important word in this sentence is 'successfully', which implies that desired behaviour change results when the receiver takes in the message. The quality of our lives depends on the quality of our communication skills. Language is essential to human perception, thinking and awareness. It is a universal form of communication adopted by human beings in which a system of symbols or sound patterns conveys readily interpreted standardized meaning to others. Intentional communication is the common conversations and exchange of words and thoughts that forms and maintains social relationships in our everyday lives. In addition to the role of language in interpersonal communication, we can look to its role within individual humans and also its function within human society. Therefore, language plays a very important role in human lives. Chomsky (1965:4) made the original distinction between 'competence' and 'performance'. Chomsky says that 'competence' is the person's knowledge of the language and 'performance' is the actual use of the language in a concrete situation. According to Chomsky (1970:184):

A person who has learned a language has acquired a system of rules that relate sound and meaning in a certain specific way. He has, in other words, acquired a certain competence that he puts to use in producing and understanding speech.

True competence of a language learner is being able to recognize and produce grammatical sentences, and comprehend the meaning. Acquisition of communicative competence involves acquiring the ability to perceive the situation in the world, its experiences. It is a reflection of knowledge or competence, both grammatical and functional. Students have to achieve various competences in order to be able to function optimally in foreign and second language situations.

It is not - and never will be - enough to know the grammatical, phonological or orthographical systems of a language, or to be in possession of a large vocabulary. With such aids students will perhaps be well able to produce sentences. But, without a competence involving discourse/conversation and a textual competence, without a pragmatic/language usage competence and a socio-cultural competence which leaves its distinctive imprint on the language, students will not be able to cope up with either small or large communicative assignments. Finally, communicative competence is not simply a matter of being orally able to 'keep one's end up'. Communicative competence means competence in all four proficiencies - both the productive and the receptive.

In India, English is taught in a bewildering variety of situations. Like in most countries, it is taught in the primary curriculum, but most learners are still insufficiently competent in English use (Harmer, 2007). Davies and Pearse (1998) make it clear that the major goal of English language teaching should be to enhance learners' ability to use English effectively and accurately in communication.

It is no wonder that the mastery of speaking skills is the main concern for many L2 or EFL learners. As a result, "learners often consider their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency" (Richards, 2008). "Speaking is considered to be the most important of all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) because people who know a language are usually referred to as speakers of that language" (Ur, 1996). Zhang (2009) argues that "speaking remains the most difficult skill to master for the majority of English learners, and most learners remain incompetent in communicating orally in English." Complexity, accuracy and fluency are used as parameters for the productive skills' assessment of language learners. According to Housen and Kuiken (2009) complexity, accuracy and fluency are also indicative of language learners' proficiency.

This study is part of the doctoral research and is primarily concerned with those Post Graduate students who have had their entire education in schools and colleges where the medium of instruction had been English. In spite of approximately fifteen years of education in English medium institutions, it is very unfortunate and disturbing that most of the students fail to communicate in English what they really want to, not because they lack ideas, thoughts and feelings, but because they are unaware of when and how these communicative tasks and acts are performed. Teaching English at the Post-Graduate level is a daunting task for any teacher especially when students have learnt English through "grammar method".

It is a well known fact that learners are not unaware of the importance of English in India. Most students are eager to learn English, some just for the love of it but others for the practical value in life. Given the status of English in India, it is not surprising that an overwhelming majority of students have a highly positive attitude towards English.

The fact is that the question of demand for English education both at school and university levels is closely bound up with the question of national opportunities in the fields of education, employment and business and profession. This unique status of English in India determines learners' perception of their needs and priorities.

Given that English is the language of international communication, providing Indian learners who are facing rapid internationalization with appropriate proficiency in English is a pressing task for teachers. Most Indian learners have their only real contact with English in schools and colleges, and as a result learning English is more likely to be an academic exercise.

Many learners, at English language institutes, even after instruction in the language from 6 to 22 years, still cannot comprehend or compose many English sentences and fail to read, write or speak with proper fluency

## 2. RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

This study is kindled by the fact that the students from English medium schools and colleges failed to achieve practical communication ability. When the students spoke, mother tongue interference of prosodic features and individual sounds were very noticeable.

The aim is to consider language learning as skill learning and language teaching as skill teaching. The oral tests to assess the proficiency of the students were administered to approximately two hundred postgraduate students. Some of the most popular tasks like, impromptu speech, role-play, interview and group discussion, were used to assess the speaking skills of the students. Further, a range of activities relevant to oral assessment such as turn-taking strategies, co-operating strategies, asking for clarification, fluency, sociolinguistic competence, vocabulary range, grammatical accuracy, phonological control and so on were administered. All tasks had duration of at least fifteen minutes for each student.

Four sets of questionnaire were designed to assess the following:

- a) Students' Social Background Questions
- b) Students' language proficiency
- c) Students' attitude towards English
- d) Teaching methodology

In the process of analyzing the data collected, the primary objective was to ensure that all categories of assessment should focus more on the student's success in conveying a message and communication rather than language accuracy. An analysis of the data revealed that students from English medium schools did communicate adequately in most everyday contexts by appropriately participating in the interactive sessions and by responding and asking questions, but speech was slow and hesitant and at times passive. Their knowledge of grammatical functions and range of vocabulary were limited to the extent that it prevented them from attempting more complex structures befitting their age and education. The researcher also found that the learners had high anxiety in English learning since, most of them lacked speaking practice in the target language both inside and outside of the classroom. This limited real-life practice and experience appeared to have eroded their confidence and weakened their willingness to speak. Moreover, they experienced a sense of panic when pressured into doing an English oral test or even just to speak in English.

The following checklist was administered to the students, both from rural and urban backgrounds and they were required to shade the bubble that corresponds to their answer.

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
<b>Home</b>					
1. My parents talk in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
2. English is spoken at home.	<input type="radio"/>				
3. I converse in English among my family.	<input type="radio"/>				
4. I engage in activities where English is used.	<input type="radio"/>				
<b>Friends</b>					
5. My friends speak in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
6. I attend social gatherings where English is spoken.	<input type="radio"/>				
7. I talk with my friends in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
<b>School</b>					
8. My teachers speak in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
9. The activities in my school are conducted in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
10. My classmates speak in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
11. My school encourages students to speak in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
12. The medium of instruction used in the classroom is English.	<input type="radio"/>				
<b>Media</b>					
13. I chat online in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
14. I send text messages in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
15. I receive text messages in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
16. I browse web pages that are written in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
17. I listen to songs in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
18. I watch movies in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
19. I watch TV shows in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
20. I read magazines written in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
21. I read newspapers written in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
22. I read books written in English.	<input type="radio"/>				
23. The information I read around is in English.	<input type="radio"/>				

Table: 1 Checklist to Gauge Students' Exposure to English Language

### Exposure to English Language

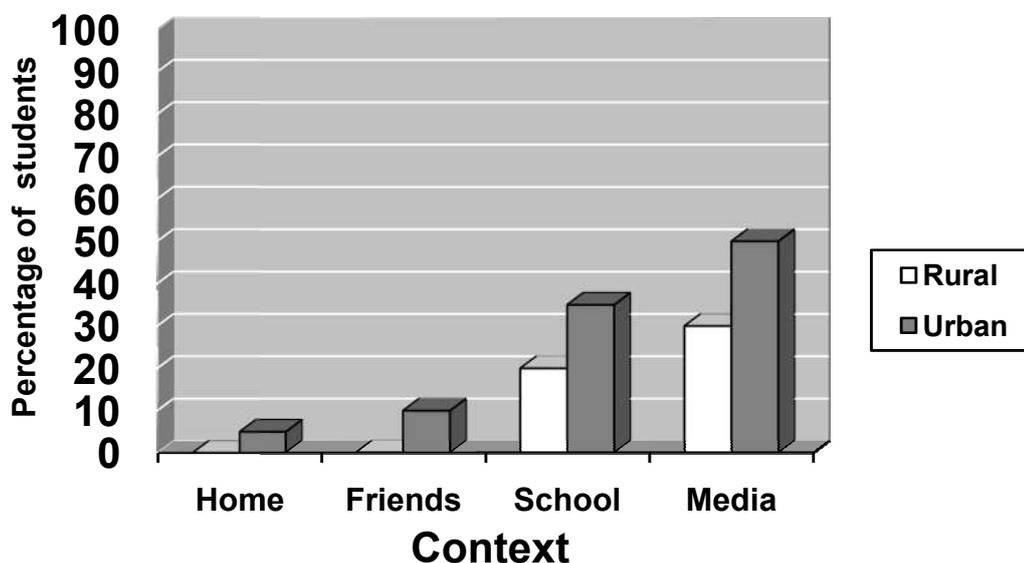


Table: 2. Exposure to the English Language

The results of the questionnaire revealed that the exposure to the language in both rural and urban areas were almost equal. This is probably due to the reason that even though the mass media, English newspapers and magazines are freely available even in rural areas, the use of these resources is limited. One area of exposure where the researcher noticed that students from urban areas had a slighter edge is the exposure in school. More teachers in urban schools communicated in English and comparatively more activities were carried out in English in urban schools. But the researcher wishes to record that whatever differences that might be noticed in the level of exposure in rural and urban schools, the difference is only minimal.

### 3. TEACHER’S ROLE IN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Teachers play a vital role in the teaching and learning processes of students. They have the power to be agents of change and are empowered to become proactive in their students’ lives. Many teachers are trained to work with special types of students, including those in bilingual, special education, and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Teachers who are not properly trained can cause emotional and psychological impairment in students’ educational futures. With the increasing numbers of children who speak languages other than English in our schools, teachers need to be sensitive to the language and cultural needs of this population. It is a fact that teacher education and teacher beliefs are areas of great importance within the education of a multicultural population and a teacher’s knowledge is influenced by his or her experiences.

Teachers’ attitudes toward the learner’s language are an important factor in the teaching and learning process. Teachers’ educational training and the knowledge of a second language affect teachers’ personal beliefs, behaviour, and practices

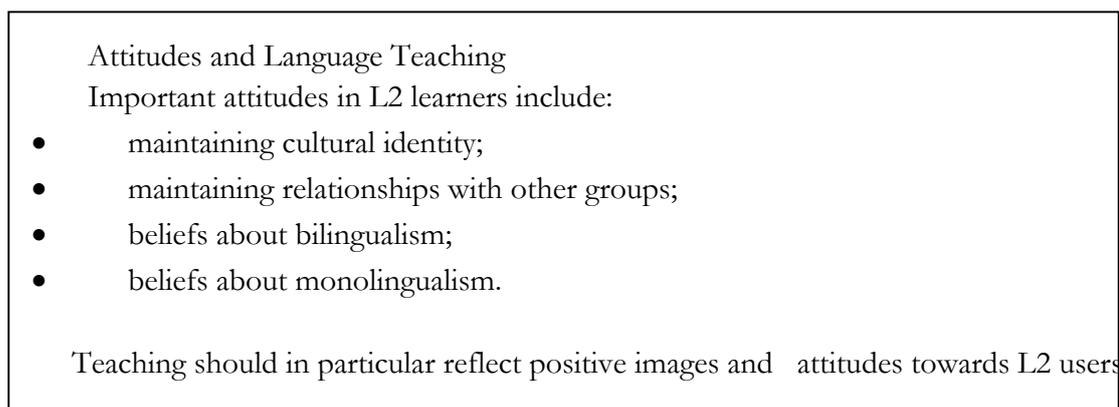


Fig: 1 Proposed by Vivian Cook in *Second Language Learning and Language Teaching*.(2001.)

Teaching English as EFL or ESL requires helping them with the double demands of acquiring English and mastering academic content. Teachers tend to get overwhelmed by the amount of work they have to do in a day. Thus, the complexity of teaching the academic content and the English language can eventually cause teacher burnout and frustration.

Many teachers of English endorse the view that the essential aim of English teaching throughout the Indian secondary school and colleges should be to develop the capacity of every pupil to use, understand and appreciate English. The emphasis placed upon this aim is justified by the fact that pupils' command of language contributes fundamentally to intellectual and imaginative growth, and also to its emotional and moral dimensions. Moreover, developing competence in language is important to the student both as an individual and as an active member of society.

Building students' confidence in their language abilities is an important role of the English teacher. Their confidence or lack of it turns into frustration and lack of motivation to continue their ongoing learning process. When the students are studying for educational benefit or for personal profit in places where the second language has no place in the society, teaching in the classroom is their chief or indeed only source of the second language. Whatever they know, whatever they can say or understand, is an effect of teaching. As students' confidence increase and both teacher and students are willing to foster shared decision-making in classes, there is more chance of them becoming self-directed and motivated enough to have input into the direction and composition of classroom activities. In such circumstances, teachers' roles as facilitators will be much more prominent.

In the teaching of English as a second or foreign language today, the old pedagogical ideal of the teacher as an authority transmitting knowledge to students "who do not know" is in disrepute. The ideal now is for a more democratic, student-centered approach, in which the teacher facilitates communicative educational activities with students. This model reflects in part the influence of communication-based theories of language acquisition. But it also reflects, in large part, the influence of different pragmatist and progressive education theorists ranging from John Dewey (1916) to Malcolm Knowles (1970). Such an approach stresses the importance of learner autonomy and responsibility for the learning process, and attributes greater value to the learner's experience and knowledge in the classroom. The two important responsibilities for English teachers as facilitators of learning are to foster a practice-based language study environment, with orientation towards what Knowles terms "more participatory experiential" techniques (1970, p. 45).

These include planning group work activities in discussions, games and role-plays, preparing listening, reading and writing activities that connect meaningfully with students' felt needs and with pedagogical aims, as well as allowing more spontaneous conversations to take place. In all of these interactions students have opportunities to discover and fine-tune linguistic habits.

#### 4. TEACHING APPROACHES

Learning to speak proficiently in a second or a foreign language does not merely depend on how to employ knowledge of grammar and vocabulary to assemble sentences. The ability to produce these sentences fluently in real time and adapt them to the circumstances is also an essential requirement for proficient speaking. This ability includes making decisions rapidly, implementing them smoothly, and adjusting spoken utterances according to the unexpected circumstances that develop during conversation. The distinction between knowledge and skill is crucial since dealing with learners' problems in each area often requires different pedagogical actions (Bygate 1987).

In recent years, many methodologies of English language teaching have been introduced in India, such as Audio-lingual Language Method, Community Language Learning, Communicative Language Teaching, Task-based Learning, etc. However, each method has its own advantages and disadvantages. When the methods are applied properly, they will be more efficient; on the contrary, if the English levels and the situations of the students are ignored, and just use one of the methods mechanically, the teaching will be less efficient. Regardless of the method, motivation is the most important aspect in ELT. Motivation has been widely accepted by teachers and researchers as one of the key factors that can influence the rate and success of foreign language learning.

Moreover, in India, most students are affected by a lot of extrinsic motivators. Most parents enrol their children in English medium schools as speaking in English is a status symbol and good communication skills in English is required for better job opportunities. These factors can just be seen as extrinsic motivation. None of them increase the level of true motivation that is desired in the language classroom. True motivation can be described as "the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (Gardner, 1985). It is important for the language teacher to recognize the significance of motivation and make good use of it in teaching practice.

The best way of teaching English is by creating new situations and the eclectic approach to language teaching is quite popular and widely accepted as an effective tool for teaching English for EFL. This approach combines techniques and activities from a wide range of language teaching approaches and methodologies. This approach has been successful because of the good results it has produced without pressurizing the learners and makes learning an enjoyable experience. It advocates that a number of methods can be used based on the level and proficiency of the students. Eclectic approach works well in a heterogeneous group and a class of students with mixed ability as it is a holistic approach to language learning.

The current study is investigating the teaching methods of EFL speaking in terms of their treatment of speaking as a skill and also as the knowledge of the language. Therefore, it is essential to recognise the difference between knowledge about a language and the skill to use it. In India, teaching of English is more or less content-based and not skill based. The four skills of the language - Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing have been generally neglected.

Teachers are required to teach only based on the prescribed text and students are given stock answers and they memorize the answers and reproduce them in examinations. Marks and degrees are awarded without any reference to the skills and abilities of the learners. At present, India has a very strict exam system which is in essence knowledge - rather than skill-based. Students' language competence is then assessed using written exam papers where neither listening nor speaking skills are tested. This has had a substantial impact on teaching practices since, overall, teachers find themselves teaching to a test rather than helping their learners to develop their basic language skills. The consequence of this is that, although many students manage to excel in their examinations, most of them do not succeed in using the language to communicate effectively.

One of the approaches that is most successful is communicative approach. This approach is the emergence of a learner-centred approach that emphasised the importance for learning of starting from the meanings learners would like to communicate, and working out how these meanings can be expressed (Bygate 2001).

Communicative language teaching may, therefore, be defined as an approach to language teaching where the target language is used by the learner in a range of contexts and for a range of purposes. It thus, emphasises the use of language skills in real settings (Carter and Nunan 2001). Nunan (1991) identifies several features of communicative language teaching:

- Learning to communicate is emphasised through interaction in the target language.
- Authentic texts are employed in the learning process.
- The enhancement of the learner's own personal experience is regarded as an important contributing element to classroom learning.
- Classroom language learning is linked with language activities outside the classroom.

As discussed above, the use of the target language by learners in different contexts and for different purpose should be considered as a key component not only in the communicative language teaching approach but for all approaches. This would provide learners with an opportunity to produce output as well as to provide comprehensible input for each other, which is essential for developing speaking skill. The communicative language teaching approach has been welcomed by teachers and educators within various EFL contexts (e.g. Wang 1990; Anderson 1993; Kleinsasser 1993; Nunan 1993). The success of communicative language teaching was reported by Wang (1990) in terms of oral competence in a foreign language school in China.

Liao (2003) applied a survey to investigate high school English teachers' attitudes toward CLT in China. The results indicated that among 302 participants, 94% responded positively toward CLT and were willing to practice it (Liao 2003). In addition, learners expressed positive attitudes toward a more communicative approach and negative attitudes toward form-focused instruction, particularly among those learners who began learning English at an early age. These findings confirm those of Huang (1998) who found that Taiwanese senior high school students believe that the proper way to learn English is through the use of English. According to Huang (1998), the students are consistent with current classroom language learning theory, which emphasizes the value of meaning based experience in the development of communicative competence.

Both behavioural approach and structured approach would result in adhering to the principles of reliability, validity and fairness. The researcher's intention was to gauge the students' basic abilities to understand and convey information, ideas, etc. and to investigate their attitude toward communication through dealing with everyday topics.

The researcher approached this research with a premise that all categories of assessment should focus more on success in conveying a message and communication rather than language accuracy. The researcher followed two approaches in order to design effective communicative tasks concerning the selection and adaptation of materials, looking in particular at the issues of attracting learners' participation and at ensuring their ability to express themselves in oral English with basic fluency and accuracy. The researcher acknowledges the fact that there is no standard scale to rate the speaking of the students despite the fact that achieving practical communication ability is the goal of English language teaching.

Learners come to the classroom with certain needs and expectations which they hope to fulfil. These expectations include social needs, such as taking an active part in group activities and competing with others, and intrinsic needs, such as the need to make progress, to satisfy curiosity and to perform a task well. The teacher should be aware of the learner's needs and should consider how these may be fulfilled during the time at his disposal in the practical teaching situation. In India for many years syllabus-designers have ignored the importance of satisfying the learners' needs. Very often the syllabus would be influenced by the administrators and community members with the result that neither the teacher nor the students would feel satisfied with the courses available in the educational institutions.

The term needs analysis generally refers to the activities that are involved in collecting information that will serve as the basis for developing a curriculum that will meet the needs of a particular group of students. Formal needs analysis is relatively new to the field of language teaching. However, informal needs analysis have been conducted by teachers in order to assess what language points their students needed to master. In fact, the reason why different approaches were born and then replaced by others is that teachers have intended to meet the needs of their students during their learning.

Richards and Rodgers define needs analysis as:

*"concerned with identifying general and specific language needs that can be addressed in developing goals, objectives and content in a language program" (Richards & Rodgers 1986, p. 156).*

Nunan (1988a: 14) states that for a needs analysis, "information will need to be collected, not only on why learners want to learn the target language, but also about such things as societal expectations and constraints and the resources available for implementing the syllabus."

If an ELT program has to be successful, it must develop proper criteria for identifying the participants and their language needs, selecting proper materials and designing effective classroom activities capable of making students communicative in both predictable and unpredictable needs. This involves a step-by-step process of defining and redefining learning objectives as clearly envisaged in the following diagram. The nine steps in Figure 2 indicate the complexity that goes into designing courses which are need-based. They are interactive in nature as all of them are essential in making learning meaningful in the classroom.

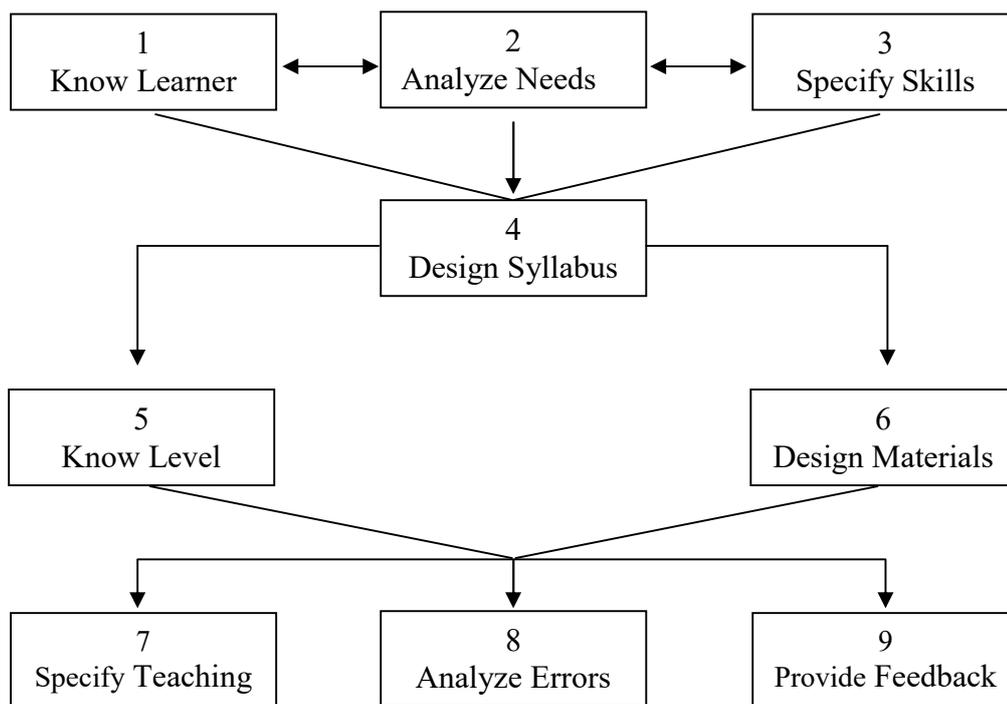


Fig. 2. Needs Analysis

The students belonging to these disciplines had language needs which could not be satisfied by the courses offered in the colleges. The students were of the opinion that the present syllabi do not prepare them for 'speaking skills' which in their opinion is their primary need. From their responses to their present and future needs and what their present needs actually are, the syllabus and the teaching methodology did little to improve their speaking skills, be it in school or college. It is obvious that to a large extent that any course designed to improve the communication skills of the students must strike a balance between learners' present and future needs and between their actual needs and needs as perceived by them. Without such a blend it may be impossible to motivate them to learn.

On cross-checking the responses to various items, even the students who feel that they already know enough English still require the help of teachers to speak intelligibly. They need help to speak even on simple topics about their personal lives and their preferences. The students totally lack the ability to face complex situations, where a high degree of formal language would be needed, like interviews, debates, group discussions and in drafting official and business communications.

The researcher found a very strong correlation between learners' present level of achievement in English and their own perception of their need for help from the teacher of English. It is also evident that for the majority of the students, the most pressing present needs are speaking fluently in English, while their future needs relate to their success in interviews and professional lives. Students wish their teachers to help them primarily with speaking as they are very much aware of their deficiencies in speaking and they are extremely keen to remedy this situation.

Although much effort has been made to improve the teaching of English in India, the traditional grammar-translation method, careful explanation of word meaning and usage followed by drilling and mechanical exercises are still widely used in many contexts all over the country.

However, during the last decade, a shift toward more communicative approaches of second language teaching around the world has led to a change in instructional styles allotting more classroom time for students to actively communicate with one another. Though this is a welcome change, an eclectic approach to language teaching will fulfil the needs of the language learners, as communicative approach is one of the components of eclectic approach.

The English teachers acknowledge that the essential aim of English teaching both in schools and colleges should be to develop the capacity of every student to use, understand and speak fluently, accurately, with a sufficient lexicogrammatical repertoire for meaningful communication to take place. The emphasis placed upon this aim is justified by the fact that students' command of language contributes fundamentally to intellectual and imaginative growth, and also to its emotional and moral dimensions.

According to Richards (2006), the first step for planning EFL speaking activities is to determine what speaking function the course will focus on. The second step is to specify appropriate teaching strategies that provide opportunities for learners to learn each type of speaking functions.

Richards (2008) lists “three types of functions: talk as interaction, talk as transaction and talk as performance.” Each of these speech activities is quite distinct in terms of form and function and requires different teaching approaches.”

The main objective of activities for speaking as transaction is to provide the learners with opportunities to practice sharing and obtaining information as well as engaging in real-world transactions (Richards 2006). This may be achieved by employing communicative activities, such as group activities, information-gap activities, role plays, brainstorming, and simulations.

According to Richards (2006), interactional talk is best taught through incorporating features such as opening and closing conversations, making small talk, recounting personal incidents and experiences, and reacting to what others say.

Learners may be prepared for delivering talk as performance by observing examples of speeches, oral presentations or stories with the aid of video or audio recordings (Richards 2006). The learners could also practice delivering some of these performances in class. Thornbury (2005) provides the following activities for speaking as performance:

**-Show-and-Tell:** This involves asking learners to speak about an object of special interest to them for two to three minutes. Then, the other students ask the speaker few questions about the object.

**-Did you read about ...?:** Students are asked to talk about something they read in newspapers or heard in the news. They could work on this activity in groups rather than in front of the whole class. The students are told about this activity beforehand so that they come to class prepared. The most interesting story in each group can then be presented to the whole class.

**-Presentations:** Learners are first exposed to video or audio recorded presentation examples. Then, they work in groups, where they are asked to prepare a presentation about a certain topic (e.g. academic or business topic). They are next asked to deliver their presentation to the whole class.

Reading aloud is also a helpful activity for teaching students speaking as performance, especially delivering presentations. Proper teaching methodology can increase students' motivation. The teacher should be aware that the method he employs will have some effect on the students' motivation. For example, in the Communicative Language Teaching context, students' initiative and creativity are brought about as they deeply involve themselves in a variety of interesting and challenging learning tasks that require speaking, listening, reading, writing and thinking. Students work cooperatively and learn from each other. The teacher is a facilitator rather than a director and helps them in any way that motivates them to learn. This result is not only an overall motivational climate which further facilitates learning but also a harmonious interpersonal relationship between the teacher and the students.

The English reading materials should include a lot of interesting activities pertaining to practical current affairs, interesting anecdotes etc. Linguistically, English language learning has the purpose of communication. They will be extremely happy to communicate with others about things that interest them, they will be comfortable speaking and they would concentrate on the content of the topic and not on making errors. So topics such as sports, the policies of the government, celebrities and so on, might motivate the students to communicate. This can also stimulate their motivation to read widely. This purpose of using practical teaching materials is to arouse the students' interest to learn foreign language well. Furthermore, local or international news in the target language is very helpful for students to learn English. English materials from leading newspapers and magazines will be very useful and interesting for learners to read and discuss in the classroom. It is much better if the learners already know the information or at least understand the headlines, because it is possible to introduce some lexical items whose meanings may be inferred from the context. Teachers must always motivate the learners to use English when they discuss these issues in class not only with the teacher but even among the students.

Irrespective of whether teachers are native speakers or skilled second language speakers themselves, there is reason for thinking that as educated practitioners of the language, they have (or ought to have) a high level of practical knowledge in its pragmatics, registers, appropriate vocabulary use, and in its reading and writing skills.

They should also have the special ability to communicate English as "comprehensible input" to students; that is, to "rough-tune" their classroom language and reading materials to students' comprehension levels (Krashen & Terrill, 1983, pp. 34-35). The English teachers are exemplary agents in this process of language learning, especially in English as foreign language classrooms, where access to the target language outside of the classrooms is much more limited.

Teachers' grasp of the technical knowledge of a language gives added reason for recognizing them as such potentially exemplary, authoritative agents. Teachers need far more sophisticated insight into the implications of the language they use, and they should recognize the linguistic and conceptual difficulties experienced by students.

Teachers in all classrooms are expected to be knowledgeable and skilled practitioners, accountable for raising standards of achievement of all students in ways that will stimulate pupils' interests in learning. During the past decade significant changes have taken place in the field of language teaching and it has been acknowledged that the primary need of most learners is to speak fluently in the target language, in this case, English.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Communication is the imparting or exchanging of information by message or otherwise, and the effectiveness of this process is measured by observing its results. It is through language that meaningful communication takes place.

It was Chomsky(1965) who made a clear distinction between “competence” and “performance”. A person is said to be competent in a language if he applies his knowledge of the language in concrete situations. Moreover, communicative competence means competence in all four proficiencies - both the productive and the receptive.

The researcher’s impassioned plea has always been to consider language learning as skill learning and language teaching as skill teaching. The researcher’s teaching experience coupled with the outcome of the assessment carried out among the postgraduate students, had paved the way to gauge the proficiency of the students and was in a position to identify the difficulties of these students while communicating in English.

As mentioned an eclectic approach with a combination of CLT, TBLT, blended learning and other informal methods not mentioned by practitioners of ELT will yield good results. All the teacher needs to do is to make use of real-life situations that necessitate communication. The teacher sets up a situation that students are likely to encounter in real life. This approach can leave students in suspense as to the outcome of a class exercise, which will vary according to their reactions and responses. The real-life simulations change from day to day. Students’ motivation to learn comes from their desire to communicate in meaningful ways about meaningful topics.

With this aim in mind, English courses should be constructed so as to ensure that students engage regularly and at suitable levels in worthwhile language activities which have four dimensions. They use, learn and practice the skills of language, they experience and reflect on imaginative works, and they build up knowledge of important concepts in language and literature; in so doing they acquire attitudes of interest and concern for meaning in language. These skills, experiences, concepts and attitudes constitute the basic objectives of learning and teaching in English. In an age of globalization, pragmatic objectives of language learning place an increased value on integrated and dynamic multi-skill instructional models with a focus on meaningful communication and the development of learners’ communicative competence.

If the syllabus could combine all the above mentioned aspects, then, learners will be conscious of the structural or grammatical features of the target language, be able to associate those features to their functional usage, and have the ability to use both forms and functions properly for establishing meaningful communication. This, as a result, calls for an eclectic approach in which teachers working as controllers, facilitators, and/or assessors should adopt various roles and use a wide selection of activities ranging from form-focused tasks to more informal and meaning-focused interactions whereby students are led to converge purposefully and successfully with one another.

Commonly accepted perspectives on language teaching and learning recognize that, in meaningful communication, people employ incremental language skills not in isolation but in tandem. For example, to engage in a conversation, one needs to be able speak and comprehend at the same time. To make language learning as realistic as possible, integrated instruction has to address a range of L2 skills simultaneously, all of which are requisite in communication. For instance, teaching reading can be easily tied to instruction on writing and vocabulary, and oral skills readily lend themselves to teaching pronunciation and listening.

The teacher is generally considered as the chief source of knowledge. All successful teaching depends upon learning; there is no point in providing entertaining, lively, well-constructed language lessons if students do not learn from them. Adult learners have fully formed personalities and minds when they start learning the second language, and these have profound effects on their ways of learning and on how successful they are. Teaching methods usually incorporate a view of L2 learning, whether implicitly or explicitly. Teaching methods require the students to talk to each other because they see L2 learning as growing out of the give-and-take of communication.

To be successful in the classroom, aids must supplement the teacher's work and should be flexible in their application. The teacher may have access to the latest multi-media teaching aids, but this will be of little use to a teacher who lacks the know-how that they require or who does not have the time to set them in the classroom. Before using any aid the teacher must be fully conversant with its operation and application.

Teachers are not all cast from the same mould. Personalities vary from person to person and the list of desirable traits required of a perfect teacher is long. No one person can hope to possess all of the traits required. Perhaps some of the best results are obtained by teachers who are described as sociable, friendly extroverts. It is important to be enthusiastic about the subject being taught, to be something of a showman, to be knowledgeable and to establish a warm friendly atmosphere. Early efforts should be made to establish rapport. Approval for good work and prompting or coaxing for the strugglers is better than punishing or showing disapproval. Learners often have several teachers during the same day and compare notes about their methods, attitudes and manner. Teachers tend to forget this and then wonder why they have a hard time when other teachers have no trouble with the same group.

Knowledge of results of tests, questionnaires and progress is a very important factor in the learning process. Try to provide feedback as quickly as possible when required, because it is important that the learner knows just how well he is doing – quickly. It is important that evaluation is not something which takes place in a summative manner, at the end of six months or one year, but informal monitoring should be carried out right through the period of study.

Teachers should encourage their students to talk and write as much as is possible in order to get the best out of a given learning experience. Practice is one of the best methods of increasing a student's language store and developing skills in the use of words. This can be achieved by creating a rewarding atmosphere in which the students can attempt to put the concept being taught into their own words and are able to discuss the problem as they see it.

The effectiveness of any education system rests with the achievement of the students. To maximize the achievement, therefore, should be the goal of every teacher. Teaching is definitely difficult task, but despite the difficulties the teachers must not resist towards cynicism. They must look for and find incentives and rewards within the changing realities of teaching. They might wish to work with creative, hardworking and intelligent students but must understand this might not always the case. As Christopher Day (2004) says, teachers must possess a high degree of self-esteem:

*Teachers with high self-esteem know how to value both themselves and others . . . This basic sense of self-worth is internalized, deeply embedded, so it is not easily susceptible to any gross distortion by life events, however calamitous . . . .*

It is obvious that without a teacher or skilled language speaker who can present the knowledge to be experimented within a structured, graduated, and comprehensible manner, and who can guide, observe, and correct errors in usage, the students cannot learn the language effectively. Finally, without a teacher or other skilled speaker who can serve as a linguistic exemplar, someone whose example can be followed, a learner is likely to miss out on important nuances in language that can only be communicated from person to person. The scholar does propagate that in order to be effective, the English language classroom must always be teacher-centred and didactic. But at the same time, the researcher is well aware that the nature of second or foreign language acquisition and learning in a classroom setting, especially in India, is such that a teacher-centred approach cannot always be avoided in the learning process. This approach will be necessary intermittently even at later stages as students struggle with more complex aspects of the language. To become a competent user of a second language, a student must partake of a linguistic inheritance different from his/her own. The teacher facilitates the learning process in the classroom. Teachers in all classrooms are expected to be knowledgeable and skilled practitioners, accountable for raising standards of achievement of all students in ways that will stimulate students' interests in learning.

To sum up, the importance of English can be seen from the emphasis given by the Indian University Education Commission:

*English however must continue to be studied. It is a language which is rich in literature-humanistic, scientific and technical. If, under sentimental urges, we should give up English, we would cut ourselves from the living stream of our growing knowledge. Unable to have access to this knowledge, our standards of scholarship would fast deteriorate and our participation in the world movements of thoughts would become negligible. English is the only means of preventing our isolation from the world.*

The researcher advocates the adoption of eclectic approach to language teaching as an effective way to improve the communication skills of the students who learn English as a foreign language. The researcher based on this empirical study, recommends a learner-centred curriculum to enhance language learning in the classroom. The importance of designing and implementing lesson plan contribute to effective language teaching. Finally, it is imperative that the language teachers should be knowledgeable and skilled practitioners of the language being taught no matter what approach they practice.

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