

# Historical Perspective of English and Some Pedagogical Problems and Solutions in Teaching English in Sri Lankan Schools

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**Abstract-** The aim of this research article is to meet 2 objectives. One of the important aims of this research article is to provide information about the historical perspective of English in Sri Lanka. This article also aims to analyze some pedagogical issues and solutions in teaching English in Sri Lankan schools. Since the early 1950s, teaching ESL in Sri Lankan schools irrespective of socio-economic or regional facilities has been a major concern of successive governments of Sri Lanka. As the need of English speaking citizens is felt widely nowadays, the language policy of the Sri Lankan government which further emphasizes the adoption of the effective measures to enhance the quality of teaching still continues. English language teaching and learning styles and strategies are among the main factors that help determine how and how well our students learn a second language. Success of the learning/teaching process largely depends on a set of factors such as students' motivation, appropriate selection of the teaching approaches, methods, tasks and materials that are mostly determined by students' psychological characteristics such as learning style and type of intelligence.

**Index Terms-** historical perspective, Pedagogical issues, teaching and learning strategies and styles, Second Language

## I. INTRODUCTION

English was introduced to the island with the arrival of the British in 1796. In the course of time, the English language was firmly planted in Sri Lanka in a systematic manner. The use of English became supreme and pervasive in several domains of language use. Under British rule, English was the language of administration. It was the language of higher education and the most popular language of school education. The Christian missionaries were the first to start teaching English in Sri Lanka.

During the British colonial rule in Sri Lanka from 1796 to 1948, English was the medium of instruction. English had become an indispensable tool for higher education and for intellectual pursuits. English served as a ladder to high positions and without English, no one could have thought of any remarkable achievement in public life. After independence, the mother tongue was considered the best for one's education especially at the primary level. School children were given the privilege to have their education through Sinhala and Tamil. However, English has been one of the subjects of the school curriculum and has been the medium of instruction in the universities and other higher institutions. So the need for English

is still being felt strongly. The recent development in science and technology also demands a sound knowledge of English for bettering the prospects of our students and their services in the modern world.

So English as a link language plays an important role in social activities. Thus everyone wants to learn the English language. Especially in the academic domains each student has to plunge into the task of learning English in order to survive in the competitive academic and social entity. Consequently, the educational planners are taking a series of efforts to teach the English language among students in Sri Lanka. Although English is a foreign language, it is taught as a second language.

## Historical Context of English in Sri Lanka

English in South Asia developed vastly following the Colonization by the British. The Colonization began in South Asia in the sixteenth century and the process went on vigorously throughout the eighteenth century and the nineteenth centuries, as the British established their full political control in this region. The British strengthened their power in colonies and the English language also had a firm position there. Consequently, it created a language atmosphere where English L2 speakers emerged in a large number though their competence of the language varied.

The educational activities accelerated by the British Colonial rulers and the consequent influence of the English language over the life of the natives of Sri Lanka are matters of interest. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of February 1796, the colonial power of Sri Lanka came to the hands of the British. Many remarkable political and educational changes took place in Sri Lanka during the period from 1798 to 1805, when the Hon. Frederic North was the governor. According to the educational policies adopted by North, the learning of English language by natives was given much importance and motivation and several measures were taken to impart English education. Later, the missionaries and the establishment of private schools played a key role in imparting English education. Following this, on the recommendation of the Colebrooke Commission, English was made the medium of instruction in government schools at that time.

## Status of English as a second language

The sociology of the use of English in Sri Lanka today and sociological factors affecting the teaching and learning of this language are all closely linked with the country's modern history starting from the period of British colonial rule (1796 – 1948). The social value placed on the English language in contemporary Sri Lanka is largely related to the British education system which

for the first time introduced a European language to a minority of Sri Lankans.

Post-independent politicians of Sri Lanka introduced several changes to the British education system which had class and linguistic discrepancies. Their intention was to create an equitable system of education which would cater to all segments of society. Among such changes was the introduction of free vernacular-medium education in all government schools. Consequently, English shifted from being the medium of instruction to a subject in the wider school curriculum, i.e. the second language (Jayaweera, 1984, Rupasinghe, 1990). This shift in the medium of education in itself was not completely effective at replacing with vernacular languages in important social strata (Kandiah, 1984) (as cited in Sivagurunathan, 1993). Therefore, the demand for learning English still remains at a high position in contemporary Sri Lanka.

Teaching English as a second language to all Sri Lankan students at school and higher institutions irrespective of their social, economic or geographical background has been a major educational policy of successive governments in Sri Lanka since the early 1950s. This continues to be the declared government educational policy as in recent years more than ever, the country's need for English speaking citizens has come to be realized. A further goal of education in Sri Lanka is to equip students with necessary knowledge and technical skills required for the modern employment market. Teaching of English is also considered an appropriate means of achieving this goal. The English language therefore, has played and continues to play a distinctive role in the country's development.

### **Function of English language in Sri Lanka**

English is taught as a complementary language to ensure Sri Lankans benefit from globalization and other 21<sup>st</sup> century issues. The government hopes to make up for the drawbacks of general education that is provided in the mother tongue, through English, an additional language. English is meant to compensate for the limited background provided by the indigenous languages. In many countries in Europe, English is learnt because in the view of educationists, an educated person should know another language. In the European countries, they do not learn English exactly for the purpose we learn it, that is to compensate for the perceived deficiencies in their general education. Most of the European countries provide a general education through their native languages, but need English because of technology.

In Sri Lanka, all teachers of English may not be equipped to observe what English culture is. They may not have specialized in English in degree programmes. Therefore, they need initiation to a high extent into English life and thought for imparting a good quality English education, but not in a sociological sense alone. It is not English life and thought in this "sociological" sense that matters most. It is something of more importance. English is not learnt as a social accomplishment in Sri Lanka. It has a vital function to perform. It is questionable as to what extent it is appropriate to designate the role of English as a second language in Sri Lanka. (Walataru 1965:15). English may function as a second language in countries where it is learnt as a social accomplishment. In Sri Lanka, English has been the medium of instruction in most of the secondary schools for about

one hundred years. Presently English has ceased to be the medium of instruction in secondary schools. Therefore, the demand for teaching and learning English still remains at a high status in contemporary Sri Lanka.

Though English is no longer the medium of instruction in secondary schools, its powerful influence in education still exists. It is taught as a compulsory subject in all schools. The position of English is not that of a second language in the view of what the phrase usually refers to in European countries. English is in fact, a non-medium yet vernacular language.

In the past, in most of the rural schools in Sri Lanka, English was taught through reading of the alphabet. English was learnt as if it was the first language of the learner in the past. There was no special focus on spoken aspect of English. However, the student's spoken ability was satisfactory because together with the student's progress in the school she/he was exposed to an almost English mother tongue atmosphere. But today the situation is quite different. Students lack exposure to an English using environment. Consequently, their speech ability has declined sharply. (Walataru, 1965)

### **Teaching English in Sri Lanka**

Since the early 1950s, teaching ESL in Sri Lankan schools irrespective of socio-economic or regional facilities has been a major concern of successive governments of Sri Lanka. As the need of English speaking citizens is felt widely nowadays, the language policy of the Sri Lankan government which further emphasizes the adoption of the effective measures to enhance the quality of teaching still continues. De Mel (2001) noted that teaching English as a second language has been reinforced especially since 1990s with the aim of finding a solution to the Sinhala-Tamil ethnic conflict which has developed into a devastating civil war, causing a setback in the economic and social development of the country. Further, the educational policies in Sri Lanka are intended to provide students with necessary knowledge and technical skill that are felt to be essential for the modern employment market. Proficiency in English is believed to be an effective means of achieving this goal. (De Lanerolle, 1991 and De Mel, 2001). Thus, the role of English in the country's national development becomes very significant.

The outcome of the English language programme conducted in schools has been studied by educationists, linguists and sociologists since the early 1950s. Their studies reveal that the programme is only minimally successful even though large investments are made on it. This argument centers round two major facts. Firstly, according to the research findings, only a minority of the student population is successful in scoring satisfactory marks at the G.C.E (O.L) examination. Secondly, most of the Sri Lankan youth do not have the required level of English language proficiency in the private sector job markets (Karunaratne, 2003).

During the British Colonial rule in Sri Lanka (1796 – 1948), the educational system introduced by the rulers allowed for the establishment of schools known as the 'Superior Schools' which provided education in the English medium. (Jayasuriya, 1976). Those schools imparted English medium education only among those who were the economically privileged Sri Lankans. Thus, the economically downtrodden people were deprived of

the right of reaching a higher standard of life. In case of schools where the medium of instruction was either vernacular or bilingual, a fee was levied from the students who aspired to learn in the English medium or learn English language as a subject, (Jayasuriya, 1976). Thus, a link was created between the English language and the economic status and this link assigned a social position for the English language as the language of upper classes. This is still the case in contemporary Sri Lanka.

After independence, under successive governments the British education system got modified from time to time. They mainly concentrated on providing equal opportunities in education to all segments of society. Consequently, a free vernacular – medium education system was introduced in all government schools. English was shifted from being the medium of instruction to a subject in the school curriculum, i.e. the second language. Within a decade of independence, the status of English in Sri Lanka underwent a radical change. At the national level trade, commerce, international affairs, tourism etc. required the use of English. The domains that operated on a more local level, such as the education and legal system demanded English. For instance, the faculties of medicine, science and engineering in the national university system conducted courses in the English medium.

At the interpersonal level, some groups continued to use English within the home, family and social environment. In 1987, as per the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the 1978 Constitution of Sri Lanka, English was made a link language. The employment opportunities outside Sri Lanka, the sudden boom in commercial enterprises and establishment of factories and the adoption of modern technology stressed the need for an international language. Further, the ongoing war compelled the need for a mediating language. Subsequently in 1995, English was proclaimed as a national language (Raheem&Ratwatte, 2007).

### **English Language Teaching in Jaffna**

English language teaching as it is practiced in Jaffna Tamil society can be classified into three categories. The first and the foremost are the schools where primary and secondary education is taught to the students. This is the most important period in ESL teaching-learning activities “There is a period during which language learning must take place and after which a language can never be learned in quite the same way” (Judith Chun 1980 as cited in Sanmuganathan, 2009). The kind of ESL teaching and learning activities varies from school to school and is influenced or affected by various factors.

The second is the tertiary level ESL teaching in the University of Jaffna, the Jaffna Technical College and the Advanced Technical Institute (ATI) and Open University of Sri Lanka (Jaffna branch) are involved. The general expectation is that by the time a student enters the portals of a university the child has acquired enough proficiency in the language in which he/she intends to follow his/her higher studies and is ready to learn through that language. Though it is true of students following their studies in their mother tongue, it, unfortunately, is not the case for students following their studies in the English medium due to various setbacks or shortcomings at the pre university (i.e. the primary and secondary education at school) ESL teaching.

The third is the private ESL teaching Industry. There are quite a lot of ESL, teaching institutes, private tutorials or tuition centres and individual classes and home tuition activities aimed at teaching English. The number of private institutes or centres conducting English classes is so numerous that it is difficult to find a uniform system adopted in any of these institutes. Various types of English courses are conducted. They include Spoken English classes, ‘English with Grammar’ classes, Basic English, TOFEL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and IELTS (International English language Testing System). There are also workers English’ classes conducted by private and state departments from time to time.

### **Importance of English**

In recent years, English is more and more popular in the world. It attracts people due to the interestingness in its tune and structure. However, beside the tune and the structure, this language is learned and studied by a higher number of people with every passing day because of its two importances in this modern world: a mean to communicate and to create a greater opportunity for a job.

The first importance of English language is that it is a mean to communicate in the interconnected and interdependent world. Nowadays, English is called an international/foreign language and it is also the second language of many countries in the world. Therefore, we can realize the importance in communication of this language. When we know English, we can communicate with the citizens of most of counties in this globe, without any confusion in expressing our feelings and thinking.

The other importance of the language is that it creates a greater opportunity for a job. As we know, in this modern world, businesses are targeting at qualities of employees; and, knowing English is one of those qualities. Consequently, if we know English and are good at it, we will have more chances to get a job. Moreover, with an enough amount of knowledge in English, the possibility of promotion in position is even higher. In brief, we cannot deny the importance of English language in this modern world. This language helps us to express thinking and feelings, to talk, to exchange views, and to contact between person and person though wherever we live. Furthermore, in the world that English is considered as the main language, English is now taking an important part in the chance to take a job. Hence, we can predict that English language will continue to develop and bring us more advantages in the near future; and, maybe someday, English will be the only language in the world. There are several factors that make us to learn English Language to go through in the current time. First of all, it has international standard, that’s why everyone needs to learn English in order to get in touch on international level.

There is another factor that make English very important in this world is it is the easiest language of the world to learn. Many people think that it is very difficult and confusing. But the interest and the realization of its needs in our day to day life will make them feel easy to learn English. With good understanding and communication in English, we can travel around the globe. We get assistance and help in English in every part of world. Better you visit some offices, companies, governmental organizations, and other departments, and you will see the importance of English.

It is the technology that allows people to travel further and faster than ever before. It is the Internet that links people regardless their nationalities and countries they live in. And technology is also the reason why lots of business people are active globally and why more and more entrepreneurs are on the move than ever before. In this world full of the state-of-the-art technology, English serves as a uniting element in many situations, giving all entrepreneurs and small companies a better chance on the market and an ideal comparative advantage over those who lack the ability to communicate in this language.

### Developments of English Language Teaching Methods

Developments of language teaching over recent decades have been strongly founded on the notion of teaching methodology. Among these language teaching methodologies are grammar-translation method, direct method, reading approach, audio-lingual method, community language learning, the silent way and total physical response. One of the most recent developments in this field is communicative language teaching. In Sri Lanka, since the introduction of English to the school curriculum as a second language in the early 1950s, the direct method followed by the grammar-translation method was used for teaching English. The direct method teaches the target language in the target language while the grammar-translation method teaches the target language in the students' mother tongue (Mora, 2002, Skela, 1998). However, past experience shows that these methods have not been successful at improving English proficiency of Sri Lankan school students (Karunaratne, 1993). In its attempts to find a solution for this unsuccessful teaching situation and in keeping up with the global trends in the field of teaching English, the Sri Lankan Government has adopted communicative teaching practices in the school English classrooms since the late 1980s (National Institute of Education, 1999).

Communicative language teaching places its focus on teaching language 'in use'. Proponents of this approach, while emphasizing the importance of developing 'linguistic competence' in a learner, place greater emphasis on 'communicative competence' (Johnson, 1979, Widdowson, 1979a, 1979b, Wilkins, 1979b). Linguistic competence refers to knowledge about the basic rules of a language (e.g.: grammar, lexis etc.) which a person needs to know in order to use that language. Communicative competence refers to skills other than linguistic which helps learners to place their linguistic knowledge in the social world. For example, communicative competence gives the individual an ability to decide the best thing to say in a particular situation.

In achieving the above communicative objectives of language teaching, proponents of the communicative approach recommend several strategies to be used in a language program (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). The strategies are:

- **Use of a variety of teaching materials:**

The communicative approach involves three types of instructional material: text-based, task-based and *realia* (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Text-based teaching refers to the use of a textbook in the classroom for teaching and for classroom activities. Task-based teaching involves a variety of games, role-plays, simulations and any other form of classroom activity that

reinforces target language communication in the classroom. The final category of material, *realia* refers to 'authentic' teaching material such as newspapers, signs and posters in the target language. According to the proponents of communicative teaching *realia* is a vital classroom tool in the attempt to teach language 'in use' (Canale and Swain, 1980, Widdowson, 1996). In addition, In CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) content subjects are taught and learnt in a language, which is not the mother tongue of the learners. Knowledge of the language becomes the means of learning content, language is integrated into the content-based subject teaching, and this increases motivation to study natural contextualized language. Therefore, CLIL provides a practical approach to both content and language learning that improves intercultural understanding.

- **Appropriate use of the students' mother tongue in the classroom:**

Recent trends in the field of linguistics emphasize that use of the students' mother tongue in language teaching and learning is a linguistic human right of the students (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1994, Sridhar, 1994). Therefore, the proponents of the communicative approach have given due recognition to the students' mother tongue in their teaching strategies. Accordingly, the students' mother tongue is considered a resource in the language classroom and reasonable use of the mother tongue is recommended (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, Widdowson, 1979b).

- **Student-centred teaching approach:**

Communicative language teaching also involves a teaching approach that is more student-centred than teacher-centred. Traditionally, a teacher's role was to provide correct models of language and corrective feedback (Littlewood, 1981, Nunan, 1989). Communicative language teaching requires a shift from this teacher-centred approach (teacher as 'instructor') to a student-centred approach (teacher as 'facilitator of learning'). A teacher is expected to be willing to put his/her students' learning needs ahead of his/her own behaviour (Brumfit, 1984, Savignon, 1991). Hence it is expected that the students would be allowed to take an active role in the language classroom.

### Classroom Activities and the Use of the Mother Tongue

The communicative approach involves a range of classroom activities as a source of language practice for students. Such classroom activities, it is argued, should have some 'missing information' that needs to be acquired by communicating with another person (Johnson, 1979). These activities are broadly divided into two categories; namely 'pre-communicative' and 'communicative' (Littlewood, 1981). Pre-communicative activities include grammar and quasi-communicative activities (such as drills and role plays) that are required for subsequent communicative activities. Communicative activities engage students in actual communication with others. All activities observed in this study stopped at the pre-communicative stage without moving on to the communicative stage.

The most common type of tasks observed in this study was 'meaning-focused'. These are activities that engage learners in understanding, extending or conveying meaning by handling

their linguistic (grammar) knowledge as demanded by the situation (Prabhu, 1987). Within meaning-focused activities is a sub-category identified as 'information-gap' activities that require learners to 'transfer' information from one person to another (Prabhu, 1987). The information-gap activities mainly took the form of oral or written comprehension questions related to a text or role-play in the textbook.

Information-gap activities, though common, were not of the nature indicated by communicative language teaching. That is, the information that was exchanged was not 'unknown' to either students or teachers and therefore, 'doubt', the essence of information gap activities (Johnson, 1979), was non-existent. The information has already been read in the classroom. Consequently, the information required by a particular comprehension question could be picked up from the textbook. Such questions granted limited opportunities for students to engage in independent language production.

As far as teaching English to Tamil students is concerned, the teachers' and students' excessive dependency on the mother tongue is another problem related to the classroom activities. Both students and teachers tend to revert to the mother tongue very often in the classroom obstructing the oral communicative objectives of classroom activities. Teachers differ in the extent of mother tongue usage in the classroom. Some teachers do almost all their lessons in English while others resorted to Tamil when they think it to be easier for them and students. The use of the mother tongue by teachers seems to fulfill two classroom requirements. Firstly, they use Tamil in any teaching situations that seem difficult for them to handle in English.

During situations such as the above, the mother tongue is not used as a resource to help students but more as a resource to make the 'teachers' job easier' (Skela, 1998). Such instances also suggest problems related to teacher's English proficiency. Secondly, teachers use Tamil to explain grammar and to explain instructions to classroom tasks. These can be considered situations of using mother tongue as a resource to improve students' target language comprehension.

All students, irrespective of their English fluency, prefer to speak in Tamil with each other during classroom activities or when interacting socially. The teachers do not seem to mind this as long as the students appear engaged in learning activities assigned to them. Similarly, the majority of students (except the students who were fluent in English) use Tamil in all their interactions with the teacher. These students speak in English with the teacher only for answering a comprehension question related to a lesson. Therefore, the majority of students show signs of reluctance or shyness to speak in English in the classroom. This may have been due to a lack of confidence. Evidence of such a lack of confidence and its inhibiting effects has been a recurrent observation in language classes. Students' lack of confidence is most noticeable when they are reluctant to even 'read out' something in English from the textbook.

Proponents of the communicative approach recommend the use of pair or group work as a strategy for making students communicate in the target language (Pica, 1988, 1996). But research has revealed that the tendency shown by students to revert to the mother tongue hinders the communicative objectives of such group activities (Holliday, 1994). Another problem with group activities, as pointed out by Pica (1988), is the tendency for

the entire group to depend on one fluent student to find the answer for the activity. For example, at times one student in the group was seen working out and writing the answer on behalf of the group. Both these factors are consequences of students' lack of English fluency and confidence.

### **The Role of the Teacher**

The communicative approach involves a teaching strategy that is less dominated by the teacher, providing opportunities for students to contribute to what they learn and how they learn it (Nunan, 1989). It has been argued that such a student-centred approach would lead to a friendly and supportive learning environment that minimizes classroom anxiety for students (Littlewood, 1984). In the schools, this communicative principle had been adapted to suit the Sri Lankan teacher-student requirements. All teachers are found to be 'traditional teachers'. Here, the word 'traditional' denotes the dominant role taken by teachers within the classroom (Nunan, 1989). Teaching is done mainly from the front of the class. In every classroom, the teacher does most of the talking. Student obedience in all classrooms means complying with the teacher's expectations. Most of the time, teachers teach the textbook and expect students to participate within the frame of the textbook. When teachers are not strict to the extent of forcing students to comply with them, most students drift away from the lesson without engaging in any activities. Therefore, teacher-dominance and strictness are necessary factors in these classrooms for learning to take place.

### **Boost Students' Self-confidence:**

Whenever the students do mistakes, it is the teacher's duty to give suggestion to them and have to change their negative beliefs and attitudes towards the mistakes that done by them. Teachers can discuss with 'students the value of language use even if it is not fluent and accurate' (Nation, 1997). When students are rewarded for successfully conveying a message, they will gradually change their perceptions about mistakes and language use. When the students learn the language, they can be awarded. But in spoken English class, the teacher must encourage them to speak and try to kill their shyness and stage fear. By boosting their self-confidence, the teacher can easily get success.

### **Creating English Atmosphere for Learning:**

Most of the students do not get the opportunity to speak in English because their environment brings them to speak in the local language so the teacher should support them to speak in English. They have to provide the atmosphere and make spoken English classroom environment as a speaking box. More opportunities for speaking English outside the class can also be created. Group activities encourage the students to speak and their speech should be recorded which helps them in learning language. They may also be asked to carry out and record interviews with foreigners who are visiting or living around. But here the teacher should be very careful about the group work because the students may use their mother tongue. In group interaction as a teacher, you have to introduce yourself and ask all students to introduce themselves. "When organizing pair work and group work, make sure that every student's participation is necessary for the task to be completed.

### **Attend to Individual Students' Needs and Ability:**

There are individual differences among students. All the students' knowledge is not same so that they may not perform as teacher expects, so the teacher should not expect every student to perform at the same level. Different kinds of tasks can be devised to suite different levels. Alternatively, task demands can be adjusted according to individual levels of oral competence. It is thought that once a student has a learning problem, it is best to allow the student to try to solve the problem on their own in the first place. When the problem is too challenging for the student to solve, support can be provided. The above list is made with the amount of support increasing from the first to the last solution.

### **Need for Good Interaction:**

Like other classes, there should be a good interaction between teacher and students in spoken English classes. Firstly teacher can make his participants to come out and speak whatever they can irrespective of the grammatical errors. "It is essential to concentrate on classroom interaction that goes on between and among teachers and students in order to gain insights and increase our understanding of classroom learning and teaching. Examples include how teachers ask questions and correct errors, what effect the type of task might have on learning, and whether reading aloud or silent reading in class results in more learning" (Allwright and Bailey, 1991). Here the teacher has to explain the answers in oral form. If it is in form of written form, there is, perchance, the learners may forget some structures in spoken form.

### **Use Simple Language**

Communication is a two way process. If the speaker speaks with complex language, the student may not understand it so teacher should avoid using long convoluted sentences which may work in written text where the reader can review the sentence several times to decode its meaning. However, this is not an option with spoken language and therefore it is difficult for students to review meaning.

### **More time Allotment for the Students:**

In most of the time, because of heavy work load, the teacher cannot concentrate on all the students but it is better to allot more time for the students. This can be done by giving students more preparation time. Alternatively, allow them to perform oral tasks without time pressure (Ellis, 2005) by giving them enough time to plan for and perform a task at the same time. When the students participate in language classes actively, they indirectly get self-confidence from it. Larsen-Freeman says that "students are more responsible managers of their own learning" (D. Larsen-Freeman, 1986). If the learners have the pressure, they cannot participate actively in language classes. Widdowson says that "When learners write under pressure, they may call upon systematic resources from their native language for the achievement and synthesis of meaning" (Widdowson, 1990).

## **II. CONCLUSIONS**

Success of the learning/teaching process largely depends on a set of factors such as students' motivation, appropriate

selection of the teaching approaches, methods, tasks and materials that are mostly determined by students' psychological characteristics such as learning style and type of intelligence. CLT (Communicative Language Teaching), having an aim to improve students' ability to communicate, has left a deep mark on teaching and learning of a foreign language and has been extensively used in classrooms all over the world, notwithstanding the criticism for having neglected the teaching of grammar with a consequent loss among students in accuracy in the pursuit of fluency.

In TBL (Task-Based Learning) is fostered through performing a series of activities as steps towards successful task realization. Since the emergence of TBL tasks have been widely used in language teaching, either as the basis of language course or as one of its components. The major criticisms of TBL concern its applicability to lower learning levels and the use of restricted language patterns. The important advantage offered by CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) is its potential for achieving bilingualism and improving intercultural understanding. Firstly, CLIL helps to broaden intercultural knowledge and understanding and develops intercultural communication skills. Secondly, CLIL improves target language competence and raises awareness of both mother tongue and target language. Thirdly, CLIL provides opportunities to study content and learn subject-specific terminology and hence prepare students for future studies and/or working life. Finally, CLIL offers new learning strategies while adding diversity and flexibility to existing methods and forms of classroom practice.

Each of the approaches can be successfully adopted in the English language classroom either in combination or separately. Students' needs determined by students' psychological characteristics as well as other factors influencing the learning/teaching process should be decisive in an approach selection.

Finally, achieving communicative objectives fully requires that classroom activities change to include activities which require teachers and students to communicate in English. The classroom characteristic most closely related to improving the frequency of oral communication is the kind of dominance and strictness exercised by the teacher. As students are comfortable in a strict teaching atmosphere, it is suggested that this strictness be directed towards making students communicate in English. Instead of focusing on keeping students quiet and attentive to the lesson, teachers should encourage students to speak in English.

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