CHAPTER 5

METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

5.1. Different Methods of teaching English

Method is necessary for language learning as it guides the teacher and learner about the proper way how language learning can be effective. This chapter is a prospect to the 'strength' and 'weakness' of various language teaching methods that have been in vague form time to time. An attempt has been made here to discuss the language teaching methods beginning from the earliest times of the Greeks and Romans to the present time (including the methodology advocated by the CIEFL, Hyderabad, India. The major methods discussed in this chapter are:

(i) The Grammar Translation Method

(ii) The Direct Method

(iii) Reading Method

(iv) Army Method

(v) Audio-Lingual Method

(vi) The structural Approach

(vii) The Bilingual Method

(viii) Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Student-activated Multi-skill approach advocated at the CIEFL

All these methods have discussed keeping primarily in view the context of English.

5.1. 1. Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

Grammar Translation Method (GTM) seems to stay evergreen for times to come in India in general and particularly in Silchar. This particular method changed its name in other way round. Once it was called Classical method,

as it was taught firstly in the teaching of the classical languages Latin and Greek (Freeman, 2000). Later on, in early 1900 century, this method was used for the purpose of helping students read and appreciate foreign language literature. Language teachers believed through the study of the grammar of the English language, students would be more familiar with the grammar of the Native Speakers. And this acquaintance would help them in the development of speaking as well as writing. This method has following principles:

a) Translation interprets the words and phrases of the foreign language in the best possible manner and ensures comprehension of the vocabulary items , collocations and sentences.

b) The structures of the foreign language are best learned when compared and contrasted with those of the mother tongue.

c) The method aims at training the student to write the language accurately by regular and systematic practice in translating words and sentences from his mother tongue.

But , as its practice did not have sound theoretical basis its efficacy became suspect because it was thought that what was learned was the rules of grammar rather than the fluency of expression in that language. However, even today when a hundred linguistically sound methods are being propagated, the grammar-translation method seems to have its relevance. The techniques of this method, it should be said, do achieve its objectives if the students are intelligent and interested in learning the foreign language. Secondly these techniques have the advantage of being used with large classes who listen, copy rules and write out exercises and correct them from the blackboard. In other words, it is one of the most convenient methods to use in big classes. Thirdly, it is easy to prepare tests along the lines of work that has been done in class and to assign grades to them. When the teacher is tired he can always set the class a written exercise. The teacher need not

necessarily be the master of the target language. All he needs to do is to stick closely to the text – book and discuss it using the mother tongue where necessary. The major strategies used in GTM class are:

→ Translation of a literary passage

→ Reading comprehensive questions

→ Antonyms/synonyms

→ Cognates

→ Deductive application of rules

→ Fill in the blanks

→ Memorization

→ Use words in sentences

→ Composition

However, the Grammar -Translation method has its weaknesses. It does not take into consideration all the four skills of language: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. It provides practically no chance for drill in the aural - oral skills. The spoken aspect of the language is almost completely neglected. There is great   deal of stress on knowing rules and exceptions but little training in the active use of the language to express one's own meaning even in writing. The language learnt is of little practical use to the student.

It is now felt by many pedagogues in the field of language teaching that wholesale translation as   a means of teaching meanings is not sound. The thoughts, feelings, surroundings and customs of one community differ from those of another. These differences are reflected in the language and colour meanings of words. For instance, there are so many words in English for which there are no exact equivalents in many of the Indian languages. Then, language is not picked up solely by rules and reason. There are other factors like imitation, exposure, interest and so on which matter. Dr. Ballard has rightly observed:

> "To speak any language, whether native

Or foreign , entirely by rule is quite impossible"

It may be useful to point out that the Grammar -Translation method has been the most widely practiced method of teaching a foreign language in our schools. One may, however, say that in the past few decades great many changes have taken place in English Language Teaching methodology in India. The Grammar Translation method stands discredited under the influence of new techniques. However, we should remember that when we adopt a method we adopt it for the practical results it is capable of producing in our language learning and teaching situation.

5.1.2. Direct Method (DM)

The direct method is one of the most widely known methods. It enjoyed immense popularity because it overcomes the two major defects of the GTM. The strategies used in this method are comparatively effective than the GTM method. Since DM has one basic rule NO TRANSLATION is allowed in the class, it shows traits through its name that direct target language only to be spoken in the class. Teachers who use the DM believe students need to associate meaning and the target language directly. DM was introduced by its supporters in France and Germany. Later this method was officially approved in both counties (Freeman, 2000). Morris says:
'Their common features were (a) emphasis on the oral language; (b) intensive speech practice, usually with training in phonetics; (c) the exclusive use of new language….' There are some basic strategies applied in DM ESL classrooms, for example:

→ Reading aloud

→ Questions and answers exercise

→ Getting students to Self-correction

→ Conversation practice

→ Fill-in-the-blank

→ Dictation

→ Map-drawing and

→ Paragraph writing

The Direct Method is one of the most widely known methods. It enjoyed immense popularity because it overcame the two major defects of the grammar Translation method. It substituted 'Language Contact' for 'grammar recitation' and 'language use' for translation. The Direct Method attempts to teach a foreign language ((in our case, English) directly . The learner experiences the new language in the same way in which he experienced his mother tongue.

The method had certain advantages. It provides, ample opportunity to the student to listen to spoken language which in fact, is one important factor in language learning. Since it lays stress on oral work the student improves his speech habits and this helps him think in the target language without aid of the mother tongue. The practice in spoken English strengthens has ability of self-expression and gives him confidence.

The initial success of the Direct Method blinded its followers to the many pitfalls inherent in the method. For instance, the Direct Method ignores the fact that second language learning is not like first language learning. The child is forced to learn the first language to express his wants. On the contrary,

In second language learning there is no such compulsion and moreover the degree of exposure to the target language has necessarily to be much less restricted in the second language as compared to the first language. The method is, no doubt, very useful for young learners in the beginning classes, but it does not work as well specially in higher classes. Then, it lays more emphasis on speech training and other aspects of language learning like reading and writing do not receive due attention .Thus it is an incomplete method.

The researcher has seen the main defect of the method is that the student is plunged into "a language bath "too soon with the result that he fees bewildered. He is, in fact, 'over -exposed' to the complexities of the foreign language. Secondly, its efficient handling requires competent teachers with good command of spoken language but in our area we lack good teachers with good fluency. And in our situation it is hard to get teachers who have perfect command of the language, particularly the spoken language.

However, with all its drawbacks the Direct Method enjoyed, as was said earlier, immense popularity in many countries including India. This was the method widely preached in all training institutions and it still enjoys a high reputation. However, P. Gurrey (1981) does not view it as a 'method'. In his opinion:

The method is, no doubt, very useful for the young learners in the beginning classes, but it does not work as well specially in higher classes. Then, it lays more emphasis on speech training and aspect of language learning as reading and writing do not receive due attention.

Above-mentioned basic strategies can be observed in other teaching methods as well. This method did not stay any longer, since USA government wanted quick results so that they could appoint multi-lingual persons in Arm Forces. In this context, direct method was replaced by audio-lingual method in order to get rapid result (Freeman, 2000).

5.1.3. Reading Method (RM)

Michael West was convinced that the total adaptation of the direct method was not suited to the conditions as they obtained in India. As far as back the West realized the importance of Reading in Second language Learning. He viewed language-teaching programme as a whole and gave each skill its legitimate place. Michael West (1936) believed that 'The initial stage of learning a foreign language should, we believe, be to learn to read it. He

further says that language teachers cannot produce successful learner in the school unless they put more importance on reading. His compilation of the New Method Readers paved the way towards a method based primarily on reading and it came to known as 'The Reading Method.'

Michael West further realized that, by and large most Indians required only the receptive skills of English. Besides, learning and teaching how to read and comprehend written English is easy and not affected by the size of the class. The Reading Method was well supported by the psychological principle that listening and understanding proceed speaking and writing.

To prove the efficacy of his method and to achieve his professed aim West (1936) prepared a series of Readers containing interesting reading matter with graded vocabulary. New words were evenly distributed in the lessons to facilitate reading with understanding . The aim of the series was to awaken in the students the desire to read more and more.

The appeal of the reading method did not last long. The method suffered the usual fate of any method: lack of adequately trained teachers who could not use it effectively. Reading alone is not sufficient to produce the competent second language learners hence it fails in to produce good learners.

5.1.4. Army Method (AM)

The Army Method, largely, is the byproduct of the exigencies of the Second World War. During the war, the American authority realized that their immediate need was to produce interpreters for communication purposes. So Army Specialized Training Programme (ASTP) was set up with the specific aim to train fluent speakers in many languages as they needed in the shortest possible time. This abundant contact with the spoken language was to be provided with minimum reading and writing. This method, which came to be known as Army Method, proved a great success due to the following features:

a)Small group of the trainees

b)Highly motivated students

c)Long hours of drilling by active practice with specially prepared graded materials.

Now, the Army Method which arose as a result of special requirement of the circumstances can not work with the same effect in the average classroom with average teacher, and average language learning and teaching situation. As the motivation and the full time devotion of the learner declined, the method also its effect.

5.1.5. Audio-lingual Method (ALM)

Audio-lingual teaching materials are more scientifically and systematically designed than most one-author texts. Structural pattern are more systematically introduced and practiced than in other method. Student motivation which is very important in learning is very high in audio-lingual classes. Students enjoy learning to use the target language. It gives them satisfaction to find that what they are learning is of practical use. GTM did not prepare students for target language, whereas Direct Method and Audio-lingual methods do. The target language is taught with systematic attention to pronunciation and intensive oral drillings (Freeman, 2000).

After the Second World War in forties and fifties foreign language teachers and educational authorities became interested in techniques used in the Army Method. Under the influence of the descriptive linguistics, new teaching material and methods were devised. William Moulton (1960), a linguistic scientist and foreign language teachers has described the characteristics features of the methods that developed under the influence of American structural linguists in term of the following five assumptions

    a) Language is speech, not writing

    b) A language is a set of habits

c) Teach the language, not about the language.

d) A language is what a native speakers say, not what someone think they ought to say

e) Languages are different.

Wilga Rivers (1968) examines these principles to see what bearing they have on the techniques of foreign language teaching as advocated by the pioneers of the Audio-Lingual Method.

1. Language is speech, not writing

The advocates of the Audio-Lingual Method emphasized the primacy of speech on the ground that all normal children learn to speak much before they learn to read or write. Its pedagogic implication is that oral presentation should precede written presentation. This shift in emphasis from reading and writing to speech led to a radical change in the type of material selected as a basis for teaching in the early stages.

2. A Language is a set of habits.

B.F. Skinner (1957) characterized language as 'verbal behaviour's Influenced by Skinner's 'Operant Conditioning' theories , the exponents of Audio-Lingual Method came to believe that like social behavior child's linguistic behavior is also modifiable. Language learning was thought of as the process of forming habits. In the foreign language teaching this belief has taken the form of mimicry, memorization and pattern drilling.

3. Teach the Language and not about the language

This assumption reflects the revolt of the Audio -Lingual teachers against the Grammar Translation method. For the Audio -Lingual teacher Grammar is a means to an end. As Moulton (1960) says:

"The real goal of instruction was an Ability to talk the language, and

Not to talk about it"

4. A Language is what its native speaker say, not someone think they ought to say.

This assumption represents an attack on the prescriptive school grammars. The expressions students learn from Audio-lingual materials are those that they would hear around them in the country where the language is spoken. In the text-books of an earlier period, the language used was artificially constructed to teach certain points of grammar, or was drawn from literary texts accepted as classics. Such language has proved to be little practical use in the day to day experience.

4. Languages are different

Leonard Bloomfield (1913) stresses the point that the learner must "start with a clean slate "because "the sounds, constructions and meanings of different languages are not the same "The major difficulties for the language learner are to be found at the points where the foreign language differs most radically from the native language . Therefore, the Audio-Lingual materials are designed to present the problems of a specific foreign language to students who speak another specific language. The materials emphasize and give special drilling in the major contrasts between the two languages.

5.1.5.1. Typical Techniques of the method:

Some common/typical techniques closely associated with the Audio-lingual Method are:

1. Dialogue Memorization (Students memorize an opening dialogue using mimicry and applied role-playing)

2. Backward Build-up (Expansion Drill) (Teacher breaks a line into several parts; students repeat each part starting at the end of the sentence and "expanding" backwards through the sentence, adding each part in sequence)

3. Repetition Drill (Students repeat teacher's model as quickly and accurately as possible)

4. Chain Drill (Students ask and answer each other one-by-one in a circular chain around the classroom)

5. Single Slot Substitution Drill (Teacher states a line from the dialogue, then uses a word or a phrase as a "cue" that students, when repeating the line, must substitute into the sentence in the correct place)

6. Multiple-slot Substitution Drill (Same as the Single Slot drill, except that there are multiple cues to be substituted into the line)

7. Transformation Drill (Teacher provides a sentence that must be turned into something else, for example a question to be turned into a statement, an active sentence to be turned into a negative statement, etc)

8. Question-and-answer Drill (Students should answer or ask questions very quickly)

9. Use of Minimal Pairs (Using contrastive analysis, teacher selects a pair of words that sound identical except for a single sound that typically poses difficulty for the learners - students are to pronounce and differentiate the two words)

10. Complete the Dialog (Selected words are erased from a line in the dialog - students must find and insert)

11. Grammar Games (Various games designed to practice a grammar point in context, using lots of repetition)

In Audio-Lingual teaching listening and speaking skills occupy the central position. In the early years learning is based on dialogues containing basic structures of high frequency. These dialogues are learnt by a process of mimicry and memorization. After the dialogue individual structures are taken up and pattern drills based on the structures in the dialogues become the main activity. Then, when the student has achieved a certain facility in manipulating a particular structure he is given a generalization about it. It enables him to see meaning in what he has been doing in drill. After learning the structures orally the student is encouraged to express himself in writing. The main strength of the Audio Lingual Method can be summed up as follows:

(i) Audio-Lingual teaching materials are more scientifically and systematically designed than most one author texts. Structural patterns are more systematically introduced and practiced than in other methods.

(ii) Student motivation which is very important is learning is very high in Audio -Lingual classes. Students enjoy learning to use the target language. It gives them satisfaction to find that what they are learning is of practical use.

(iii) In recent years there has been an increasing amount of criticism of the behaviorist assumptions underlying Audio-Lingual theory of language learning and teaching. If all a teacher needs is oral accuracy, why is a teacher necessary ? Albert Valdman (1964) has questioned the excessive emphasis on oral drilling in Audio-Lingual teaching. Dacanay (1963) has also reacted sharply against the mechanical drilling. "Drills are inherently unnatural contrived examples of the use of language. Humanizing these devices is left to the teacher. Unless the students are stimulated by variety, novelty, and a quick change of cues, they may be mouthing meaningless sentences and in this unwilling frame of mind, no learning takes place."

As a result of mechanical drilling the students fail to use the memorized materials in contexts other than those in which they have learnt them. To avoid this pitfall the students must be trained to apply what they have memorized or practiced

In drills in communication situations contrived within the classroom.

(a) Pedagogues today are making efforts to salvage Audio lingual approach. Chastain (1966) sees some values in the Audio-lingual approach but insists that there is a pressing need to make it more responsive to the students' intellectual needs. The methods of drill and pattern have proved pedagogically very sound. The Language teacher can make the drills more meaningful by relating them to real communication situations outside the classroom.

(b) The Second objection to the Audio Lingual method is that the techniques of memorization and drilling can be tedious and boring. A successful application of the method requires inventiveness and resourcefulness on the part of the teacher. He must always be alert to vary the presentation of material and put the students in interesting situations so that they can enjoy expressing themselves through what they have learnt. It also demands of the teacher careful preparation and organization of material. An average school teacher in the state of Assam cannot handle the Audio-Lingual method for teaching English without adequate training and without the aid of audio-visual facilities.

(c) The third problem is that a teacher has a major role to play here. By directing and controlling the language behaviour of the students he is able to create very "productive" students. He is the model for the students while learning the target language. He is the leader in the extensive drills designed to facilitate over learning and language habit formation. Very little use of the mother tongue by teachers is permitted. All the learning takes place by drilling in the target language.

5.1.6. Structural Approach (SA)

The basic principles and techniques of the structural approach doo not differ essentially from those of the direct method. However, the new techniques of teaching English as a second language as a great improvement upon the later. The structural approach is based on the belief that that language consist of structure and that the mastery of this structure is more important than the acquisition of vocabulary (Freeman 2000). The selection of the structure to be taught depends on the ability of the average students, his age, the time devoted to the teaching of English, the capacity of the teachers and availability of the equipment.

The Structural Approach is based on the belief that language consists of 'structures' and that the mastery of these structures is more important than the acquisition of vocabulary. These structures are carefully graded in terms of both meaning and form. Only one meaning of a word is taught at a time and is established by practice before another meaning is taught. Structures are so graded that each structure follows naturally from the one immediately Preceding or can be built upon structures already learnt . The students are thoroughly drilled in the graded structures by means of the substitution table technique or oral work.

The most important contribution of this approach is in (a) selecting the most essential ingredients (structures and vocabulary) of English language for teaching practices (b) arranging the teaching items in the order of teaching (c) emphasizing the pupils' activity rather than the activity of the teacher . Thus, the Structural Approach combines within it the strengths of oral method, the drill method and the situational approach. The natural way to teach a language is to teach it in situations. Items of vocabulary and structures are taught in appropriate situations.

The selection of the structure to be taught is made on the following principles

a) Usefulness: Since one aim is to impart only working knowledge of English to the pupils, we should teach only those structures which occur more frequently than others.

b) Productivity: Some structures are productive i.e., other structure can be built on them. Consider the two sentence pattern: 'Mr. Lal is here' and 'Here is Mr. Lal. The former pattern is productive because we can have many sentences from it, such as 'He is here', but we can not have any such sentences from the later. We can not say 'Here is he'. So one structure is more productive than other because it helps in building other structure.

c) Simplicity: the simplicity of the structure depends on its form and meaning. The structure 'I am playing' is simpler than the structure 'The patient had died before the doctor came'. The simpler structure is preferred to the more complicated one.

d) Teachability: One structure can be taught more easily than other. For example, the structure 'I am writing' can be easily taught because the action which it denotes can be demonstrated. On the other hand, 'I play at 4 everyday' is difficult because it cannot be demonstrated in a realistic situation.

Admittedly, structural is sound. It proved an effective tool of teaching English as a foreign language in the hands of well qualified teachers, trained in the techniques of drilling. But the researcher has found that this is only an an approach and any methods could be used within its frame work. Most of the untrained teachers converted the structural approach into a drilling method which soon reduced teaching and learning to a mechanical process devoid of interest among the students' of secondary schools of Silchar, Assam.

5.1.7. Bilingual Method (BM)

According to William Mackey (1965) 'Selection', 'Gradation', 'Presentation' and 'Repetition' are the four cardinal principles of all language teaching methodology. The Bilingual Method embodies these principles. According to Dodson (1963) a good method should have the following features to promote teaching in the language:

1. It must be simple.
2. It must strike a balance between the spoken and the written word and accuracy and fluency.
3. Constant revision of what is taught and learnt.

4. A new method must offer a new approach to the application of the translation work.

5. The method must give the teacher opportunity to prompt inter-communication between him and individual pupils.

6. The method must be sufficiently flexible to cope up with various classroom conditions, the pupils specific, and the general abilities.

7. The method must ensure that the pupil is given the opportunity of having large number of contacts within the target language than he receives with present methods

The bilingual method is structured to satisfy the above listed criteria through the following principles

(i) Controlled, systematic use of students' mother tongue by the teacher.

(ii) The introduction of writing/reading early in the course of language learning.

(iii) Integration of writing and speaking skills.

The Bilingual Method scored a remarkable improvement upon the Grammar-Translation Method and The Direct Method in the second language teaching in India. The GTM aims at the accuracy at the expense of fluency, while the DM aims at fluency at the expense of accuracy. The Bilingual Method happily combines both and aims at the accuracy and fluency in the spoken and written word. The Bilingual Method has added a new dimension to second language teaching by making it possible for the quantities and qualitative acquisition of language skills.

The Grammar-Translation method conjures up a system of grammatical rules rather than an image of a real world. Further, the response is written not a spoken one. The Direct Method on the other hand establishes fresh concepts of those already existing, and referred to by the pupils in the mother tongue terms. The Direct Method, then, expects the pupils to associate the concepts with foreign language sounds without recourse to the mother tongue.

The Direct Method also advocates the postponement of the printed word to a later stage on the assumption that the process of second language learning is similar to that of first language learning. By the early introduction of the printed word the Bilingual Method helps the students develop correct meaningful imitation responses and consolidate sentence patterns more securely than those learnt without recourse to the mother tongue. Moreover, the early introduction of the printed word smoothen the transition from the spoken to the written word. In the Bilingual Method both the Writing and 'Speaking' are well integrated , The Grammar Translation Method aims at accuracy at the expense of fluency, while the Direct Method aims at accuracy at the expense of fluency, while the Direct Method aims at fluency at the expense of accuracy. The Bilingual Method happily combines both and aims at accuracy and fluency in the spoken and written word.

There are four steps of presentation involved in the Bilingual Method.

Step 1: Imitation: The students learn how to speak a small range of basic sentences.

Step 2: Interpretation: This step is to help the students to overcome the difficulty of welding together sound and meaning, and to switch rapidly from one language to the other.

Step 3: Substitution and Extension: This stage will wean the students away from the fixed sentences of the basic situation by widening the sphere of activity and introducing stimulatory concept chains.

Step 4: Independence production of sentences:

This is a creative process and the pupils are led to this activity by a gradual process through the preceding three steps. At this stage the students do not need a spoken stimulus either in the mother tongue or in the foreign language.

Thus, the Bilingual Method is not a method made up of brand new things. It is a happy synthesis of what is best in the other methods known to us and

modified wherever necessary to suit the objectives of the second language learning today. As Carrol (1961) puts it :

"But, then, in these highly advanced

Times it could hardly be expected

That a new method would represent

Anything more than a new combination

of procedures."

The Bilingual Method has added a new dimension to second language teaching by making it possible for the quantative acquisition of language skills.

Several experiments comparing the effectiveness of the Direct Method and the Bilingual Method conducted both in India and abroad have revealed that this method is most suitable to teach a foreign language.

In India, three experiments were carried out at the CIEFL, Hyderabad. The first experiment was conducted by Dr. H.N.L. Sastri of the CIE in the Kannada Medium School at the class IV level. His findings are: 1) The Bilingual Method is simple both from the point of view of teaching and learning. 2) The BM is superior to the DM so far as comprehension is concerned. 3) The BM makes it possible for practice and provides more active contact with foreign language. 4) The BM increases the rate and amount of learning in the classroom 5) the BM creates better attitudes in the pupils towards learning English. 6) the BM establishes rapport between the teacher and pupils.

Shri R.V.S. Murty research fellow, Central Institute of English, conducted the second experiment in the Telegu medium schools at the IV level and the third experiment was done bt Smt. Nalini Nagarajan, research fellow, Central Institute of English Hyderabad. All these experiment showed that the Bilingual Method is eminently suited to the conditions of classroom teaching and learning in this country.

Now whether the Bilingual Method would show the same impact on language teaching at the secondary level remains to be investigated. I suggest that an experiment to be conducted to assesses its efficiency at the secondary schools of Silchar Subdivision.

5.1.8. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The "communicative approach to the teaching of foreign languages" also known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) or the "communicative approach" emphasizes learning a language through genuine communication. Its instrumental aim of teaching is to make the students communicatively competent. (Freeman, 2000).

Littlewood (1981:1) argues: "One of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language." The "communicative approach to the teaching of foreign languages" also known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) or the "communicative approach" emphasizes learning a language through genuine communication. Learning a new language is easier and more enjoyable when it is truly meaningful.

The desired goal of CLT is communicative competence i.e. the ability to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately. We find that the meaning keeps paramount place in this method. Since the target of language teaching is to develop what Hymes (1972) referred to as "communicative competence". Dell Hymes is the originator of the phrase who coined this term in order to contrast a communicative view of language and Chomsky's theory of competence. In a number of influential books and papers, Halliday (1973) has described a powerful theory of the functions of language, which complements Hymes's views of communicative competence for many

writers on CLT (e.g., Brumfit and Johnson 1979). Canale and Swain (1980), they identified four dimensions of communicative competence:

-- Grammatical Competence

 -- Sociolinguistic Competence

 -- Discourse Competence &

 -- Strategic Competence

Communication Language Teaching (CLT) approach is currently in vogue and is actively promoted and taught by many secondary, higher secondary and colleges as the preferred methodology, in other countries. As Brown (1987) humorously put it, CLT, along with a number of concepts closely allied to it such as "learner-centered," "whole language based," "content-centered," and "cooperative," has become such a bandwagon term that without the endorsement of it "teachers cannot be decent human beings " In this connection,   Kasper (1997, p.345) points out, "in applied linguistics, models of communicative competence serve as goal specifications for L_2 teaching and testing." There are some typical techniques of this method of this approach:

1. Interaction between the learner and users of the language

2. Collaborative creation of meaning

3. Creating meaningful and purposeful interaction through language

4. Negotiation of meaning as the learner and his or her interlocutor arrive at understanding

5. Learning through attending to the feedback learners get when they use the language

6. Paying attention to the language one hears (the input) and trying to incorporate new forms into one's developing communicative competence

7. Trying out and experimenting with different ways of saying things.

The type of classroom activities proposed in CLT also implied new roles in the classroom for teachers and learners. Learners now had to participate in classroom activities that were based on a cooperative rather than individualistic approach to learning. Students had to become comfortable with listening to their peers in group work or pair work tasks, rather than relying on the teacher for a model. They were expected to take on a greater degree of responsibility for their own learning. And teachers now had to assume the role of facilitator and monitor. Rather than being a model for correct speech and writing and one with the primary responsibility of making students produce plenty of error-free sentences, the teacher had to develop a different view of learners' errors and of her/his own role in facilitating language learning.

The communicative approach is concerned with the learning of the target language. By making use of the target language, learners can acquire the desired skills rapidly and agreeably. So the use of mother tongue is restricted here.

5.1.8.1. Student-Activated, Multi-Skill Approach as a advocated by the CIEFL

Till recently there has no serious effort on the part of the schools/college and university departments of English to develop any kind of ELT strategy.

The secondary teacher of English does not normally follow any 'method' he does what he considers 'natural' which is, following more or less what his teachers did when he was a student. Traditionally, the teaching of English at the secondary level has been based on

    a) The study of the selected 'literary texts'

    b) Lectures on these texts

    c) Dictating notes to the students on the expected questions

There is also no evidence to show that the teachers made any systematic efforts to plan and organize their lessons before entering the class. The fact

that language is a form of 'activity' has all along been neglected. Language is a form of activity and one learn a language through activity. One learns to speak by speaking, and to write by writing there is no short cut to language learning. What really produces learning is the practice. There must be a provision for repeated opportunities for the learner to practice what he is learning through activity.

Therefore, the method advocated by the CIEFL has student activity (appropriate to adolescent students) as its first and most important element. The CIEFL advocates what we call 'multiskill' approach i.e. an approach to speaking, writing, reading and listening. And since 'reading' skill is most important in our country the 'multi – skill' approach places high premium on reading'. This priority is a result of the belief that in India English is needed primarily as a 'library language'. Courses in English then were to help the students {achieve competence in areas of language relevant to their specialties .Hence at the secondary level, the stress has to be given on cultivating the abilities of independent reading and study including the use of reference techniques . Reading (silently) with attention and comprehension is the main activity we require for the student and this forms the main 'technique' for use in the classroom. Such 'reading' activity should be followed by oral discussion and language exercise. In such oral activities the emphasis should be on comprehension, correctness and appropriateness of expression and not on phonetic accuracy. Oral activity is chiefly intended as a support for reading and writing. In the 'exercise' periods the students may be asked to read the content material other than the prescribed one and answer orally the comprehension questions on it. Here the oral activity might precede their answering the comprehension questions. After all the details embodied in the reading material have been explained to them by the teacher in simple English, the students may be asked to formulate their answers to

the questions put to them. This would force them to put down in writing what they now know well enough.

The usual argument is that 'language practice' and directed 'oral activity' is not possible in a typical English class where the number of students . Sometimes exceeds 100. However, large classes should not make us pessimistic about the 'workability' of language activities advocated at the CIEFL. One of the essentials of good methodology is the acceptance of actual conditions and adjustment of the method to these conditions. We must ask ourselves: What is the best that can be done under the existing conditions?

Jean F. Forrester (1972) in her book *Teaching without Lecturing* makes a strong case for 'Group Method' This book is devoted to the discussion of "the principles and problems underlying the method and its application to secondary classes…" It is rightly claimed that the 'Group Method' is one of the most profitable ways of dealing with large classes. Here is a brief description of how this method works in a classroom

The class is divided into small groups each consisting of about ten pupils of mixed ability groups. Usually language exercises and practice work are done in these groups. Suppose the exercise on writing composition. Now, this involves the selection of ideas and their arrangement. In this case the teacher may first ask the groups to list the points that they would include in their answers. The teacher then asks the groups to give him the points. These he writes up on the board, points out any omissions, clears up any difficulties, discusses briefly the order in which these should be presented and then lets the groups write their answers from this outline. Thus all the essential points are included in the composition. The procedure of collecting material on the intended composition will be the following.

One member of the group will suggest an opening sentence, and when this is approved by all it will be written down in each note - book. The second sentence will then be suggested and so on.

The CIEFL is in general agreement with Forrester's 'group method' but recommends changes wherever justified by the context of teaching. In fact, the whole of CIEFL thesis is 'flexibility' and not rigidity. The secondary schools teacher will be well advised to acquaint himself with this group method. Though he might have to face certain difficulties in the efficient handling of this method, he will gradually overcome them as the students begin to realize its usefulness in learning English. While the importance of 'student activity' in the classroom is emphasized there are difficulties involved in this. Some of them are discussed below:

First, students are often very uncooperative either because of their shyness or their indifference to English teaching. This handicap can be removed if the teacher makes constant and persistent efforts to make the classroom atmosphere uninhibiting and to drive home to the students that they should slough off their shyness if they meant to learn English. Secondly, most secondary school teachers get away with their responsibility by saying that the students are far below the expected standards. If the entrance competence of the students is lower than expected the teachers can and I believe should organize classes in remedial teaching to bring them to the desired level. It is the entry level of the students which should determine the manner of teaching. The teacher, is is necessary, should not hesitate to descend to their level and lead them, by easy stages up the language slope. Then, it is sometimes said student activity turns into indiscipline. But delivering 'learned-lectures' to awe the students into silence and such unproductive discipline is certainly no answer to this problem. 'group techniques' can prove effective if the teacher sincerely tries to organize systematically.

The following points emerge from the above discussion. They form three most significant aspects of ELT methodology which the CIEFL (1974) advocates:

1. The organization of teaching materials

The teaching materials should have the following qualities .

(a) The language used in the texts should be well controlled in terms of the entry – level and the terminal proficiency level of the students.

(b) The cultural content of the texts should not be too alien to be understood and appreciated by the students.

(c) The teaching materials should be lively and they should be lucidly presented

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5.1.8.1. 1. The Teacher's Presentation

The teacher's function is to prepare the student for the activity of reading. He has, first of all, to motivate the student to undertake this activity i.e. to put him in the proper frame of mind for reading. The Teacher should try to instill in the student a desire to go to the text and find out for himself what the text contains. A certain amount of curiosity has to be aroused and some sort of suspense has to be created. The teacher can write up some 'motivating questions' on the blackboard. He tells the students that the answers to these questions are to be found in the text, and asks them to look for the appropriate answers. Such ' before-questions' make the activity of reading more purposive by directing attention in advance to a particular set of facts . These are only a few of the activities that could precede reading. There are other ways too like asking the students to read ten to twelve lines and then answering the comprehension questions asked by the teacher. Here the teacher would clear up the difficult vocabulary before asking the students to undertake the activity of reading. These 'after- questions' will send the students back to the lines they have just read, to locate the answers to the

questions asked. Sometimes the students may be asked to guess the meaning of a particular word or a phrase from the context in which it occurs. It is important, however, that no single technique be used all the time without change as it would bore them and stifle attention.

The Teacher must see that all the 'blocks' that hamper the students' understanding of the text be removed before the students can negotiate the text. These 'blocks' may be 'new' words, 'difficult' syntax, allusions references and so on.

5.1.8.1.2. Exercise by the Students

Establishing the teaching item through frequent repetition is not enough. This forms only the first phase -the initial presentation by the teacher. This must be followed up by adequate practice and exercise. These exercises may be comprehension exercises, oral discussion following the reading activity, grammar exercises or written work. The procedure of presenting each of these exercises in the classroom is described below:

5.1.8.1.2. 1. Comprehension Exercise

In the comprehension exercises the students may, first, be asked to read a few lines which constitute a unit of thought and then may be asked to answer comprehension questions orally. These questions must be planned by the teacher in advance. The types of questions that can be asked are basically:

a) Questions requiring factual answers information directly available in the text;

b) Questions requiring answers to be inferred from the text;

c) Questions requiring the selection, arrangement, interpretation etc. of information available in the text.

d) Comprehension may proceed from the general to the particular, or vice   versa; there should be no rigidity here.

5.1.8.1.2.2. Oral discussion following the reading activity

This part of the teaching is very important as it is here that the teacher can promote stimulating language activity by suggesting ideas, providing cues helping them out with words they may be grouping for and so on. It is important, however, that the student be given the opportunity of expressing himself even though he commits mistakes.

Such oral discussions should come between the reading stage (which proceeds) it and the writing activity to follow.

5.1.8.1.2. 3. Grammar

Grammar teaching at the school level is mainly for remediation, revision and consolidation. It is not just pattern -practice: It involves illustration, discussion, explanation and so on. Here, comparisons with the mother tongue can prove very useful.

5.1.8.1.2.4. Written Work

Every lesson should include some writing activity be the students. Written work may include summering the main points of the text, précis writing, and compositions and so on. In the usual school situation teachers produces his own summery and dictates it to the students, who, then, memorize it. Here, however, the students should prepare the summery, collectively through 'group method' with teacher's help and guidance. Similarly précis writing and composition work can be done through 'group method' Properly used and adapted to the context of teaching these techniques are capable of producing maximum dividends or desire result. At all the stages of teaching

the 'learner' <u>the consumer of English</u> should be kept at the center of attention.

5.2. Method applied in Bengali Medium schools

The Grammar Translation Method is mostly used by the teachers of Bengali medium schools. They prefer to teach with this conservative approach. They are not in a position to use modern method like communicative language teaching. Some teachers, who understand the importance of the use of English in the classroom, try to communicate in English language but students fail to respond in a proper way. As a result, teaching learning becomes a one sided activity where students remain just as a passive learner. To make the teaching-learning process communicative, the teachers are seemed to adopt the Grammar translation method and thus they fail to develop the students' language proficiency which is the basic objective of teaching English.

The Bengali medium students have very little exposure to the English language. They get opportunity to learn English only in the language classroom. The rest of the time they are exposed to their mother tongue and therefore they have little or no scope to learn English except in the classroom. The language class of a limited period of 45 minutes per day is not enough for them to learn a language. Classroom observation by the researcher witnessed the same scenario where teachers accomplish the task of teaching English language by simply explaining the text in Bengali and by preparing readymade textual answers for the examinations. Again it has been observed that though oral English form an integral part of the syllabus of class X, the teachers hardly teach pronunciation, stress and intonation patterns of English and thus the students get little or no scope to develop their oral skills. While teaching grammar too long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given. Grammar is taught by giving out the

rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words. Students are made to understand grammatical rules and their exceptions, then the applying of them to new examples. Memorization is given prime importance. Memorizing vocabulary lists, grammatical rules and grammatical paradigms are emphasized. Little attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis. Translation of a Literary Passage to Bengali language is done. Composition is given lot of importance.

5.2.1. How it affects the learning

It is seems that the students are able to read and write English well who are taught in Grammar Translation Method, at the end of their years, communicating in English becomes a major problem for them. Paradoxically, when they go for higher studies at the end of that period, they are unable to compose a sentence of their own and lack communication skills in the target language. They are endlessly frustrated with their strange accent and lack of colloquial vocabulary, the constant stumbling through menial utterances. They are often found to have correct application of grammar/sentence structure but they are unfamiliar about their application in communication skills. In hindsight, they find the language learning process highly stressful and frustrating.

5.2.2. The method that should be applied, why and how

The researcher thinks that both bi-lingual and communicative methods can be more applicable to teach the students of Bengali medium or any mother tongue. Using bilingual method will help the students to understand the target language in a more appropriate way but unlike the grammar translation method they will get enough scope to use the target language.

The teachers will use L_1 in special circumstances for better understanding of the students but as the students are bound to use the target language, they are exposed to it. A combination of communicative method with the bi-lingual will help students in communicating in the target language fluently and proficiently.

5.3. Analysis and interpretation of data

All most all the students of the Bengali medium schools reported that the teachers translate the content in mother tongue. At the same time they also reported that their teachers give word meaning and question answer and assign homework. The 19.60 % of the students reported that their teachers ask them to read aloud and only 17.70% say that their teachers relate the content with real life. The responses of the students and teachers to the questionnaire are analyzed below in details. They were allowed to tick more than one option if necessary

Teaching practices	Total responses of the students	percentage
Content Translated into the mother tongue	150	100%
The content meaning explained in English	nil	0%
Does the teacher Gives word meaning and question answer	150	100%
Assign homework	150	100%
Ask learners to read aloud	46	19.60%
Relates the content to real life	27	17.70%

Table 9: Responses of students about teaching practices

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On adopted methods for teaching English 30% teachers said that instead of following a particular method of teaching English they prefer to teach their students using their own method as per their convenience sometimes mixing two or more methods. Only 30% of the teachers are well aware about the different methods of teaching English and they use them as per the need of their teaching. 40% of the teachers comment that due to the difficulty of using other method i.e. students' inability to understand the content, they have to teach in a traditional way. However 100% of the students believe that students learn more easily when they are taught in mother tongue.

Method of teaching	Total response	percentage
Yes, I am well aware about the different methods of teaching English and I use them as per the need of my teaching	3	30%
Yes, I am well aware about the different methods of teaching English but find it difficult to use and so use traditional method	4	40%
Instead of following a particular method I prefer to teach my teach my students using my own method as per convenience	3	30%
Yes, students learn more easily when they are taught in mother tongue	10	100%

Table 10: Responses of Teachers about methods of teaching English

It is clear from the above analysis that most of the teachers of English in the Bengali medium schools adopt traditional grammar translation method while teaching English. Most of the teachers explain the content of the text by giving meaning to difficult words translating them in vernacular language

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and finally by giving notes prepared by them. Quite naturally the learners play the role of a passive listener where they find no opportunity to expose themselves in the target language. Thus the basic objective of teaching English as a second language i.e. developing learners' proficiency in the target language is completely ignored.

It is also interesting to note that most of the teachers of Silchar Subdivision barely pursue any method systematically except Grammar Translation Method very rarely did they use other methods while teaching English.

Most of the teachers explain the content of the text by giving meaning to difficult words translating them in vernacular language and finally by giving notes prepared by them. Quite naturally, the learners play the role of a passive listener where they find no opportunity to expose themselves in the target language. As a result of it the fundamental aim of teaching English which is basically targeted to develop the learners' proficiency in the target language is remain silent.

5.4. Language Skills

Learning a language comprises of mainly four skills. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing (LSRW). The former two skills are known as oracy and the later two are known as literacy; both oracy and literary form linguacy.

Among these four skills, listening and reading are used as the channels of receiving Information. Thus, these two skills are called as receptive skills.

The remaining two skills, speaking and writing, are used as channels of sending information. Thus, these two skills are labeled as productive skills.

5.4.1. Listening Skill

Lundsteen (1979) "Listening is the first and foremost language mode that children acquire which provides the basis for the other language arts." Lundsteen further stated that " Listening is a complex, multistep process by which spoken language is converted into meaning in the mind" Wolvin and Coakly (1985) have identified three steps in the process of listening which are receiving, attending and assigning meaning. In the first step, listeners receive the aural stimuli or the combined aural and visual stimuli presented by the speaker. In the second step, listeners focus on or attend to select stimuli while ignoring other distracting stimuli. Because, so many stimuli surround students in the classroom, they must be attractive to the speaker's message, focusing on the most important information in that message. In the third step, listeners assign meaning to or understand the speaker's message. Chidambaram (2005) stated that Listening is a prerequisite to other skills of language. The activity of listening is not an act of just recording the speaker's utterances and repeating them as a tap recorder as they are. It is a process of making meaning out of spoken language. Listening involves:

▪ receiving the systematic sounds of the language,

▪ processing and constructing sounds into words,

▪ giving meaning to the words and getting meaning from the words received,

▪ ability to interpret and comprehend the speaker's utterances, etc.

Please refer page (131), where data analysis of the listening skill of secondary students of class X standard of Sichar Subdivision, Assam has been described.

5.4.2. Speaking Skill

Speaking is a more complex skill than listening. It is an act of creativity. In addition to knowing the language, the speaker must think of an idea he

wishes to express, either initiating the monologue or conversation or responding to previous speaker. The activity of speaking involves:

- the consciousness of the grammatical, lexical and cultural features of the language,
- ability to speak without grammatical errors,
- where, when, why, how, what to speak awareness,
- correct pronunciation and ability to present in understandable way, etc.

Speech is the first and foremost form of communication. It occupies a predominant position in enlightening the minds of the people. Information is understood and processed easily through speech rather than writing. Speech is a biologically endowed behaviour of human beings.

Speech is an activity. Whilst language is the structural pattern of system we use to convey our message in speech. The pattern of the language exists of words and of the structured relationship between words and phrases, which is known as grammar (Mitchel, 1984: 1). Spoken language has wider range of functions to perform than the written language. They start from casual spontaneous conversations ending with formal speeches and so on. Written language tends to serve rather specialized functions at the formal level.

One may possess mono-or bi-or multilingual potentiality. He may express his inner speech fluently through all the languages he knows. But, a monolingual cannot express his views other then the L_1. If he wants to become a bilingual, he should learn a language in addition to his L_1. The additional or second language may be learned in school atmosphere or in society where it is used in real communication. Learning/acquiring spoken mode of an L_2 is different from that of L_1 as said earlier. If an L_2 user has linguistic skills to steer the language fluently with the native speaker of that language, he may be considered as an actual speaker of that language, otherwise he is not. In the process of learning spoken mode of L_2, the learner

encounters difficulties because of the inter and intra lingual factors, language shock, cultural shock and so on. However, difficulties and problems are inevitable in the process of learning spoken or written mode of the L_2. Please refer to page (152) where data analysis of the speaking skill has been described.

5.4.2.1. Teaching / Learning Speaking

The development of spoken language involves the development of pragmatic usage in addition to the development of pronunciation, constructing words, phrases, sentences and discourses. The development of spoken language is not merely expressing the structure of language. The teaching of second language fulfills when the learner comes to know how the second language works in discourses. Discourse in learning of second language, plays a vital role. Barns and Seidlhofer (2001: 211) say that 'learning speaking involves developing subtle and detailed knowledge about why, how and when to communicate, and complex skills for producing and managing interaction such as asking question or obtaining in turn.' It is viewed commonly by the applied linguists that the second language is learned as the first language learning. The stages of the learning the speaking skill of L_2 are same as learning of speaking L_1. The problems encountered by the learners in the process of learning subtle, and detailed knowledge, show the gradual development of spoken language. The purpose of the learning second language fulfills when the learners use language with the real people for real purpose.
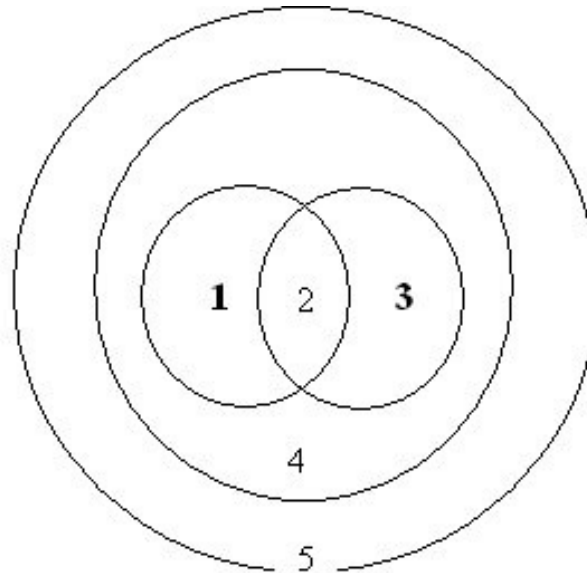
5.4. 3. Reading Skill

Widdowson (1979) says that "reading is the process of getting linguistic information 'via-print' through reading; the information conveyed by the

writer through the print medium is retrieved by the reader" Jenkinson (1973) adds a new dimension to this definition when he writes about reading. "Reading has been defined as an act of responding to printed symbols so that meaning is created. It has long since been recognized, however, that getting meaning from the printed page is too limited as a definition of reading. Bringing meaning to the printed page indicates more accurately the reciprocal process between the printer symbols and the mind of the reader".

Education of a child is incomplete unless he is equipped with the ability to read, to decipher, to interpret and to understand properly the content of a reading material. The intellectual advancement of a child is strictly limited, if he is unable to read (Yadov, 2006).

In self education reading is one of the good sources. A person can achieved all the news and knowledge, literature and science of world by reading. The knowledge of the world can be achieved through the gateway of reading skill. In ancient time reading was considered quite neglected bur today it is considered as most vibrant and a person's academic success is based on his reading ability.

(Weaver, 1988). "Reading is a transitive process in which readers negotiate meaning or interpretation. During reading, the meaning does not go from the page to the reader; instead, it is a complex negotiation between the text and the reader that is shaped by the immediate situational context and broader socio linguistic contexts" He further stated that the immediate situational context includes the reader's knowledge about the topic, the reader's purpose for reading, and other factors related to the situation. Broader socio linguistic contexts include the language community that the reader belongs to and how closely it matches the language used in the text, the reader's culturally based expectations about reading, and the reader's expectations about reading based on his other previous experiences.

The Reading Process

Figt 1: Reading Process

Adapted from Weaver, 1988: 30.

1. Reader; 2. Transaction; 3. Text; 4. Immediate Situational Contexts and 5. Broader Socio Linguistic Contexts.

5.4. 3.1. Reading and Reading Skill

Reading in general is ability to comprehend knowledge from the printed or written words. Chidambaram (2012) has mentioned that in the process of reading, the reader employs his reading skill. The degree of reading skill varies from person to person according to the linguistic competence and background knowledge he possesses. However, he further mentioned some of the important components of reading skill.

1. Recognition of the graphemes.

2. Recognition of the correlation of graphemes within words.

3. Recognizing word boundaries and sentence boundary.

4. Recognizing the meaning of words and its relationship in sentence.

5. Recognizing relationship between and among sentences in a discourse.

6. Deducing meaning of unfamiliar words

7. Inferring implicit and explicit information and ideas of text, etc.

Please refer to page (166), where data analysis of the reading skill has been described. The tested items are incomplete sentences, narrative, tabular, passage, word, telegraphic form and pie graph etc.

5.4. 4. Writing skill

Writing is a conscious, deliberate, and planned activity. A mono literate is a person who can read and write in a language and a biliterate or multi literate can read and write in more than one language. A literate person in a language can convey his inner speech through written mode. That is to say that one may be literate in one language and illiterate in another language. To become a literate in an another language he must learn the written form of that language. For learning written mode of second language, in addition to L_1, one requires an additional ability and time. For learning writing of L_1 one need not learn words and their meaning but their coherence. Thus, one can convert his inner speech into writing without any kind of hindrance if he has literacy skill in L_1 to correlate the sounds with graphemes and to sequence the graphemes into words, and words into sentences, cohering the sentences with meaning and ability to organize them in a readable manner. But, for learning writing of L_2 one requires to learn deliberately and consciously each and every linguistic element through instruction or proper guidance. Further, the learning experience of L_1 is different from that of L_2. In the process of learning L_2 writing, previous experience (that is L_1) gets in the way of learning of writing in all the levels of L_2. But for learning of L_1 writing there is no such experience.

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5.4. 4.1. Writing and Writing Skill

Writing is an outcome of a writing skill which refers to the writer's linguistic ability in making use of the mechanics of writing. Writing is permanent, but writing skill is transitory. The use of writing skill differs according to mental ability and language proficiency of the writer. A writer cannot produce the same kind of work which he already produced a few years back. The external experience realized by the five senses of writer and the intellectual delight attained by the five senses of the writer develops or undergoes some changes. As this is the backbone of the writing skill, the outcome also changed accordingly. As a writer learns new themes by every moment that new knowledge makes him to change his views and approaches while practicing the writing skill. This in turn, enables him to steer the language in the written medium in an innovative fashion. Due to this, his writing style assumes various shapes. (Sobana, 2003: 26) stated that the writing skill includes a number of sub-skills. These are:

1. Mechanics - handwriting, spelling, punctuation

2. Word selection - vocabulary, idioms, tone

3. Organization - paragraphs, topic and support, cohesion and unit

4. Syntax - sentence structure, sentence boundaries, stylistics, etc.

5. Grammar - rules of verbs, agreement, articles, pronouns, etc.

6. Content - relevance, clarity, originality, logic, etc.

7. The writing process - getting ideas, getting started, writing drafts, revising etc.

8. Purpose - the reason for writing, justification

5.4. 4.2. Testing Writing

Testing the learners' writing implies identifying the errors and the mistakes found in writing of the students. Error analysis is followed to test and

evaluate the responses of the informants to detect the processes involved in using the word, phrasal, syntactical, semantic categories of the language. Through identifying the areas of the errors, the areas where more concentration needed to be focused by both the teacher and the learners can be realized and relevant remedies can be suggested by which the difficulties and problems can be eliminated. Please refer to page (183) where data analysis of the writing skill has been described.