# CHAPTER: 6 SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

## 6.0 Introduction

Language is our principal means of making sense of our experience and communication with others. It is an inseparable aspect of our personality. The oxford dictionary defines language as 'the whole body of words and of methods of combination of words used by a nation, people or race.' Language can exist in spoken as well as written form. It is written or spoken expression. There is a limitless variety of language. It plays a prominent role in the preservation, advancement and transmission of culture.

As **Venkateswaran (1995)** says *Language is not a natural phenomenon. It is a creation of man's social needs. Hence society depends on language. Language is an extremely complex and highly versatile code that is used to communicate our thoughts, desires and experiences to other persons. There are also other devices such as gestures, signs, drawing, sculptures etc. but these are not enough to replace language*. In fact, language is a creative process with the learner playing a pivotal role.

According to **Rao (2006)** *Special needs to be paid in the study of English ...world knowledge is growing at a tremendous pace ...India must not only keep up this growth but should also make her own significant contribution to it. For this purpose study of English deserves to be specially strengthened. Learning of English may be facilitated in the upper primary or secondary stages considering that this would be needed as a 'library language' in the field of higher education and consequently a strong foundation in the language will have to be laid at the school stage.*

English language has made a place for itself on the international stage as a common medium for communication and knowledge. It has created a need to learn English language as an instrument for attainment of knowledge in various fields of study. Learning a language doesn't mean learning about a language only i. e. acquisition of structures and vocabulary. It constitutes the use of language in terms of acquiring language skills. Learning a language therefore means communicating. And when it is about the second language, it demands lots of efforts and practice. Learning a language is acquiring some skills-learning, speaking it, reading it with understanding

and writing it. Everyone uses language to communicate his/her habits and feelings to others in the spoken or written form. Language teaching as well as learning is a complex task. It cannot be denied that both the way of teaching and the teacher have an effect on the learning outcome of a learner. A learner – oriented teaching method may enable the learner to engage him/herself in creative and divergent thinking, problem solving, self-learning and exploring new avenues of communication. For effective communication, there is a need to develop basic skills of language. Nowadays one can't acquire language through lecture method only, students should be kept engaged in activities. The researcher being an English teacher wants to make an humble effort to develop effective and meaningful communication skills in the students through tasks based strategies and thus the study.

In Gujarat, after 2001-02, English was made compulsory for the primary students and in 2006 it was made compulsory in STD X. There was the structural approach up to 2004 to teach English, but after 2004 a new approach viz. functional approach was introduced in the teaching of English in the textbook form. Even evaluation in examination was transformed and in 2011 semester system was introduced in STD IX. Practical use of language is given 40% weightage in this new semester system. The textbook is more based on tasks as per new system of evaluation. In this new way, tasks have an important place in using the language. Communication in language is focused more through various activities and tasks. Language skills and exposure to the expression and presentation of the students are emphasized.

Today, effective communication skills have become a predominant factor even while recruiting employees. While interviewing candidates, most interviewers judge them on the basis of the way they communicate. They believe that skills can be improvised on the job; but ability to communicate well is important, as every employee becomes the representing face of the company.

## Communicative Approach :(Communicative Language Teaching (CLT))

CLT is a functional approach to language learning. In 1972, this language course was proposed in Europe. The main aim is to develop the communicative competency of the learner. His/Her need of understanding and expressing in the L2 is the main focus of this method.

The main objective is to produce effective communicative competency in learners. The focus is on meanings and functions of the language and more importance is on the learner and his/her learning. Language is acquired in CLT. The teacher is a facilitator in language acquisitions. It involves the learner in the learning process through problem solving, tasks, participation and interaction. All the four LSRW skills are equally treated. CLT involves many classroom activities like group work, pair work, language games, and role play and question-answer sessions. It is not confined to any set of text books. The learners are mostly introduced to the task based and problem solving situations. No single uniform method is prescribed. Different techniques are followed in the process of learning. Several roles are assigned to the teachers.

According to Hymes (1972), Communicative competence refers to the effective use of language in social contexts. Later it was supported by Wilkins (1976) who advocated a notional approach with the main focus on the communicative value of the language. He himself later gave this approach the label of the Communicative approach.

This approach is also known as the **Functional Approach** because it includes a syllabus using language for functional purposes. The entire focus of the approach is to teach the learners to use language for carrying out specific communicative functions. This approach is also recognized as the **Modcom Approach** because it is a modified version of the Communicative Approach. In fact, this approach is not a new approach as it has been adopted and not imported in totality from the concept existing earlier named the Communicative Approach. Though many features of the earlier communicative approach have been adopted in the recently developed Modified Communicative Approach, its framework differs a lot from the earlier communicative approach as the syllabus has been framed by integrating different perspectives of language teaching and emphasizes learners' affective involvement in language learning by creating anxiety free atmosphere, building their confidence and emphasizing what the learners know rather than what they don't know.

## The Concept 'Communicative Approach'

The Communicative Approach or Communicative Language Teaching widely known as CLT is a new theory or paradigm which advocates the paramount importance to the

communicative aspect of language in English Language Teaching (ELT). Widdowson (1992) in his book 'Teaching Language as Communication' defines 'communicative' in the following words: "Neither producing similar type of sentences in a random manner nor producing sentences describing some situations without any purpose is communicative."

Kurian (2006) quoted that "Communicative Approach is a set of principles about teaching including recommendations about method and syllabus where the focus is on meaningful communication not structure. In this approach, students are given tasks to accomplish using language instead of studying the language. The syllabus is based primarily on functional development (asking permission, asking directions, etc.), not structural development (past tense, conditionals, etc.) In essence, a functional syllabus replaces a structural syllabus. There is also less emphasis on error correction as fluency and communication become more important than accuracy. Authentic and meaningful language input becomes more important. The class becomes more student centered as students accomplish their tasks with other students, while the teacher plays more of an observer's role". The Communicative Approach to language teaching emphasizes the teaching language, enhancing communicative skill and the use (function) of the target language in everyday situations. This approach assists to set up a situation that learners are likely to encounter in real life. This approach provides the real life simulations that change from day to day and motivates the learners to communicate in meaningful ways about meaningful topics.

Berns (1984), an expert in the field of Communicative Language Teaching, writes that the communicative approach of language is of a very great importance, as a learner is generally required to use the language to communicate something. This means that s/he is generally placed in such a situation which motivates him/her to produce language, to use language, and once s/he is able to use the language purposefully and appropriately, s/he may be said to be a person who has been able to cultivate meaningful communicative behaviour. Thus the primary objective of this approach is to nurture the communicative capabilities and enhance communicative skills among learners. In English LanguageTeaching, especially in CLT, learning tasks should be designed in such a way that acquisition of the functional aspect of language can be

carried out naturally, but for this natural acquisition, communicative competence is the prime requisite, which has been discussed further.

## Communicative Competence

Dell Hymes (1972) has introduced this term, 'Communicative Competence'. According to him, the speakers of a language have to have more than grammatical competence in order to be able to communicate effectively in the target language. He outlines a theory of communicative competence and says that communicative competence includes a much wider perspective including all the aspects of speech i.e. phonetics, semantics and the others that render communication what it is. Savignon (1983) has rightly pointed out that Communicative Competence is relative, not absolute, and depends on the cooperation of all participants involved in the linguistic activities. The communicative competence is one of the essential capabilities of human beings and is always possessed by a person in an integrated form and there are so many competences lying within it, that integrated skills are always required for effective and purposeful communication. The aim of CLT is to enable learners to develop their communicative competence and to nurture communicative capabilities.

The communicative competence includes the following competences:

 (1) Grammatical Competence (Knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence- grammar semantics, and phonology)

(2) Discourse Competence (Knowledge of rules governing cohesion and coherence)

(3) Strategic Competence (Verbal and non- verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence)

(4) Socio-linguistic Competence (Knowledge of the relation of language use to its non-linguistic context)

## The Communicative Approach in the Classroom: Content and Task-Based Learning

The Communicative Approach is often seen in the context of the need of content and task oriented learning based on language functions. The concept of Content and Task-Based Learning was developed by Willis. Content & Task Based Learning involves the teaching of a subject matter or content in the target language. Content and Task Based Learning is responsible for the overall classroom atmosphere. Definitely, the teacher can do much towards creating a positive atmosphere, but the influence of the content and task- based learning is equally important.

As per Willis and Willis (2001) "Task- Based Learning is actually a more resolutely communicative application of Communicative Language Teaching principles. It advocates the use of a syllabus based on communicatively oriented tasks rather than linguistic forms. In Task Based Learning, language forms are not prescribed in advance and so learners are free to use any language that they can in completing the required task". Even though learners have the level of communicative competence in their first language, there is obviously a need to encourage the use of both communication and task- based learning in the target language. For a communicative approach to be relevant today it needs to integrate both the content and task- based learning and it is expected that the syllabus must have Content & Task Based Learning in its center. Thus, by considering the inevitability of syllabus, the next section has provided a broad view of the role played by syllabus.

## The Role of Teacher in Communicative Language Teaching

Several roles are assumed for teachers in Communicative Language Teaching. Communicative Approach expects the language teacher to attempt to teach a language in such a way that he can take his learners to their anticipated language needs not simply in the classroom but in the outside world. Considering the importance of the particular role of the teacher being determined from the view point of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) adopted, Vyavahare (2006) pointed out that the teacher has to give up his traditional role of 'Preacher' and Dictator'. He is expected to be democratic accepting different opinions and answers of students and providing them flexibility. He has to give up his earlier one way communication and

be a co-communicator. In this approach, the teacher's role is that of a facilitator – providing them opportunities to use language in the class. He is also expected to play the role of an adviser and a monitor to monitor their responses and tell them whether they are on the right track. The dominant interaction pattern in CLT class is student-student interaction. After his initial presentation the teacher withdraws and asks student to work in pair or group. Students explain, discuss, analyze, elaborate, give opinion, illustrate, and give feedback while doing the tasks. The teacher moves around, helping them with ideas or suitable expressions. The teacher does not interfere in their work, nor does he correct their errors when they present themselves. In 'Guidelines for Classroom Practice' Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) suggest that teachers in communicative classrooms will find themselves talking less and listening more, becoming active facilitators of their students' learning and act as an observer and referee or monitor. However, this does not mean that once an activity is in progress, the teacher should become a passive observer. His function becomes less dominant than before, but no less important. For example: if learners find themselves unable to cope with the demands of a situation, the teacher can offer advice or provide necessary language items. If pupils do not get agree to any point, the teacher can resolve their disagreement. His/her presence is an important psychological support for many learners, especially for those who are slow to develop independence. While learners are performing, the teacher can monitor their strengths and weaknesses. S/He can use weaknesses as signs of learning needs, which s/he must cater for later, probably through more control, pre-communicative activities. S/ He may also decide that in the context of a given task, the major error must be corrected at once to prevent it from becoming fixed in the learners' speech.

In a broad sense, the teacher is a facilitator of learning, and may need to perform in a variety of specific roles, separately or simultaneously i.e., an overseer, a classroom manager, a language instructor, an evaluator, a consultant or adviser.

## Task Based Strategies for Teaching English

Task-based strategies refer to the strategies which are based on tasks and when it is about language teaching, it refers to language tasks. Before understanding the meaning of task based strategies, it is necessary to know what language tasks and strategies are.

**Task:** According to **Prabhu (1987),** 'An activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from the given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process, was considered a task'

As **Nunan (1989)** says, "Task based teaching and learning is teaching and learning a language by using language to accomplish open ended tasks. Learners are given a problem or objective to accomplish but are left with some freedom in approaching this problem or objective." A task is defined by him as "an activity (or technique) where students are urged to accomplish something or solve some problem using their language. Preferably, this activity is open-ended; there is no set way to accomplish their goal".

**Nunan (1991)** outlines five characteristics of a task-based approach to language learning:

  i.    An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
  ii.   The introduction of authentic texts (teaching materials) into the learning situation.
  iii.  The provision of opportunities for learners to focus not only on language, but also on the learning process itself.
  iv.   An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
  v.    An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

He views the task as a piece of meaning-focused work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing and interacting in the target language.

Specifically, tasks can be analyzed according to the goals, the input data, the activities derived from the input, the settings and roles implied for teacher and learners.

According to **Willis (1996)**, a task is a goal-oriented activity with a clear purpose. Doing a communication task involves achieving an outcome, creating a final product that can be appreciated by others. Tasks can be used as the central component of a three-part framework: "pre-task", "task cycle", and "language focus." Learners get exposure at the pre-task stage, and an opportunity to recall things they know. The task

cycle gives them speaking and writing exposure with opportunities for students to learn from each other. The task cycle also gives students opportunities to use whatever language they have, both in private (where mistakes, hesitations, and approximate renderings do not matter so long as the meaning is clear) and in public (where there is a built-in desire to strive for accuracy of form and meaning, so as not to lose face).

As **Richards (2006**) says, Task Based Instruction or TBI (also known as task-based teaching) is another methodology that can be regarded as developing from a focus on classroom process. In the case of TBI, the claim is that language learning will result from creating the right kinds of interactional processes in the classroom and the best way to create these is to use specially designed instructional tasks. Rather than employing a conventional syllabus, particularly a grammar-based one, the advocates of TBI argue that grammar and other dimensions of communicative competence can be developed as a biproduct of engaging learners in interactive tasks. Of course, most teachers make use of different kinds of tasks as part of their regular teaching. TBI however makes strong claims for the use of tasks and sees them as the primary unit to be used both in planning teaching (i.e. in developing a syllabus) and also in classroom teaching. But what exactly is a task? And what is not a task? The notion of task is a somewhat fuzzy one, though various attempts have been made to define it. Some of the key characteristics of a task are:-

⇒ It is something that learners do or carry out by using their existing language resources.

⇒ It has an outcome which is not simply linked to learning language though language acquisition may occur as the learner carries out the task.

⇒ It involves a focus on meaning.

⇒ In the case of tasks involving two or more learners it calls upon the learner's use of communicative strategies and interactional skills.

On the basis of the above definitions, task can be defined as a kind of process to be carried out by the learners to acquire learning experiences and to use the language in life-like situations with the help of authentic materials and interaction in the classroom process of learning the language. Various activities and information gap activities can be used in the task. A task must be interesting and meaning-focused so

that the learners can accomplish it with full participation. The role of the teacher is to create atmosphere and facilitate the learners whenever and wherever necessary.

Task-based learning is advantageous to the student because it is more student-centered, allows for more meaningful communication, and often provides for practical extra-linguistic skill building. As the tasks are likely to be familiar to the students (e.g.: visiting the doctor), students are more likely to be engaged, which may further motivate them in their language learning.

According to **Jeremy Harmer**, tasks promote language acquisition through the types of language and interaction they require. Harmer says that although the teacher may present language in the pre-task, the students are ultimately free to use what grammar constructs and vocabulary they want. This allows them, he says, to use all the language they know and are learning, rather than just the 'target language' of the lesson. On the other hand, according to Loschky and Bley-Vroman, tasks can also be designed to make certain target forms 'task-essential,' thus making it communicatively necessary for students to practice using them.[ In terms of interaction, information gap tasks in particular have been shown to promote negotiation of meaning and output modification.

According to **Plews and Zhao**, task-based language learning can suffer in practice from poorly informed implementation and adaptations that alter its fundamental nature. They say that lessons are frequently changed to be more like traditional teacher-led presentation – practice – production lessons than task-based lessons.

**Strategy**: according to **Devaki (1998),** in general, the term strategy is defined as a planned approach to any task. Strategies are considered initiated mental activities like inferring, grouping, deduction and elaboration that trigger off the process of learning. These are generally used by successful learners when applied to language. They are known as language learning strategies. The characteristics of language learning strategies are:

⇒ They are either teacher or learner generated aimed at learning.
⇒ They enhance language learning as manifested in increased understanding, speaking, writing, reading and listening skills.
⇒ They are embedded in learner-centered teaching methodologies and materials.

⇒ They are either the learning process or refer to the characterization features of successful language learners.

⇒ They may be overt in form of certain behaviors or covert in form of mental processes.

⇒ They entail linguistic processing of information.

With this shift the term 'strategy' acquired importance in second language learning. Strategies can be varied as per the level of the students and with a particular strategy, different kinds of tasks can be designed to meet the demands of the learners. To make the learners ready to learn, a teacher can apply various strategies like- use background knowledge of the learners and tell them to perform a task of watch the snap or clip and recognize or listen and guess. Thus, strategies can be used to develop communication skills in learners.

## Status of English in the Modern World

English is the most important language for wider communication and most useful to study. Perhaps the reasons for the predominance of English can be found related to two important phenomena in the world that is the vast expansion of English through cultural and commercial influence in many parts of the world by the British imperialism in the nineteenth century and secondly with the economic influence of the united states of America in the twentieth century. The combination of political influence and technological superiority gave English an advantage to become an international auxiliary language of the world.

Today, English has been spreading around the world making itself the second largest language of the world. The importance of English as means of international communication is recognized by all over the world. Today it is difficult to estimate the number of people in this world who have acquired an adequate working knowledge of English. It is widely used all over the world as a first language, second language or as a third language or foreign language.

According to **Quirk (1985)** *English is a global language in ENL IT (English as Native Language), ESL (English as a Second Language and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) countries all round the world. The English language works pretty well in its global context; certainly the globe has at present no plausible substitute.*

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It cannot be denied that English is a world language and also a very important medium for expressing our views before any nation of the world. It is now-a-days an effective means of communication.

## 6.1 Implications of the Related Literature Reviewed for the Present Study

The review of related literature reveals that studies concentrate on various aspects of English language teaching-learning. They are oral communication, listening abilities and skills, writing skills in English, activity centered approach, Direct Method, Communicative Approach and Bilingual Method, communicative competence, Language Barriers, willingness to communicate, effectiveness of work-cards, difficulties in English Learning, communication strategies, grammar teaching and the usefulness of communicative language teaching strategies, partials in English conversation, the cognitive concept of game, agentivity of passives and inchoatives. Tools like listening test, PLCGT are used. Games, authentic materials, use of AV aids, conversation kind of tasks and work cards are used. Keeping in mind the new technologies, innovation in the method of classroom transaction and demand of the student-centered approach in ELT, our classroom activities needs changes in the way of developing effective communication skills of the students. For last 6 years, with the introduction of new approach no research work is found in this area. So this study can bridge the research gap and be a humble effort to find out the effectiveness of task based strategies for enhancing communication skills in English.

**As Paliwal (1999)** cited, *students mostly fail to communicate what they really want to do, not because they lack ideas, thoughts and feelings but because they have not been taught so far how and when these communication tasks and acts are performed. Consequently they are not able to communicate and whatever they communicate is enough proof that their communicative competence needs to be developed.*

It is also seen that with the change in the classroom instruction, motivational level and learning strategies a change could be brought about in the performance of the students. Some researchers like Kang (2005) found that there was a positive effect of strategies in English language teaching and supported teaching English language through different activities. Group method can also be helpful in English language learning and other development of oral skills in English language.

As the newly introduced syllabus in Gujarat State, from June 2004-05 was based on the Communicative Approach with respect to the functional aspect, a dire need was felt that more and more researches should be conducted to strengthen this area. Here it is worth to be noted that from the literature reviewed by the researcher in this area, no study was found conducted on newly introduced Communicative Approach i.e. Modcom Approach, Thus, by locating this research gap from the discussion held above and seeing the importance of the communicative approach, the researcher suggests the possibility and great need to develop and implement a strategy to enhance the communication skills among the students. Till now, few studies are carried out in the area of communication skills and tasks developed. So keeping this view in mind, the present study is thought to be carried out in Gujarat State.

## 6.2 Rationale of the Study

The communicative approach to language learning fosters the use of appropriate, positive learning strategies. Nowadays communicative language teaching and learning has become a salient feature in ESL contexts across many countries. And the adult learners, especially in the target language situation directly benefit from the use of communicative skills. In second language learning, good language learners employ a variety of strategies to improve their communicative ability. From the practical perspectives speaking is one of the most important aspects in dealing with communication skills, particularly in second or foreign language situation, as they enhance learners' confidence and fluency. The communicative approach implicitly encourages learners to take greater responsibility for their own learning and to use a wide range of language learning strategies

According to Gupta (2004), to language teachers, the functional approach seemed more promising for application in the classroom.

*A communicative approach opens up a wider perspective on language and language learning. In particular, it makes us consider language not only in terms of its structures but also in terms of the communicative functions that it performs.* Littlewood(1984)

For this the teachers must provide learners with ample opportunities to use the language themselves for communicative purposes and be concerned with developing

the learners' ability to take part in the process of communicating rather than with their perfect mastery of structures. According to UNICEF (1998) teachers' complete reliance on traditional teacher centered approaches was believed to be one of the major causes of school children's failure to acquire English as a second language.

Nobody can deny that our 21st century world is an ever changing globalization world. It is the fact that people move around everywhere as long as their lives go on. English, a very well-known language, is used effectively all over the world.

Whether we realize it or not, we are now living in an information and communication technology world. In this digital age, computers can be seen populating everywhere. Eighty percent of computer data are processed and stored in English. Much satellite communication use English. Even in many countries where English is a minority language, there is still at least one newspaper in English.

English is also very important for doing traveling business. As you can see most information that you have received from foreign countries are in English. English is spoken in large hotels and tourist attractions, at airports, and in shops that tourists crowd at. There are newspapers printed in English, and TV news is available in English. Tours are almost always available in English. Even in countries where few people speak English on the street, people who work with tourists generally speak English. As you can see, communication skills in English connect people to the world's understanding.

Communicating in English in our globalizing world allows us to become a successful person. It can allow you to understand people all over around the world, gain knowledge from new technologies, and connect your understandings while traveling from places to places. In my prediction, if more and more young generations learn to communicate in English, there would surely be no limitation in the globalizing world

"Do not evaluate their students in any way because the tutor's role is to help students, not to lecture at them or repeat information available from the teacher or textbook. (Harris, 2010).

A paramount aim of education is the social development of the individual so that he may contribute maximally to his society. The importance of oral language to the social development of an individual is obvious. The nuclear goal of our schools is to nourish and support the growth of the individual so that he may realize the endowments of his personal potentialities to their limits and contribute wholesomely to his society. The ability to communicate orally in effective fashion is essential if the individual is to participate in group action for the common good. This fundamental reason makes study in oral communication an important portion of the preparation of the teacher of the language arts in the elementary school and of the teacher of English in the secondary school

Effective oral communication skills help students to: improve their own academic performance; increase their employment options; enhance their subsequent professional competence; and improve their own personal effectiveness. Employers value good oral communication skills because: staff need to interact effectively and productively in, and on behalf of the organization; listening to and conveying information accurately are crucial; giving instructions and explanations clearly is essential; and engaging in constructive debate and contributing to meetings and committees are fundamental to the success of the organization.

Dhrol is a tehsil of Jamnagar district with 42 villages. Dhrol had a population of 23,618in 2001. Presently it is 74,943; Males constitute 49% of the population and females 51%. Dhrol has an average literacy rate of 69%,: male literacy is 74% and, female literacy is 64%. In Dhrol, 12% of the population is under 6 years of age. Girls' education is emphasized in Dhrol as there are two major contributions in girls' education 1. Shri M D Mehta Girls' High School managed by Shri M D Mehta Education Trust established in 1973 which runs courses from K.G. to B. Ed. and District Science Center, adolescent center, language lab, fitness center and 2. Shri G. M. Patel Girls' High School managed by Shri Umiyaji Education Trust, it is also giving priority to girls education and runs courses from STD VIII to B.Ed. Both the schools are contributing for the upliftment of girls in Dhrol tehsil. Being a teacher, the researcher wants to choose these two schools for the study as they are doing which is not so easy in the village like Dhrol. In both the institutions, scope center is going on

for last 5 years and thus they are making efforts to promote English language teaching by providing best facilities.

Today in the age of globalization and liberalization, learning English is the need of time. Everyone feels its need more or less in his/her field of work. Looking into all the above factors the researcher is interested in taking up the proposed study.

There are many studies conducted in abroad on communication skills and task based teaching but there are less studies in India in this direction especially in Gujarat.

The task based communicative approach was implemented in the textbook of std 9 Guajarati medium in 2004 and still no study is found to develop communication skills of the students of std 9 in Gujarat. So this study can be a humble effort to bridge the research gap.

Keeping in mind the above thoughts/ideas, the investigator would like to study the effectiveness of communication skills in English language teaching in Gujarat.

## 6.3 Statement of the Problem

Development and Effectiveness of Task Based Strategies for Enhancing Communication Skills of Class IX Students in English

## 6.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To study the difficulties faced by the students in task-based Strategies.

2. To develop a set of task-based strategies for enhancing communication skills.

3. To implement the task-based strategies in English.

4. To study the effectiveness of task based strategies in English.

5. To study reactions of the students towards the task-based strategies implemented.

## 6.5 Explanation of the Terms

### 6.5.1 Task

The task is using language in order to achieve a communicative goal. It involves both oral and written activities.

### 6.5.2 Task-Based Strategies

They refer to a set of strategies used in the present study viz. imagination, elaboration, make inferences, critical thinking , sharing information, sharing experiences, auditory representation.

### 6.5.3 Communication Skills

They refer to the skills that are used and practiced to communicate in English in and out of the classroom viz. language skills-LSRW, presentation skills and body language.

### 6.5.4 Effectiveness

It refers to the effectiveness of task-based strategies in terms of the mean gain scores obtained by the students in the pre test and post test in the light of the following aspects:

1. Ability of students to communicate in both-oral and written form of English language.
2. Ability of students to use the language skills i.e. LSRW.
3. Development of competencies in students to use and develop analytical ability using English, so as to express social concerns.
4. To focus on enhancing the specific proficiencies related to pronunciation, understanding and articulation in English language.
5. Ability of students to express their ideas and views with confidence and fluently.
6. Ability of students to understand the importance of body language in presentations.

## 6.6 Delimitation of the Study

The present study will be delimited to the students studying in Gujarati medium schools in Dhrol following the syllabus of GSHSEB.

## 6.7 Type of the Study

The study followed quasi experimental design. Pre test post test on both the groups viz. experimental and control group were administered. Task based strategy was independent variable and achievement scores by the students was dependent variable

## 6.8 Population for the Study

All the students of the standard IX following the Gujarati medium syllabus of the GSHSEB considered the population for the present study.

## 6.9 Sample for the study

Two schools out of 12 secondary schools of Dhrol were selected purposively. All the students of one of the sections of STD IX of one school constituted the experimental group and all the students of one of the sections of STD IX of the other school constituted the control group. Cluster sampling was used for selecting control group and experimental group.

## 6.10 Tools and Techniques

The following tools and techniques were employed for the present study.

### Observation

An observation of the classroom employing communicative approach and interaction of the learners with the teachers using communication skills was done by the researcher and it was validated by both subject experts of English Language Teaching and research methodology experts in education.

### Pre-Test and Post-Test

The test was constructed by the researcher keeping in mind the objectives of English language teaching at the secondary level. It was validated by the subject experts in the area of English Language Teaching. The test was divided into two parts viz. oral communication and written communication for the purpose to evaluate communication skills. It was of 150 marks-75 for oral and 75 for written.

### Task-Based Strategies

Task-based strategies were prepared by the researcher. They referred to a set of strategies used in the present study viz. imagination, elaboration, make inferences, critical thinking, sharing information, sharing experiences, auditory representation. They were of 100 days. The researcher constructed strategies which were based on 25 tasks (refer appendix-VI) and they were set to enhance both oral and written communication skills of the students.

**Reaction Scale**

A Five Points Reaction scale was constructed by the researcher to know the reactions of the students towards the task-based strategies. There were fifteen statements in the reaction scale and five points for the reactions were strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. It was validated by the subject experts in the area of English Language Teaching

## 6.11 Data Collection

The data were collected personally by the researcher. The researcher sought the permission from the Principals of the selected schools.

**Phase - I**: in the first phase, the researcher observed total 40 classes in both the schools, 20 in each school to know the difficulties of the students in learning through tasks and communicative activities and employed the Pre-test on both the groups viz. the control group and the experimental group.

**Phase- II**: after the pre-test, task based strategies were developed by the researcher and students of the experimental group were taught through task based strategies by the researcher for 100 days – 1hour each day. All the task-based strategies were based on the objectives of English language teaching at secondary level. Strategies were related to language skills, pronunciation, and vocabulary. It took 100 days for the implementation of task-based strategies.

**Phase- III**: In this phase, Post test was conducted on both the groups viz. the experimental group and the control group to find out the effectiveness of the task based strategies on experimental group.

**Phase IV**: in this phase reaction scale was used by the researcher to know the reactions of the students towards the task-based strategies in learning English language.

## 6.12 Data Analysis Technique Employed

The collected data  through pre- test and post test to study the effectiveness were analyzed by using t-test whereas 'chi-square' was used to know the reactions of

students towards task based strategies. The data gathered through observation was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

**Table -23 Tools and Techniques used for Data Analysis**

| Sr.no. | Tools | Use of the tools | Techniques used for data analysis |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Observation schedule | To study the difficulties of the students in learning English through communicative approach. | Content analysis, frequency and percentage |
| 2 | Pre-test | To test the previous knowledge of the students (prior to implementation of the task-based strategy). | Mean, Standard Deviation and 't' Value |
| 3 | Post-test | To study the effectiveness of the developed strategy in terms of achievement of the students | Mean, Standard Deviation and 't' Value |
| 4 | Reaction scale | To study reactions of the students towards task-based strategies | Chi square |

## 6.13 Findings of the Study

The findings of the study are as follow:

### 6.13.1 Findings based on Observation

The observation of the classes explained the real situation of the implementation of the tasks mentioned in the textbook. The curriculum and syllabus of English language teaching was framed on some criteria- keeping in mind certain goals and objectives to enhance communication skills of the students. At least 50% of the classroom transaction should be done in English during English class. Few instructions and daily spoken English words and phrases should be practiced in the classroom and the textbook was prepared with communicative tasks to provide a platform to the students to speak in English. During the observation of the English classes of STD IX, the

researcher observed that in most of the classes, grammar translation method is still prevalent. Workbooks had been filled up by using guides. Out of 40, 38 classes grammar translation method was going on except 2 classes no group and pair work was found. Only writing tasks were emphasized and that was just copying. In one class there was quiz. Only few teachers were trying to provide opportunity to the students to listen and speak in English. The researcher observed in few classes the situation was not so bad. Teachers were not even wished to speak a single word in English in class and students were passive, some of the students didn't know what was happening in the class, the translation of the lesson was going on so fast that they couldn't even listen to the reading of the unit in English by the teacher. The natural stages of language learning are to listen, to speak, to read and to write, but during the observation the researcher observed that this order was going on in reverse in most of the classes. Students were seen only writing and it's not creative writing but just copying from guides and other sources to their notebooks.

## 6.13.2 Findings based on the Analysis of Pre test and Post test data

The researcher constructed the pre and post test to test the effectiveness of task based strategies employed On the basis of the data collected through pre and post test it was found that most of the students felt shy and hesitation to speak in English as they didn't get experience of it. Written test was more effective than the oral one. Students were ready to answer when it's about written expression but during the oral test they tried to answer some of the questions and many students avoided to answer due to lack of vocabulary and fear to speak in English. During post test some of the students felt comfortable and confident to answer. Independent T test was used to evaluate pre and post test administered on both the groups viz. control group and experimental group. There were thirteen questions in the oral test based on five strategies i.e. auditory representation, Sharing Information, Observation, Sharing experience and Imagination. The oral test was evaluated following five language components and based on grade point: listening comprehension, fluency, pronunciation vocabulary appropriateness and grammar.

The calculated t value of the **oral test** indicated that there is a significant difference in the mean gain scores of the experimental group and the control group at 0.01 and 0.05 level.

The calculated t value of the **written** test indicated that there is a significant difference in the mean gain scores of the experimental group and the control group at 0.01 and 0.05 level.

The calculated t value of the **oral and written** test indicated that there is a significant difference in the mean gain scores of the experimental group and the control group at 0.01 and 0.05 level.

It shows positive effect of task based strategies. So it can be said that there is a significance difference between the scores achieved by the experimental group and the control group as the calculated t value is higher than the table value in oral test, written test and overall too.

## 6.13.3 Findings Based on the Analysis of Pre and Post Test Data- Strategy Wise

The researcher constructed pre and post test keeping in mind strategies – 5 strategies for oral test and 10 strategies for written test. The finding based on the analysis of pre and post test data- strategy wise are as follow:

Among all the five strategies used in oral test, strategy 1 was found effective at 0.05 level as the mean gain scores of the students of experimental group was higher than the mean gain scores of the students of control group at 0.05 level. Among all the five strategies used in oral test, strategy 2 and 3 were found effective at 0.01 and 0.05 level as the mean gain scores of the students of experimental group was higher than the mean gain scores of the students of control group at 0.01 and 0.05 level. Among all the five strategies used in oral test, strategy 4 and 5 were not found effective at 0.01 and 0.05 level as the mean gain scores of the students of experimental group was showing no significant difference from the mean gain scores of the students of control group.

All the written strategies were found effective at 0.01 and 0.05 level as the mean gain scores of the students of experimental group was showing significant difference from the mean gain scores of the students of control group at both the levels.

It shows positive effect of task based strategies. So it can be said that there is a significance difference between the scores achieved by experimental group and the control group in strategies used in written test where as in oral test out of five, 3

strategies were effective and showed significant difference and 2 strategies were not effective at 0.01 and 0.05 level.

## 6.13.4 Findings of Reaction Scale

The reactions of the students towards the task based strategies showed that in 15 out of 15 statements, there was a significant difference between the observed frequency and the expected frequency .The findings indicated that:

**6.13.4.1** 78.95% of the students agreed that tasks were interesting. They found that learning English language through tasks was interesting.7.89% of the students was undecided and 13.16% of the students didn't find tasks interesting.

**6.13.4.2** 10.53% of the students agreed that tasks were boring. They found that learning English language through tasks was boring, 18.42% of the students were undecided and 71.05% of the students didn't find tasks boring.

**6.13.4.3** 13.16% of the students felt translation necessary to learn English. 15.79% of the students were undecided and 71.05% of the students didn't find translation necessary to learn English.

**6.13.4.4** 81.58% of the students felt that Through tasks English can be learnt easily. 7.89% of the students were undecided and 10.53% of the students disagreed that English can be learnt easily through tasks.

**6.13.4.5** 86.84% of the students felt no need to translate to learn English5.26% of the students were undecided and 7.89% of the students felt need to translate to learn English.

**6.13.4.6** 84.21% of the students felt Group and pair work helpful in communication, 7.89% of the students were undecided and 7.89% of the students didn't find group and pair work helpful in communication.

**6.13.4.7** 81.58% of the students felt that tasks were helpful to learn English and use it in day-to-day life,7.89% of the students were undecided and 10.53% of the students didn't feel that tasks were helpful to learn English and use it in day-to-day life.

**6.13.4.8** 73.68% of the students felt tasks helpful in developing listening skills. 10.53% of the students were undecided and 15.79% of the students didn't find tasks helpful in developing listening skills.

**6.13.4.9** 71.05% of the students felt helpful in developing speaking skills. 10.53% of the students were undecided and 18.42% of the students didn't find tasks helpful in developing speaking skills.

**6.13.4.10** 76.32% of the students felt tasks helpful in developing reading skills, 13.16% of the students were undecided and 10.53% of the students didn't find tasks helpful in developing writing skills.

**6.13.4.11** 84.21% of the students found tasks helpful in developing writing skills, 7.89% of the students were undecided and 7.89% of the students didn't find tasks helpful in developing writing skills.

**6.13.4.12** 84.21% of the students felt that tasks made them confident to speak in English with their friends and teachers, 5.26% of the students were undecided and 10.53% of the students didn't feel that tasks made them confident to speak in English with their friends and teachers.

**6.13.4.13** 86.84% of the students felt that use of dictionaries for different tasks helped them to enrich vocabulary, 5.26% of the students were undecided and 7.89% of the students didn't find use of dictionaries for different tasks helpful to enrich vocabulary.

**6.13.4.14** 81.58% of the students felt that they could respond and present their views and opinions to any situations, 10.53% of the students were undecided and 7.89% of the students didn't feel that they could respond and present their views and opinions to any situations.

**6.13.4.15** 81.58% of the students felt that they could complete story and reply messages orally and written. 5.26% of the students were undecided and 13.16% of the students didn't feel that they could complete story and reply messages orally and written.

The reactions of the students made it clear that tasks were interesting and helped them to develop language skills, communicate with teachers and friends as well as they felt confident to present their views and reply messages.

## 6.14 Implication of the Study

On the basis of the findings and the implementation of task based strategies presented that learning English language through task based strategies is not so difficult as it is considered.

$\Rightarrow$ English language teaching and learning can be joyful by using different tasks given in the textbook and tasks other than the textbook could be developed.

$\Rightarrow$ Innovative tasks should be carried out to enhance communication skills of the students.

$\Rightarrow$ The aim of English language teaching should be to enable the students to communicate in English. This is possible when opportunities will be provided to express on their own and their grammatical mistakes should be avoided.

$\Rightarrow$ Oral as well as written tasks should be done more and more for implementing communicative approach in English language teaching.

$\Rightarrow$ English language classroom should be student centered and students should be involved in all the tasks to control their fear of English language.

$\Rightarrow$ Innovative strategies should be followed and discussion with the students in English can be helpful to enhance communication skills in English.

$\Rightarrow$ Videos, computer aided tasks should find place in English Language classroom.

$\Rightarrow$ Dictionaries should be used more by the students to enhance vocabulary by the students.

$\Rightarrow$ Students' imagination should be focused during teaching language skills.

$\Rightarrow$ Students should be encouraged to share their experiences of daily activities in English to make English language teaching natural.

## 6.15 Suggestions for Further Research

Keeping in mind the scope of the researches in the area of English Language Teaching as well as Communicative Language Teaching, the researcher would like to suggest the following studies for further research:

$\Rightarrow$ Similar type of study can be conducted for the students of class XI with more task based strategies.

$\Rightarrow$ The task based strategies for oral and written communication skills can be developed separately to enhance communication skills in English.

$\Rightarrow$ Similar type of strategy based study can be developed for other languages.

$\Rightarrow$ Various computer and multimedia aided strategies can be developed to enhance communication skills in English for the students of upper primary and secondary level.

$\Rightarrow$ A study of task based strategies can be developed for student- teachers.

$\Rightarrow$ Task based strategies by using only authentic material can be developed for the students of upper primary and secondary level.

## 6.16 Conclusion

In the context of the classroom teaching observation, the students were not given enough exposure to the tasks and they were passive. English spoken by the teachers and students was less.

Throughout the implementation of the task based strategies students were encouraged by providing opportunities to express their views through twenty five different tasks and they were involved in tasks through group and pair work. The students performed in post test better than in the pre test. About task based strategies students found that the tasks were interesting and helped them to communicate with their friends and teachers and in their daily life.

The communicative approach can be best implemented through various tasks and involvement of the students in the tasks is must to enhance their communication skills in English. The fundamental key aspects of task based strategies are learner-centered teaching, task-oriented teaching-learning, healthy interaction opportunities for learners, scope for creativity and task based strategies which can lead to natural learning of English language.

The students as a whole were found to be better on written task based strategies than on the oral task based strategies. It can be attributed to rare oral communication culture in English particular in vernacular schools. So, the spoken English language culture was found to be missing but it can be realized through the implementation of task based strategies.