STRUCTURAL APPROACH

Structural approach in English means teaching English on the basis of selected structures. It is called structural approach because emphasis is laid on the structures or sentence patterns than the acquisition of vocabulary. It is an approach and not a method. As the selected structures form the subject matter and any method can be used for presenting the subject matter before the students. Moreover in a method a number of techniques are used but in structural approach only selected structures are used.

C.S. Bhandari has also supported this view by saying. "It is not a method; it is an approach. Any method can be used with it."

According to Krishna Swamy, "The structural approach came to India in the form of a syllabus brought to India by the British Council in 1952. In 1957, the all India seminar held in Nagpur accepted the structural approach. The Allahabad ELT institute, the All India Council for Secondary Education, the CIEFL and many other institutions and states accepted the structural approach as the basic for English teaching in India. The grading of grammatical item called teaching items, the selection of words from the vocabulary lists prepared by Michael West and others, the encouragement given by the British Council in India made the structural approach very popular. A number of readers were prepared by Allahabad institute, the CIEFL in Hyderabad and the RIE in Bangalore."

DEFINITIONS OF STRUCTURAL APPROACH

1. **According to Menon and Patel,** "The structural approach is based on the belief that in the learning of a foreign language, mastery of structures is more important than the acquisition of vocabulary."

2. **According to C.S. Bhandari**, "The structural approach to English is teaching the learner certain selected structures in a certain order…. In structures, meaning words are used in a particular order to convey their meaning…. Structures may be complete utterances or form part of a larger pattern."

3. **According to Brewington**, "Structural approach to English is a scientific study of the fundamental structures of English language, their analyses and logical arrangement."

MEANING OF STRUCTURES

The structures or sentence patterns are different from the sentences A sentence is a group of words arranged in a systematic and grammatical way to give certain meaning. On the other hand, a structure may or may not have a grammatical background at all. Thus in a structure or spy the arrangement of words in a certain order is We use of a grammatical rule KQ French in his book Abroad's "The word pattern means a model A washes of the same kind and shape be made, like houses which look the s, or shoes made alike or number of lorries, all of the same size and shape though of different colours. A sentence pattern is pirate a mail of a sentence which will be of the same shape and size but made of different words.

KINDS OF STRUCTURES

There are different kinds of structures. Basically these can classified into the allowing four kinds:

I)   **Sentence patterns**: Sentence patterns belong to the identical category of sentence formation which can be divided into following types:

•**Assertive sentence**: These are the sentence patterns which assert something. These follow the SVO(subject-verb-object) pattern and negative sentences are also included in them e.g.

She sang a song.

She did not sing a song.

•**Interrogative sentence:** It is a sentence in which question is asked. The word order in this pattern is VSO; e.g. Does she like mangoes? Did he invite me?

•**Imperative sentence**: This sentence expresses order, command, request, advice, wish, proposals or suggestions; e.g.

Work hard.

May you live long!

Please give me your pen.

Obey your elders.

•**Phrase**: Phrase is made of two or more than two words that follow a certain order of arrangement and has an independent meaning. It is different from a sentence as it does not make a complete sense. E.g.

In the garden, on the wall, near the hut etc.

• **Formulae**: Formulae are used on certain occasions; e.g. Thanks you, Excuse me, Good morning etc.

• **Idioms**: These are a group of words which must be taugh as a whole and not by parts. Because they convey a different meaning of the words of which they are made; e.g. bone of contention, cats and dogs, black and white, black sheep, dark horse etc.

OBJECTIVES OF STRUCTURAL APPROACH

According to Menon and Patel, the objectives of structural approach are :
•To attain mastery over about 275 graded structures.

•To help the children in mastering an essential vocabulary of about 3000 words for active use.

•To correlate the teaching of grammar and composition with the reading lessons.

•To teach the four fundamental skills namely understanding speaking, reading and writing in the order named.

• To lay proper emphasis on aural – oral approach, activity methods and the condemnation of formal grammar for its own sake.

PRINCIPLES OF STRUCTURAL APPROACH

•It teaches the student to form habits and for which a lot of practice in listening, speaking, reading and writing of structures is given to the students till these can be recalled

automatically by the students.

- Speech is emphasized more as compared to reading and Writing .

- Learner's activity is more encouraged as compared to teachers activity.

- Learning of structures or structural patterns is more important than vocabulary and teachers are motivated to use any means for making the teaching of structures interesting.

SELECTION OF STRUCTURES

There are only 26 alphabets and from these 26 alphabets, a countless number of words can be made. By using these words, an unlimited number of structures can be framed. All the structures framed should not be selected for teaching. The selection of the structures should be done keeping in view the following points:

- Nature of the structure i.e. simple or complicated.

- Usability of the structure means whether it is useful for the learners or not.

- Extension of the structure means whether the given structure can be extended by adding one or more words to form new Structures or not.

- Frequency of occurrence in the study material means how many times a structure occurs in the study material of the Learner.

- Resourcefulness of the teacher means whether the structure can be taught by the teacher with the help of concrete objects or not.

So, in the selection of structures, those structures which are simple, can be extended by adding words, have more frequency of occurrence in the study material and can be taught with the help of concrete objects by the teacher are given preference.

GRADATION

Gradation of structures means putting the structures in the order of presentation. While grading, simple and concrete type of structures are presented to the learner at the early stages. Complicated and abstract type of structures are kept for later stages. F.G. French suggests that during the first three years of learning English, the patterns given below should be followed:-

- **Two part patterns means the sentence pattern in which only Two words are used e.g.**

- She/ate

- I/slept.

Three part patterns means the sentence pattern in which three words are used e.g.

a) He/ran/a race
b) Geeta/wrote/ a letter
   - **Four part patterns means the sentence pattern in which four Words are used e.g.**
a) She/gave/me/an apple
b) The teacher/ teaches/us/ English
   - **The negative forms of the above given patterns are with subject helping verbs, negative, verb and object e.g.**
   (a) He did not run a race.
   (b) Gita did not write a letter.

• The interrogative forms of these patterns

(a) Did he run a race?

(b) Did he write a letter?

• Patterns showing command or request

(a) Open the window.

(b) Don't make a noise.

    a) Give me your pen, please.

    b) May you help me.

•Patterns with hidden subject like 'there' and 'it', e.g.

(a) There are seven days in a week.

(b) It is a nice story.

METHODS OF TEACHING STRUCTURES

The different methods of structures are:

1. Drill Method: Drill is a method which is used by the teacher for fixing the sentence patterns or structures in the minds of the learner It can be given in chorus, in groups and to the single individual. Basically it is of two types i.e. oral drill and written drill. In structural approach, the subject matter is structures or the sentence patterns which are given by the teacher for oral drill firstly in chorus, then in groups and finally to an individual. The same structures are given for written drill after a lot of oral practice. A lot of oral and written practice of the structures helps the learner in attaining the mastery of the structures and in developing the listening, speaking and writing abilities which is the main objective of structural approach.

2. Palmer's Substitution Method: The substitution method chooses a model structure or sentence pattern first. As it is based on the assumption that a sentence should be a unit of language so the selected structure should be grammatically correct. Based on this structure, teacher can prepare a substitution table and a number of structures of the same kind can be framed by using different words. e.g.

Ram

Sham is noise.

Veena making a

boat. Geeta chart.

She   map.

He

From this table 6 x 1 x 2 x 1 x 4 =48 different structures of the same type can be developed.

Similarly, other kinds of sentence patterns and structures like negative, interrogative etc, can be taught by using different substitution tables. Teacher can also tell the students to speak or write as many structures as possible by consulting the substitution table. This practice enables the learner to develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

LIMITATIONS OF STRUCTURAL APPROACH

•Competent, dedicated and resourceful teachers are required for teaching through structural approach. But there is shortage of such teachers in our schools.

• In structural approach, a lot of practice for speaking and writing the structures of the same type is givento the learners. As a result the learners, feel boredom and take less interest in learning.

• It is very difficult to finish the entire syllabus in time.

• In structural approach, learning is based on imitation that does not help in developing creativity.

• It is not good for teaching English to higher classes.

• This approach is not suitable for teaching prose, poetry and composition.

ADVANTAGES OF STRUCTURAL APPROACH

The advantages of the structural approach can be enumerated as Follows:

• It enables the students to speak English fluently as oral practice is given much importance in thisapproach.

• The structural approach can be used both at the early stages as well as at the later stages of learningEnglish.

• The structural approach is based on psychological principles i.e. proceeding from simple to complex,easy to difficult and concrete to abstract.

• It helps in acquiring all the four skills i.e. listening speaking, reading and writing through its methods ofteaching.

• Structural approach is based on the principle of imitation and it does not put burden on the minds ofthe learner while learning Structures. It also reduces the chances of committing error .

• Structure is the unit of speech in structural approach and t the word.

• Students learn to make the structures of same kind by different words in their daily use.

• This approach can be used for teaching English to avera and below average students as each structureis practise until it is fully learnt.

SITUATIONAL APPROACH

Situational approach in English means teaching English by creating situations in the classroom. It is the best way for teaching words structures to the students. This is because the words convey their meaning only in the context and situation in which they are used and structures are made of words. In this way the meanings of the words and structures can be made more understandable. The important thing to keep in mind is that only suitable situations created by the teacher can help the student in making the meaning of the words and structures clear otherwise I may lead to confusion. Situations are of twotypes:

1. Verbal   situations.
2. Non-verbal situation
VERBAL SITUATION
Verbal situations are created by speaking the language. Ther situations are created for teaching those words and structures for which objects related to the words and structures cannot be shown through pictures, models, charts, in actual form or through sketches a performing actions.

For teaching the word 'regular' and 'irregular', verbal situation can be created as follows:

- Mohit was present yesterday.

- He was also present a day before yesterday.

- He is present today also.

- He was present throughout the week.

- So, he is regular.

- Sham was absent yesterday.

- He was also absent a day before yesterday.

- He is also absent today.

- He remained absent in the last week.

- So, he is irregular.

   a) **Classroom Situation**: It is very easy for a pupil to recall and understand if such examples are taken which a pupil can see, hear and touch directly. The classroom presents various objects like table, chair fan, wall, door window etc. The child can point out at them, touch them and say :

- This is a table,

- These are chairs

- There are four fans, etc.

   b) **Classroom window** : classroom window can also prove very helpful in building Up situations.

   Objects seen outside the classroom through the window like trees, flowers, birds, road, buses, cars etc. can be used to teach structues like:

- That is a car .
- Those are buses.

Similarly, structures like they are... there are – etc can also be taught. Objects from the Teacher's bag can also work magic. The objects, like balls, boxes, small models, toys, when taken out of the bag arouse the interest of the class and makes the lesson interesting.

   c) **Real Life Situation**: These are the situations which the pupil knows from his own experience in daily life, family circle etc. Only the familiar objects are included in it. A conversation between pupil and teacher makes a club recall certain word and certain structures eg.

Teacher : Where do you stay?
Pupil : I stay in University Campus, Sir.

Teacher : How do you come to the school?

Pupil : By University bus.

Teacher: How much time do you take to reach the school?

Pupil: I reach in half an hour.

NON-VERBAL SITUATIONS

Non-verbal situations can be created by the teacher in the classroom with the help of actualobjects, pictures, models, charts and by performing actions.
Words and structures that can be taught with the help of Actual objects are: Words: Bag, table, chair, fan, window, book, apple etc.

Structures:

•This is a bag.

•This is a chair and that is a table.

•That is a fan.

•These are windows.

• Those books are mine.

• There are apples on the table.

1. **With the help of models**: **Words** like Lion, Elephant, Zeb T.V. etc. can be taught as they cannot beactually brought into the class.

Structures:

•This lion is very ferocious.

•This elephant is very kind.

•There is a zebra grazing the grass.

•The T.V. is on the table.

2.   **With the help of charts we can make our lecture intresting:** Words: Flower, pitcher, crow, dog, boy,girl.

Structures:

•This is a beautiful flower but that flower is more beautiful.

•That is a pitcher.

•This is a crow.

•This is my dog.

•He is a tall boy.

•She is a beautiful girl.

3. **With the help of pictures, children's axiety can be aroused**: Words: Temple, house, tree, boat, shipetc.

Structures:

• This is a temple.

• That is a house.

• The boys are fighting.

• The girls are singing.

• The ship is sailing in the sea.

    4. **By performing actions:** Certain words and structures are Taught by performing actions. Basically, action words are taught by Creating suitable type of situation by the teacher e.g. sing, read, write, run, walk, sit, stand. Structures that can be taught by performing actions are:

• I am singing.

• I am sitting.

• I am standing.

• She is reading

• He is writing.

• They are coming.

• We are going and so on.

Advantages of Situational Approach: The situational approach has the following advantages:

• It makes the teaching learning process interesting as the real life situations are presented before the students in the class with the help of aids.

• The students can retain the taught material for a longer time as more than two senses are involved while learning. (iii) This approach lays equal stress on listening and speaking Skills of the language.

• In this approach learning of the language is based on activity which develops the interest of the students for better learning.

• It keeps the teacher as well as the students busy throughout the class.

• It also develops creativity among the teachers for creating different types of situations.

• This approach is good for teaching English to the lower classes and to average and below average students.

Disadvantages: The main disadvantages of situational approach are:

• Only a few words and structures can be taught by approach in the classroom.

• English cannot be taught to higher classes by using this approach.

• It is very difficult to teach abstract words.

• Poetry and composition cannot be taught by this approach.

• A lot of repetition makes the classroom teaching quite monotonous or boring for good learners.

• By using this method, curriculum of the text books cannot be finished in time.

• It is very difficult for the teacher to create a new situation for every new word and structure.

•Competent and hard working teachers are required but there is dearth of such teachers in our country.

COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING APPROACH

The importance of interpersonal communication is increasing in today's world. If you are not a good communicator you are not likely develop into a good teacher. Communication can be considered as personal process that involves the transfer of information and also involv some
behavioural input, Communication is something people do. It do not exist without people taking some form of action. It has to do with relationships between people. It can be very complex or very simple very formal or informal-it all depends on the nature of the message to be Passed, and on the relationship between the sender and the receiver.

Now the question which comes to our mind is why do we need communication?

Some common answers to the questions are:

•It leads to greater communication.

•It keeps people in the picture. It gets people involved with the institution/organisation and increases motivation to perform well with enhanced commitment to the organisation institution.

• It makes the relationships and understanding better.

•It helps people to understand the need for change.

Language being means of communication is one of the important purposes to be fulfilled in most teaching learning programmes. When we use language for communication, we must have a knowledge of the linguistic forms of the language as well as the social meaning of the linguistic forms and their functions. In today's world we do not want a language user who is linguistic competent but a person who has 4 knowledge to communicate and interact knowledgeably. So what we actually look for is a communicative competent person.

The Importance of English language in all the fields is increasing day by day. The researchers, in the teaching of English have been experimenting new methods to facilitate teaching-learning of English and that is how the origin of the 'Communicative Approach' which is combination of different methods came into being in the teaching of foreign languages.

WHERE DOES COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING COME FROM?

Communicative language teaching could be the product of educators and linguistics who had become dissatisfied with the approaches of methods used to teach or learn a foreign language. Initiative was taken to bring new methodologies and communicative movement was the result of such initiatives which started in late 1960's and 70's. The stress was that formal English should give way to functional English. Thus meaningless pattern drills and repetitions needed a reform.

It was developed and practised in the Far East, particularly in China and Japan. China at present has the largest number of people using this language, for it is usefully employed in the international relations, trade and commerce, business and industry. It is because of its open door policy to English that today Japan is in the front rank of the developed and technologically advanced countries.

In Britain this approach popularly known as CLT was advocated by Christopher Cadlin and Henry Halliday. The works of Mak Haliday, Dell Hymes Christopher Brumfit, Keith Johnson etc. are worth mentioning.
They have contributed a lot to the field of CLT.

D.A. Williens, an expert in the Council of Europe in his book 'Notional Syllabuses' brought new era in language teaching and learning to match the changing educational scenario in Europe in 1970's. A
notional – functional syllabus is more or less organising a language learning curriculum than a method or an approach to teaching. The instruction in notional – functional syllabus is on terms of 'notions' and
'functions' unlike ALM (Audio-Lingual Method) where instruction is organised in terms of grammatical structure. 'Notion' is in context 'shopping' needs functions like prices or features of product and bargaining. Thus we see that notion is a particular content in which people communicate, and which people communicate, and a 'function' is a specific purpose for a speaker in a given context.

Real life situations were used and authentic language use and classroom. Exchanges where the students were likely to encounter real life situations.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

• Development of 'Communicative Competence' among the learners is the main objective of the CLT, according to **Prof. Dell Hymes.**

• Unlike ALM, its primary focus is on helping learners create meaning rather than grammatical structures.

• Effective communication in a variety of real life context.

• Stress is given to the meanings and functions of the language and not on the form.

• Students acquire all the four skills namely listening, speaking reading and writing through problem solving activities.
　　On the whole we see that proponents of CLT give more importance to learner and his learning than the language learnt.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF COMMUNICATION APPROACH

1. The primary principle is to learn English "use". In other words English should be communicative. This is possible if:

• The real life situations are created for the students to learn the language.

• The need is created which should compel a child to use a Language to communicate.

• The gap between learning and usage is brushed aside.

• Communication involves freedom and unpredictability.

2. According to **D.A., Wilkins** there are three different levels of eaning which makes the communicationeasier :

• Grammatical meaning.

• Modal meaning.

• Contextual meaning.

3. **Prof. MAK Haliday** (1970) complemented Hymes giving seven basic functions of language, whichbrings 'communicative competence. '

• The instrumental function: using language to get things.

• The regulatory function: using language to control the behaviour of others.

• The interactional function: to create interaction with others.

• The personal function: using language to express personal feelings and meanings.
• The heuristic function: using language to learn and to discover .

• The imaginative function: using language to create a world of the imagination.

• The representational function: using language to communicate Information.

• Learner must be provided adequate exposure with reference to target language. Here grammar andvocabulary take a back seat.

• This approach honours the maxim of easy to difficult. The difficulty referred to is at the conceptual andlinguistic level and not structural level.

• No learner by himself ever invented language. Good speech is the outcome of imitating good model. So a learner should learn bits of the language by mimicry and memorization and by intensive practice afterwards.

• This approach is student centered so teaching-learning takes Place according to the need of thelearner.

• It does not advocate habit forming as it gives stress to functioning Of the mind thus language learningdemands initiative from learners.

PROCEDURE IN COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE

• The teacher presents a brief dialogue or several mini dialogues preceded by a motivation and a discussion of the function and situation – people, roles, setting, topic and the informality or formality ofthe language which the function and situation demand.

• The teacher allows oral practice of each utterance of the dialogue either in chorus, in groups orindividually. The oral practice is preceded by the teacher model.

• The teacher sets questions based on the dialogue practised and elicits answers.

• The teacher sets questions on the students' personal experiences. He takes care of the experiencecentres around the dialogue theme.

• He reads one of the basic communicative expressions in the Dialogue or one of the structures

whichillustrates or exemplifies the functions.

•Gives a few more examples of the function, using picture Real objects or dramatisation to clarify themeaning of the Function.

• Helps the learners to discover the rules underlying the functional expression or structure – its forms inspeech and writing.

• Makes the pupils recognise and interpret the utterances. In other words, he gives activities that wouldencourage and recognize the function and interpret it.

• The teacher gives a few more oral production activities, thus he proceeds from guided to freercommunication activities.

•Makes the pupils copy the dialogue if they are not in the text.

• Provides samples of written homework.

• Evaluates the function learnt orally (B.K. Sahu's Adaptatio from Finnochiaro and Brumfit, 1983).

CLASSROOM TECHNIQUES

It is quite clear from the above mentioned points that CLT is eclectic approach where the learner is anactive participant in the clay room situation. So the role of the teacher is to help the learner to acquire
knowledge through various activities to develop 'communicative competence. The tasks/activities whichmay be included are as follows:

•**Warm-ups**: The teacher co-ordinates various Language Activities maintaining proper rapport with thestudents.

•**Introduction of Grammatical Items**: To learn the target Language conversation is must. The communication between the teache and the taught is the best way to develop grammatical items.

• **Practice**: A language is best learnt if its need is felt in everyday situations. So the target language is practised in everyday situations with Which children can easily identify themselves. Recalling encouragesself- Expression and arouses learner's intellectual curiosity.

• **Reading the Text**: Experts believe that the oral way is the surest way to language learning. Listening and speaking are primary skills reading and writing through secondary but are reinforcement skills. Thisincluded silent as well as loud reading. Unlike the traditional teaching the contents are explained by listening to the tape, the output is best seen creativity orally or in writing is developed.

MERITS OF CLT (WITH REFERENCE TO TEACHING-LEARNING ENGLISH

•**Opportunity to Communicate in the Target Language** : The learners have to communicate their ideas,thoughts and feelings others in the target language. They get ample practice this way not possible in anyother method. This language interaction makes the confident And successful in life.

•**Makes Students Fluent Speakers** : Language practice and interaction in English among children of the same age is an effective means of gaining fluency. The children feel shy when they talk with elders or their teachers. They hesitate because the possibility of errors is more but consistent usage of language inthe same class makes them fluent speakers.

• **Lively Approach**: In this approach teaching is coupled with pleasure. The lessons are never dull as they are based on some task or activity.

• **Imagination and Creative Talent Comes Out** : For teaching English through CLT the material used are newspapers, magazines, visuals, filmstrips, wall charts, pictures, models etc. This makes the learning more meaningful and the students more involved. To have an edge over their classmates they discuss new reading materials or creative write- ups with classmates which activate their imagination and
creativity.

• **Child Centered Approach** : In CLT, the teacher's role is that of an observer or he has to create a functional situation. The teacher's role becomes less dominant. The child learns according to his needs as the teacher is a facilitator and this makes the teacher taught relations more cordial.

• **An Eclectic Approach** : CLT has good points of all the approaches/methods to the teaching of English as a foreign language.

• **A Practical Approach** : This approach gives importance to the practical aspect of language. The learning is not confined to any set Text-books but to the activities.

• CLT concentrates on functional situation so it diverts attention From the structural aspect of English.

LIMITATIONS OF THE CLT

• **Lack of Competent Teachers :** The teachers who themselves have command over the target language can work on communicative language teaching approach. The ones with dynamic character and creative outlook can only teach through CLT. But such teachers are not easily available for teaching of English.

• **Neglect of Some Skills** : In CLT, English is taught without the help of text-books so all the four skills are not taken care of. Over emphasis on communication neglects the reading and writing skill.

• **Lack of Infrastructure** : Majority of our schools lack basic Infrastructure so as to get material aids like magazines, visuals, filmstrips, Models which is part and parcel of this type of teaching is impossible.

• **Over Crowded Classroom** : Over crowded classrooms in most of the schools is the real picture of Indian schools. In such cases it is not easy to seat the kids properly for pair work and group work which is essential requirement in CLT.

• **No Unanimous Way of Teaching** : Different techniques are Used by different teachers for involving the students. Thus there is no Unanimity about the ways the teaching should be done in CLT. While concluding it can be said that we cannot teach English through this approach by using Readers/workbooks only. The teaching material needs to be specially written if communicative approach is to be followed A massive programme has been launched for the production of material, which is learner-centered but it will take number of years before this approach is extensively used. The streak of improvement in the present scenario of teaching-learning English is seen as an attempt has been made to ensure student participation in the process of learning. In many good schools the activities like role- play, dramatization, poetry recitation, report observation, picture work, group discussion etc. have started. The day is not far when the limitations of the CLT will be overcome and following the CLT the teaching of English in schools will improve.