

STUDY NOTES

English Language Teaching – I

(Course Code: HENGET1301)

B.A. T.Y. — Semester V

Major in English (Core)

Written in Simple, Easy-to-Understand Language

Based on: English Language Teaching — Approaches, Methods, Techniques by Nagaraj

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About This Course

English Language Teaching (ELT) is the field of study that looks at how English is taught as a second or foreign language. Over the last hundred years, teachers and researchers have developed many different ways (called 'methods' or 'approaches') to teach English. Each method has its own ideas about what language is, how people learn language, and what should happen inside a classroom.

This paper introduces four important stages in the history of ELT: the Grammar Translation Method, the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach, Modern Approaches such as Communicative Language Teaching and Task-Based Language Teaching, and Humanistic Approaches. By studying these methods, you will understand how the way we teach English has changed over time, and you will be able to choose good techniques for real classrooms.

How to Use These Notes

These notes explain every topic in simple language with clear headings, definitions, examples, and comparison tables. Each unit ends with a short summary and important points to remember. Read one unit at a time, and try to note down the key words in your own words as you go along.

Course Objectives at a Glance

- Understand the history and key ideas of major ELT methods.
- Analyse the Grammar Translation Method and the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach.
- Examine Modern Approaches such as CLT and TBLT.
- Explore Humanistic Approaches that care about learners' feelings and emotions.
- Compare different ELT methods and choose the right technique for a given context.
- Design simple lesson plans and classroom activities.

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Unit 1: The Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

1.1 Introduction and History

The Grammar Translation Method is one of the oldest methods of teaching foreign languages. It developed in Europe in the late 18th and 19th centuries and was originally used to teach classical languages like Latin and Greek. Later, it was applied to teaching modern foreign languages, including English. Because of this history, it is sometimes called the 'Classical Method'.

In GTM, the main aim is not to help students speak the language fluently. Instead, the goal is to help students read literature written in the foreign language, understand grammar rules deeply, and translate texts from the foreign language into the mother tongue and back again. Language is treated mainly as a system of rules to be learned by heart, and the mother tongue is used freely in the classroom to explain meaning.

1.2 Aims of the Grammar Translation Method

- To enable students to read and understand literature written in the target language.
- To train the mind through the mental exercise of analysing grammar and translating.
- To help students understand the grammatical rules of the target language in great detail.
- To build a strong vocabulary through lists of words and their mother-tongue equivalents.
- To develop the ability to translate accurately from one language to another.

1.3 Main Principles and Characteristics

Focus on Grammar Rules: Grammar is taught deductively — the teacher first explains a rule, and then students apply it in exercises. Long lists of grammar rules and paradigms (such as verb conjugations) are memorised.

Use of the Mother Tongue: The students' first language is used as the medium of instruction. New vocabulary and grammar are explained by translating them into the mother tongue rather than by using the target language itself.

Translation as a Technique: Translation is both the main teaching technique and the main testing technique. Students regularly translate sentences and passages from the target language into their mother tongue, and from the mother tongue into the target language.

Reading and Writing over Speaking and Listening: Reading and writing are the main skills developed. Little or no attention is given to speaking or listening, and pronunciation is often not taught at all.

Vocabulary Taught through Word Lists: Vocabulary is chosen from the reading texts used in class and is presented as bilingual word lists to be memorised, with little concern for how frequently a word is actually used in real life.

The Sentence as the Basic Unit: The sentence is treated as the basic unit of teaching and testing. Accuracy is valued very highly; students are expected to produce grammatically correct sentences.

Literary Texts as Content: Classroom material is usually taken from classical or literary texts, which are considered to represent the 'best' form of the language.

1.4 Role of the Teacher

In the Grammar Translation classroom, the teacher is the central authority. The teacher explains the rules of grammar, gives the correct translations, and corrects every mistake that a student makes. The teaching process is teacher-centred, meaning that the teacher controls almost everything that happens in the class, and interaction mostly flows from the teacher to the students rather than between students.

1.5 Role of the Learner

Learners are expected to listen to the teacher's explanations, memorise grammar rules and vocabulary lists, and complete translation exercises accurately. Learners have very little freedom to use their own creativity in language use; they mainly follow instructions and practise what the teacher has already explained.

1.6 Typical Classroom Techniques and Activities

1. Translation of a Literary Passage: Students translate a passage from the target language into the mother tongue, word by word or sentence by sentence.
2. Reading Comprehension Questions: Students read a passage and answer questions in the target language based on their understanding of the text.
3. Antonyms and Synonyms: Students find opposite or similar words for words in the reading passage.
4. Fill in the Blanks: Sentences with a blank space are given, and students fill in the blank using a grammar rule already taught (for example, the correct verb form).
5. Memorisation: Students memorise vocabulary lists, grammatical rules, and verb paradigms (conjugations) for tests.
6. Use Words in Sentences: Students are given target vocabulary and asked to make their own sentences to show they understand the meaning.
7. Composition Writing: Students write a short paragraph or essay on a given topic in the target language, based on what they have read.

1.7 Materials Used

The main teaching materials are grammar textbooks that present rules in a logical order, along with reading passages taken from literature. Bilingual dictionaries and word lists are also commonly used so that students can quickly find the mother-tongue meaning of new words.

1.8 Advantages of the Grammar Translation Method

- It is easy to use, even for teachers who are not fully fluent in the target language, because the mother tongue does most of the explaining.
- It gives students a strong understanding of grammar rules and sentence structure.
- It helps students build a good reading vocabulary, especially useful for reading literature.
- Translation is a useful real-world skill in itself, and this method develops it directly.
- It can be used effectively with very large classes since it does not require much speaking practice or equipment.
- Testing is simple and can be marked objectively, since translation and grammar exercises usually have one correct answer.

1.9 Disadvantages and Limitations

- It neglects speaking and listening skills almost entirely, so students often cannot communicate orally even after years of study.
- Pronunciation is not taught, so learners may develop poor pronunciation habits.
- Heavy reliance on translation and the mother tongue can prevent students from thinking directly in the target language.
- Memorising grammar rules and word lists can feel boring and mechanical, reducing student motivation.
- Language is treated as a fixed set of rules rather than a living tool for real communication.
- Little attention is given to the natural or everyday use of language outside literary texts.

1.10 A Sample GTM-Style Exercise

To understand how a real GTM lesson works, imagine a short passage in English about 'A Visit to the Market'. In a GTM class, the lesson would typically proceed like this: first, the teacher reads the passage aloud; then the teacher translates each sentence into the students' mother tongue, explaining any difficult grammar point along the way (for example, the use of the past continuous tense); after this, students are asked to translate the same passage back into English from the mother-tongue version, without looking at the original; finally, students answer comprehension questions and complete a grammar exercise based on the tense used in the passage.

Such an exercise shows clearly how translation, explicit grammar explanation, and the mother tongue work together in every stage of a typical GTM lesson, and how little space is left for free spoken practice.

Sample Bilingual Word List (as used in GTM)

English Word	Mother-Tongue Meaning	Example Sentence
Market	(local-language equivalent)	My mother goes to the market every morning.
Purchase	(local-language equivalent)	He wanted to purchase some fresh vegetables.
Merchant	(local-language equivalent)	The merchant sold cloth of many colours.
Bargain	(local-language equivalent)	She tried to bargain for a lower price.

Notice how each word is simply matched with its mother-tongue meaning and one example sentence — a format that is very typical of GTM vocabulary teaching, and one that students are usually expected to memorise for tests.

1.11 Criticism of the Grammar Translation Method by Later Linguists

From the late 19th century onwards, linguists and educators such as those in the Reform Movement began to criticise GTM strongly. They argued that language is primarily a spoken phenomenon and that a method which ignores speech cannot be called a genuine method of language teaching at all. They also pointed out that translation encourages learners to think in their mother tongue and then convert their thoughts into the target language, which is slow and unnatural compared to thinking directly in the target language. These criticisms eventually paved the way for approaches that placed oral skills at the centre, such as the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach discussed in the next unit.

1.12 Summary of Unit 1

The Grammar Translation Method is a traditional, teacher-centred method that focuses on reading literary texts, learning grammar rules deductively, translating between languages, and memorising vocabulary. It builds strong reading and writing skills and a solid knowledge of grammar, but it fails to develop speaking, listening, and real communicative ability. It remained the dominant method in language classrooms for a very long time before newer approaches, such as the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach, began to focus more on oral skills and everyday communication.

Unit 2: The Structural-Oral-Situational Approach (SOS)

2.1 Introduction and History

The Structural-Oral-Situational Approach, often shortened to the 'Situational Approach' or 'Oral Approach', developed in Britain between the 1930s and 1960s. It grew out of the work of British linguists such as Harold Palmer and A. S. Hornby, who wanted to make language teaching more scientific and more focused on speaking than the older Grammar Translation Method.

This approach came as a reaction against Grammar Translation. Instead of teaching grammar rules through translation, this approach argued that a foreign language should be taught orally first, through carefully graded structures presented in meaningful situations, and only later connected to reading and writing.

2.2 Basic Principles

Speech is Primary: Speaking is considered the foundation of language learning. Students first learn to speak the language before they read or write it.

Structures are Graded: The grammatical structures (sentence patterns) of English are arranged in an order from simple to complex, and new structures are introduced one at a time and practised thoroughly before moving to the next.

Language is Presented through Situations: New vocabulary and structures are not just explained abstractly; they are presented within believable, everyday situations (for example, at a railway station, in a shop, at home) so that meaning becomes clear through context, without needing translation.

Meaning through Demonstration: Meaning is conveyed using real objects, pictures, actions, and situations rather than translation into the mother tongue.

Habit Formation through Practice: Learning a language is viewed as building correct habits. Students repeat and practise structures until they can use them automatically and correctly, avoiding mistakes as much as possible.

Accuracy Comes First: As in GTM, correctness is highly valued, but here it is correctness in speech and structure rather than in written translation.

2.3 Key Features of the Approach

- New language items are introduced through situations rather than explained by rules or translation.
- Structures are taught step-by-step, in a carefully planned sequence (grading of structures).
- Oral practice and drilling are central classroom activities.
- Only the target language is used in the classroom (no translation).
- Reading and writing are introduced only after a structure has already been mastered orally.

- Vocabulary is limited and controlled so that students are not overloaded.

2.4 The P-P-P Framework

A very common way of describing lessons within this approach is the P-P-P framework, which stands for Presentation, Practice, and Production.

8. Presentation: The teacher introduces a new structure within a clear situation, often using pictures, objects, or a short dialogue, so students see and hear the structure being used with meaning.
9. Practice: Students practise the new structure through controlled drills, such as repetition drills or substitution drills, where the teacher guides the class carefully.
10. Production: Students use the new structure more freely, for example in short conversations or exercises, with less support from the teacher, to show they can use it independently.

2.5 Role of the Teacher

The teacher is still the central figure in the classroom, similar to GTM, but the teacher's role here is more like a skilled demonstrator and drill leader. The teacher sets up situations, models correct pronunciation and structures, leads oral drills, and carefully corrects errors so that incorrect habits do not form.

2.6 Role of the Learner

Learners are expected to listen carefully, imitate the teacher's model, and repeat structures accurately during drills. Learning is viewed largely as imitation and habit formation, so learners have a fairly controlled and responsive role rather than a creative one, especially in the early Presentation and Practice stages.

2.7 Typical Classroom Techniques

11. Repetition Drill: Students repeat a sentence or structure exactly as the teacher models it.
12. Substitution Drill: Students replace one word in a sentence pattern with another word, keeping the structure the same (for example, changing 'This is a pen' to 'This is a book').
13. Question and Answer Drill: The teacher asks a question using the target structure, and students answer using the same structure.
14. Situational Dialogue: A short conversation is built around a real-life situation, and students practise it in pairs.
15. Use of Visual Aids: Pictures, real objects (realia), and simple actions are used to show meaning without translation.

2.8 Advantages of the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach

- It gives clear priority to speaking, which was neglected in the Grammar Translation Method.
- Grading structures from simple to complex helps learners build language step-by-step without feeling overwhelmed.
- Learning through situations makes new language meaningful and memorable.
- Drilling helps build accuracy and confidence, especially for beginners.
- Because only the target language is used, students get more exposure to English in the classroom.

2.9 Disadvantages and Limitations

- Heavy drilling can become mechanical and repetitive, and students may produce correct sentences without truly understanding when to use them in real communication.
- The approach gives little room for learners' own creativity or spontaneous conversation.
- It does not prepare learners well for the unpredictability of real-life conversations outside the classroom.
- It requires careful planning and grading of structures, which demands a highly trained teacher.
- Little attention is given to functions of language (such as apologising or requesting) since the focus is mainly on grammatical structure.

2.10 Contribution of Palmer and Hornby

Harold Palmer is often regarded as one of the founders of this approach. He carried out detailed research into the vocabulary and sentence patterns most commonly used in English and argued that these should form the basis of a graded syllabus. A. S. Hornby built on Palmer's work and became famous for classifying English sentence patterns into a system of verb patterns, which greatly influenced how structures were sequenced in situational textbooks. Hornby is also well known as the compiler of one of the most widely used learner's dictionaries of English, which grew directly out of his work on structural grading.

2.11 A Sample Situational Dialogue

A typical situational lesson might be built around the situation of 'At the Railway Station'. The teacher first sets the scene using a picture of a ticket counter, then presents a short model dialogue, for example: 'Passenger: I want a ticket to Delhi, please. Clerk: Single or return? Passenger: Return, please. Clerk: That will be five hundred rupees.' After the teacher models this dialogue clearly, students repeat it chorally and then in pairs, gradually substituting new destinations and prices through substitution drills, before finally performing a similar dialogue of their own using the same structure.

A Closer Look at Substitution Drills

Substitution drills are one of the most common techniques of this approach, and it is worth seeing exactly how one develops step by step.

Step	Teacher Says	Student Response
1	This is a book. (holds up a book)	This is a book.
2	Pen. (holds up a pen, as a cue)	This is a pen.
3	Bag.	This is a bag.
4	Chair.	This is a chair.

As the table shows, the sentence structure ('This is a ____') stays exactly the same throughout the drill, while only the final word changes each time based on the teacher's cue. This kind of practice helps learners produce the structure automatically and with confidence before they move on to freer speech.

2.12 Comparing GTM and the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach

Feature	Grammar Translation Method	Structural-Oral-Situational Approach
Main skill focus	Reading and writing	Speaking (oral skills first)
Use of mother tongue	Freely used for explanation	Avoided; only target language used
How grammar is taught	Explicit rules, then translation practice	Through situations and structured drills
View of learning	Mental/intellectual exercise	Habit formation through practice
Classroom activity	Translation, reading, memorising rules	Drills, dialogues, situational practice
Teacher's role	Explains rules, corrects translation	Models language, leads drills
Main weakness	No real communication skill developed	Mechanical drilling, little creativity

2.13 Summary of Unit 2

The Structural-Oral-Situational Approach shifted the focus of language teaching from reading and translation to speaking and structure. By presenting language through real-life situations and practising it through careful drills, this approach gave learners a stronger foundation in spoken English than the Grammar Translation Method. However, its heavy reliance on repetition and controlled practice still left little room for genuine, creative communication — a gap that Modern Approaches later tried to fill.

Unit 3: Modern Approaches — CLT and TBLT

3.1 Introduction to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Communicative Language Teaching, usually called CLT, developed in the 1970s and 1980s as a reaction to the limitations of earlier methods like the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach. Linguists began to argue that knowing grammar rules and structures is not enough — learners must also know how to use language appropriately in real social situations. This idea of 'communicative competence' became the foundation of CLT.

The central idea of CLT is that the main goal of language teaching is to enable learners to communicate meaningfully, not simply to produce grammatically perfect sentences. Fluency and the successful exchange of meaning are valued as much as, or more than, grammatical accuracy.

3.2 Principles of CLT

Communicative Competence: The overall aim is to develop the learner's ability to use language appropriately and effectively for real communication, including knowing what to say, how to say it politely, and when to say it.

Meaning is Central: Activities focus on exchanging real meaning and information, not on producing perfect grammatical forms.

Fluency and Accuracy Both Matter: Fluency (speaking smoothly and communicating successfully) is given importance alongside accuracy (grammatical correctness), and errors are seen as a natural part of learning.

Authentic Language and Materials: Real-life materials such as newspaper articles, menus, timetables, and everyday conversations are used, instead of artificial textbook sentences.

Learner-Centred Classroom: The learner is at the centre of the learning process; the teacher acts as a guide and facilitator rather than the sole source of knowledge.

Integration of the Four Skills: Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are taught together, as they naturally occur together in real communication, rather than being kept in separate compartments.

3.3 Features of CLT

- Activities involve an information gap, meaning one student has information the other does not, so real communication is needed to exchange it.
- Students often work in pairs or small groups rather than only listening to the teacher.
- The target language is used for real classroom management and communication, not just as a subject to study.
- Grammar is taught, but usually through use and context rather than through isolated drills.
- Learners are encouraged to negotiate meaning, ask for clarification, and correct themselves.

3.4 Role of the Teacher and Learner in CLT

In CLT, the teacher becomes a facilitator, guide, and sometimes a co-communicator, organising activities, monitoring group and pair work, and offering support when needed rather than controlling every response. The learner becomes an active participant and negotiator of meaning, working with classmates to complete tasks, express ideas, and solve communicative problems.

3.5 Common Classroom Activities in CLT

16. Information Gap Activities: Two students have different pieces of information (such as two slightly different pictures or timetables) and must talk to each other to complete the full picture.
17. Role Play: Students act out a real-life situation, such as booking a hotel room or ordering food, using appropriate language for the context.
18. Pair and Group Discussions: Students discuss a topic, share opinions, or solve a problem together in the target language.
19. Games with a Communicative Purpose: Simple games that require students to ask questions, guess, or exchange information.
20. Simulations: Longer, more complex role plays where students take on realistic roles to solve a problem, such as planning an event.

3.6 Advantages of CLT

- It develops real, usable communication skills rather than just theoretical knowledge of grammar.
- It increases student motivation because activities are meaningful and often enjoyable.
- It gives learners confidence to speak, since mistakes are treated as a normal part of learning.
- It prepares learners for real-world situations they are likely to face outside the classroom.

3.7 Components of Communicative Competence

Scholars such as Canale and Swain broke down 'communicative competence' into four smaller parts, which are useful to remember for a deeper understanding of CLT.

Grammatical Competence: Knowledge of vocabulary, sentence structure, and pronunciation rules — the traditional area of language knowledge.

Sociolinguistic Competence: Knowing how to use language appropriately in different social situations, for example, speaking more formally to a stranger and more casually to a friend.

Discourse Competence: The ability to connect sentences and ideas together smoothly to produce a coherent conversation, story, or piece of writing.

Strategic Competence: The ability to overcome problems in communication, for example, by rephrasing an idea, asking for repetition, or using gestures when the right word cannot be recalled.

3.8 Limitations of CLT

- Grammar accuracy may suffer if too much focus is placed on fluency alone.
- It can be difficult to use in very large classes or classes with limited time and resources.
- It requires learners to take more responsibility for their own learning, which can be challenging for beginners.
- Assessing communicative ability is harder and less objective than marking a grammar test.

3.9 Introduction to Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Task-Based Language Teaching, or TBLT, can be seen as a more focused development within the communicative movement. Instead of organising a lesson around a grammar point or a general communicative function, TBLT organises the whole lesson around the completion of a meaningful task, such as planning a trip, solving a puzzle, or writing a short report together. Language becomes the tool needed to complete the task, rather than being the direct object of study.

3.10 Principles of TBLT

The Task is Central: A 'task' is an activity where learners use language to achieve a real outcome, such as reaching an agreement, sharing information, or creating something, and the outcome — not the language form — is the main focus.

Meaning-Focused Language Use: Learners use whatever language they already know to complete the task, focusing on getting the meaning across successfully.

Language Focus Comes Later: After completing the task, learners look back at the language they used and receive teaching on useful structures or vocabulary, so grammar is examined after real communication rather than before it.

Learner Independence: Learners plan their own way of completing the task, encouraging problem-solving, cooperation, and independent thinking.

3.11 Structure of a Task-Based Lesson

21. Pre-Task: The teacher introduces the topic and the task, explains the goal clearly, and may pre-teach a few essential words, without giving away the exact language needed.
22. Task Cycle: Students complete the task itself, usually in pairs or groups (Task); they then prepare to report their results to the class (Planning); and finally, they present their outcome to the class or another group (Report).
23. Language Focus: The teacher highlights useful language forms that came up during the task, and students practise these forms through short, focused exercises.

3.12 Advantages of TBLT

- It gives learners a real, practical purpose for using language, which increases engagement.
- It naturally encourages fluency, negotiation of meaning, and problem-solving skills.

- Because grammar is taught after the task, it connects directly to language the learners actually needed and used.
- It suits learners of different levels, since each learner can use whatever language they currently know to complete the task.

3.13 Limitations of TBLT

- Weaker students may avoid using new or challenging language, sticking to what feels safe.
- It requires careful planning by the teacher to design tasks that are neither too easy nor too difficult.
- Assessment can be complicated, since the focus is on successful task completion rather than a fixed set of language points.
- Classroom management of group tasks can be more demanding than a traditional teacher-led lesson.

3.14 Sample Short Communicative Lesson (Using CLT/TBLT Ideas)

Topic: Asking for and giving directions.

Pre-Task: Teacher shows a simple map of a town and asks, 'Have you ever asked someone for directions? What did you say?' Teacher pre-teaches key phrases such as 'turn left', 'go straight', and 'it is next to'.

Task: In pairs, Student A has a map with certain places marked, and Student B has the same map with different places marked. They must ask and answer questions to find the missing places on their partner's map.

Report: A few pairs share with the class one direction they gave or received during the activity.

Language Focus: The teacher writes useful phrases that were used or needed on the board and gives short practice, such as filling gaps in new direction sentences.

Common Types of Tasks Used in TBLT

Listing Tasks: Learners brainstorm and list items, for example, listing reasons why people learn English.

Ordering and Sorting Tasks: Learners rank or classify information, for example, ranking a set of qualities in order of importance for a good friend.

Comparing Tasks: Learners compare information from different sources to find similarities and differences, for example, comparing two holiday packages.

Problem-Solving Tasks: Learners work together to solve a puzzle or a realistic problem, such as deciding how to spend a limited budget.

Sharing Personal Experience Tasks: Learners talk about their own experiences, opinions, or stories related to a topic.

Creative or Project Tasks: Learners work together to produce something, such as a short poster, plan, or presentation, often combining several of the task types above.

3.15 Summary of Unit 3

Modern Approaches, especially Communicative Language Teaching and Task-Based Language Teaching, moved the focus of English teaching away from memorising rules or drilling fixed structures and towards real, meaningful communication. CLT emphasises communicative competence through authentic, learner-centred activities, while TBLT organises entire lessons around completing real-world tasks, with language study following naturally from the task itself. Together, these approaches try to prepare learners to use English confidently and appropriately in real life.

Unit 4: Humanistic Approaches

4.1 Introduction and Philosophical Foundations

Humanistic Approaches to language teaching developed mainly from the 1970s onward, influenced by humanistic psychology, which stresses the whole person — their feelings, emotions, and individual identity — rather than treating the learner simply as someone who must absorb information or form habits.

These approaches argue that the affective domain (a person's feelings, emotions, attitudes, and motivation) is just as important as the cognitive domain (knowledge and thinking skills) in successful language learning. If learners feel anxious, embarrassed, or threatened, they are less likely to learn well. Therefore, Humanistic Approaches try to create a supportive, non-threatening, and emotionally safe classroom atmosphere where learners feel respected and valued as individuals.

4.2 Core Ideas Shared by Humanistic Methods

- The learner's feelings, self-esteem, and personal identity matter as much as linguistic accuracy.
- Learning happens best in a relaxed, low-anxiety, cooperative environment.
- The teacher's role often shifts from an authority figure to a facilitator, counsellor, or guide.
- Learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and to express themselves as whole people, not just as language producers.
- Mistakes are treated gently, as a natural part of learning, rather than something to be harshly corrected.

4.3 Total Physical Response (TPR)

Total Physical Response was developed by James Asher. It is based on the idea that people learn a language best when they connect words directly to physical actions, similar to how young children learn their first language by responding physically to what they hear long before they speak.

Method: The teacher gives commands in the target language (for example, 'Stand up', 'Open the door', 'Touch your nose'), and learners physically respond by carrying out the action, without needing to speak at first.

Key Features: Speaking is delayed until learners feel ready; listening comprehension is developed first through action; the classroom atmosphere is playful and low-stress; grammar is absorbed naturally rather than explicitly taught.

Strength: It reduces anxiety, especially for beginners, and can be very effective for young learners and for teaching action-related vocabulary.

Limitation: It becomes difficult to use for abstract vocabulary or advanced language, and it does not fully develop speaking skills on its own.

4.4 The Silent Way

The Silent Way was developed by Caleb Gattegno. As the name suggests, the teacher speaks as little as possible, encouraging learners to discover language rules and produce language on their own.

Method: The teacher often uses coloured rods (called Cuisenaire rods) and colour-coded charts to represent sounds, words, or grammar points, and guides students mainly through gestures, silence, and occasional short prompts rather than explanations.

Key Features: Learners are pushed to think for themselves and correct their own errors; the teacher's silence forces students to take responsibility for their own speech; learning is seen as a process of discovery rather than imitation.

Strength: It builds learner independence, concentration, and self-reliance.

Limitation: It can feel unusual or uncomfortable for learners used to more teacher guidance, and it requires special training and materials for the teacher.

4.5 Suggestopedia (Desuggestopedia)

Suggestopedia was developed by the Bulgarian psychologist Georgi Lozanov. It is based on the idea that people can learn much faster when psychological barriers (such as fear of failure or self-doubt) are removed, and when the mind and body are both relaxed.

Method: Classrooms are made comfortable and pleasant, often with soft classical or baroque music playing in the background, comfortable seating, and dim or soft lighting. New material, especially dialogues, is often presented and repeated while soothing music plays, helping students absorb information in a relaxed state.

Key Features: Great attention is given to the physical environment and mood of the classroom; learners are encouraged to adopt a new, more confident identity or name to reduce fear of making mistakes; a large amount of vocabulary and dialogue is presented at once, trusting the relaxed mind to absorb it.

Strength: It reduces learner anxiety and can build confidence and comfort with the language.

Limitation: It requires special classroom setups that are not practical everywhere, and there is limited scientific proof that it works better than other methods.

4.6 Community Language Learning (CLL)

Community Language Learning was developed by Charles Curran, based on principles from counselling psychology. In this method, the teacher acts like a 'counsellor' supporting a 'client' (the learner), and learners are seen as a community that learns together and supports one another.

Method: Learners sit in a circle and decide what they want to say in their mother tongue; the teacher (counsellor) translates it into the target language; the learner then repeats the target-language version, often into a recorder, and later the whole conversation is written down, transcribed, and studied together as a group.

Key Features: Learners have a lot of control over the content of the lesson, since they choose what to talk about; the classroom builds a sense of community and mutual trust; the teacher provides emotional and linguistic support rather than direct instruction.

Strength: It lowers anxiety by giving learners real ownership of what they say, and builds a supportive group atmosphere.

Limitation: It can be slow, depends heavily on a skilled 'counsellor' teacher, and offers little structured grading of language content.

4.7 A Closer Look: Sample Classroom Moments

TPR in Action: A teacher says 'Walk to the door, open it, and close it again,' and the whole class performs the actions together, laughing and moving, with no pressure to speak until they feel ready — usually after several sessions of listening and acting.

The Silent Way in Action: The teacher points to a chart of coloured blocks representing sounds, taps a sequence, and waits. A student attempts to say the corresponding word. If it is wrong, the teacher does not correct verbally but simply taps again or gestures, encouraging the student and classmates to work out the correct sound together.

Suggestopedia in Action: Students sit comfortably as the teacher reads a long dialogue aloud twice — once normally and once in a musical, rhythmic tone over soft baroque music — while students simply listen and follow along in their books, absorbing the language without any pressure to memorise immediately.

CLL in Action: A small circle of learners decides they want to talk about their weekend plans. One learner says a sentence in the mother tongue; the teacher quietly translates it into English near their ear; the learner repeats the English version into a recorder for the whole group to hear and later study.

4.8 Distinguishing Between the Humanistic Methods

Method	Main Tool/Focus	Teacher's Role
Total Physical Response	Physical action and commands	Commander/Model — gives commands, demonstrates actions
The Silent Way	Coloured rods and charts, learner self-correction	Mostly silent guide — minimal talking
Suggestopedia	Relaxed environment, music, new identities	Authority figure who creates trust and comfort
Community Language Learning	Learner-chosen content, translation, group work	Counsellor — supports and translates for learners

How Humanistic Approaches Relate to Modern Approaches

It is useful to see that Humanistic Approaches and Modern Approaches like CLT are not opposites; in fact, they share a lot of common ground. Both move away from a strict, teacher-controlled classroom,

both value the learner's own contribution, and both try to lower the pressure that can come from constant correction. The main difference is one of focus: Humanistic Approaches concentrate more directly on emotional comfort and personal identity, while CLT and TBLT concentrate more directly on developing practical, real-world communication skills. Many modern classrooms borrow from both traditions at once — for example, using pair work and communicative tasks (from CLT) inside a warm, low-anxiety, error-tolerant atmosphere (from Humanistic Approaches).

4.9 Advantages of Humanistic Approaches

- They reduce learner anxiety and build confidence, which can be especially helpful for shy or nervous learners.
- They respect learners as whole people, valuing feelings and personal identity, not just test performance.
- They can build strong learner independence, self-correction skills, and group cooperation.

4.10 Limitations of Humanistic Approaches

- Some methods (like Suggestopedia) need special resources, such as particular seating, music, or trained teachers, which are not available in every classroom.
- Language content may not be presented in a well-graded, systematic order, which can leave gaps in learners' grammar knowledge.
- Progress can be slower compared to more structured methods, especially for learners who need to pass formal exams quickly.
- Some methods (like the Silent Way) may feel strange or uncomfortable to learners who are used to more direct teaching.

4.11 Summary of Unit 4

Humanistic Approaches remind us that language learning is not only a mental or mechanical activity but also an emotional one. Methods such as Total Physical Response, the Silent Way, Suggestopedia, and Community Language Learning each try, in different ways, to reduce anxiety, respect the learner's identity, and build a supportive classroom atmosphere. While each method has its own particular limitations, together they highlight the importance of the affective domain in successful language teaching.

A Quick Historical Timeline of ELT Methods

Seeing these methods placed on a rough timeline helps make sense of how and why English Language Teaching changed over time. Remember that these dates are approximate, and older methods often continued to be used even after newer ones appeared.

Period (Approximate)	Dominant Method/Approach	Main Idea
Late 1700s – early 1900s	Grammar Translation Method	Learn grammar rules and translate literary texts
1920s – 1960s	Structural-Oral-Situational Approach	Learn graded structures orally through situations
1950s – 1970s	Audio-Lingual and early Humanistic Methods	Habit formation through drills; attention to feelings begins
1970s – 1980s	Humanistic Approaches (TPR, Silent Way, Suggestopedia, CLL)	Focus on the affective domain and the whole learner
1970s – 1990s	Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)	Focus on real communication and communicative competence
1990s – present	Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and beyond	Organise learning around completing meaningful tasks

Why Methods Kept Changing

Each new method was usually a reaction to the weaknesses of the method before it. Grammar Translation ignored speech, so the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach brought back oral practice. That approach became too mechanical, so Humanistic Approaches restored attention to feelings, and Communicative and Task-Based approaches restored attention to real, meaningful communication. Understanding this chain of cause and reaction is very useful for exam questions that ask you to trace the development of ELT methods.

Comparing All Four Approaches

Approach	Main Focus	View of the Learner	Key Weakness
Grammar Translation Method	Reading, writing, translation, grammar rules	Passive receiver of rules	No real communication skill
Structural-Oral-Situational	Speaking through graded structures and drills	Imitator forming habits	Mechanical, little creativity
Modern Approaches (CLT/TBLT)	Real communication and task completion	Active communicator/problem-solver	Accuracy may be neglected
Humanistic Approaches	Emotional comfort and personal growth	Whole person with feelings	Less systematic grading of language

Choosing the Right Method for the Right Context

No single method is perfect for every situation. A good teacher understands the strengths and weaknesses of each approach and chooses or combines techniques based on the learners' needs, age, level, and goals, as well as the resources and time available.

- For exam-focused reading and grammar accuracy, elements of the Grammar Translation Method may still be useful.
- For building basic oral confidence and correct sentence patterns among beginners, Structural-Oral-Situational drilling can help.
- For developing real-world speaking and social communication skills, Communicative Language Teaching and Task-Based Language Teaching are most effective.
- For anxious, shy, or very young learners, Humanistic techniques can help build confidence and a positive attitude towards learning English.

Sample Micro-Lesson Plan (Combining Two Methods)

The example below combines ideas from the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach and Communicative Language Teaching to teach the structure 'Would you like...?' for making polite offers.

Stage	Method Used	Activity Description	Time
Warm-up	Humanistic (low-anxiety start)	Teacher greets students warmly and asks a simple, friendly question to each student to settle the class.	5 min
Presentation	Structural-Oral-Situational	Teacher presents the situation of offering tea/coffee to a guest at home, modelling 'Would you like some tea?' with pictures.	10 min
Controlled Practice	Structural-Oral-Situational	Students repeat the structure in a substitution drill, changing the offered item (tea, coffee, biscuits, water).	10 min
Communicative Task	CLT/TBLT	In pairs, students role-play a 'guest and host' situation, making and responding to real offers using their own choice of items.	15 min
Feedback and Language Focus	CLT	Teacher notes common errors heard during role play and reviews the correct structure with the whole class.	5 min
Wrap-up	Humanistic	Teacher asks students to share, in one sentence, what they enjoyed about the activity, building a positive and supportive close.	5 min

Why This Lesson Combines Methods Well

This micro-lesson uses structured, situational practice to build accuracy and confidence with a new grammatical pattern, and then moves into a freer, communicative role play so that students use the pattern for genuine, meaningful interaction. A gentle, humanistic tone at the beginning and end helps keep anxiety low throughout the lesson, showing how combining methods thoughtfully can be more effective than relying on just one approach.

Key Figures in ELT — Quick Reference

Exam questions sometimes ask you to match a method with the person who developed it. Use this table for a quick, easy revision.

Name	Associated Method/Contribution
Harold Palmer	Pioneer of the Structural-Oral-Situational (Oral) Approach; graded vocabulary and structures
A. S. Hornby	Developed the system of verb patterns; compiled a famous learner's dictionary; Situational Approach
James Asher	Developed Total Physical Response (TPR)
Caleb Gattegno	Developed the Silent Way
Georgi Lozanov	Developed Suggestopedia (Desuggestopedia)
Charles Curran	Developed Community Language Learning (CLL), based on counselling psychology
Canale and Swain	Defined the four components of communicative competence, used in CLT

Common Mistakes Students Make in Exams (and How to Avoid Them)

- Mixing up the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach with the Grammar Translation Method — remember, GTM focuses on reading/translation, while the Situational Approach focuses on speaking through structures.
- Forgetting that in TBLT, language focus comes after the task, not before it — this is a key difference from the P-P-P framework, where presentation comes first.
- Confusing the four Humanistic Methods — use the quick reference table in Unit 4 (tool used and teacher's role) to keep them separate in your mind.
- Writing only definitions without examples — always try to add at least one classroom example when explaining a method, as this shows deeper understanding to the examiner.
- Forgetting to mention both advantages and disadvantages when a question asks you to 'discuss' or 'evaluate' a method.

Glossary of Key Terms

Affective Domain: The emotional side of learning — feelings, attitudes, motivation, and self-confidence.

Communicative Competence: The ability to use language correctly and appropriately in real social situations, not just knowing grammar rules.

Deductive Teaching: Teaching a rule first, then giving examples and practice (rule before example).

Drill: A controlled, repeated practice activity used to build accuracy and automatic use of a language pattern.

Grading (of structures): Arranging language content in an order from simple to complex for teaching.

Information Gap: A communicative activity where one person has information another person needs, requiring real interaction to share it.

Learner-Centred: A classroom approach where the learner's needs, interests, and activity are the main focus, rather than the teacher's lecture.

Realia: Real objects (not pictures or descriptions) used in the classroom to show meaning directly.

Target Language: The language being learned (in this course, English).

Task: A classroom activity in which learners use language to achieve a real, non-linguistic outcome or goal.

Fluency: The ability to speak or write smoothly and naturally, without too much hesitation, focusing on getting the message across.

Accuracy: Correctness in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Inductive Teaching: Teaching where learners see several examples first and work out the grammar rule for themselves (example before rule).

Habit Formation: The idea, especially important in the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach, that learning a language means building automatic, correct patterns of use through repeated practice.

Facilitator: A teacher who guides, supports, and encourages learning rather than simply lecturing or controlling every answer.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1. Why did the Grammar Translation Method continue to be used for so long, despite its weaknesses?

It continued for so long mainly because it was simple to use, needed very little special training or equipment, worked well for large classes, and matched the traditional aim of many schools at the time, which was to help students read classical or literary texts rather than to hold everyday conversations.

Q2. Is the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach the same as the Audio-Lingual Method?

They are closely related but not identical. Both rely heavily on drilling and habit formation, and both developed around a similar time. However, the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach developed in Britain and places strong emphasis on presenting language through believable situations, while the Audio-Lingual Method developed in the United States and drew more directly on behaviourist psychology and contrastive analysis between languages.

Q3. Can a teacher use more than one method in the same classroom?

Yes. In real classrooms, experienced teachers often blend techniques from different methods depending on the lesson's aim. For example, a teacher might use a short grammar explanation (from GTM), a controlled drill (from the Situational Approach), and a communicative role play (from CLT) all within a single well-planned lesson, as shown earlier in the sample micro-lesson plan.

Q4. What is meant by 'learner-centred' teaching?

A learner-centred classroom is one where the learners' needs, interests, and active participation are placed at the centre of the lesson, rather than the teacher simply lecturing or controlling every response. Modern Approaches and Humanistic Approaches are both strongly learner-centred, while the Grammar Translation Method and, to some extent, the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach, are more teacher-centred.

Q5. Why is the 'affective domain' important in language learning?

The affective domain refers to a learner's feelings, confidence, and attitudes. If learners feel anxious, embarrassed, or bored, they are far less likely to take risks with the new language, participate actively, or remember what they have learned. Humanistic Approaches focus specifically on lowering this kind of anxiety so that the door to learning stays open.

Q6. How should I decide which method to use as a teacher?

A good starting point is to think about your specific learners (their age, level, and goals), the skill you want to develop (reading, speaking, writing, or listening), the time and resources you have, and the classroom atmosphere you want to create. There is rarely one 'correct' method; the best teachers understand many methods and select or combine techniques thoughtfully for each specific class and purpose.

C. Short Answer Practice

1. Name any three classroom techniques used in the Grammar Translation Method.
2. List two advantages and two disadvantages of the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach.
3. Give one example each of an information-gap activity and a role-play activity.
4. Name the four methods discussed under Humanistic Approaches.
5. Explain, in one or two sentences, why methods in ELT kept changing over time.

Important Exam-Oriented Questions**Short Notes (Likely Q.1 / Q.6 Style)**

1. Grammar Translation Method — key features
2. Situational presentation of language
3. P-P-P Framework
4. Information gap activity
5. Total Physical Response
6. The Silent Way
7. Suggestopedia
8. Community Language Learning
9. Task-Based Language Teaching
10. Affective domain in language teaching

Long / Essay-Type Questions (Likely Q.2 – Q.5 Style)

1. Explain the Grammar Translation Method with its principles, techniques, advantages, and disadvantages.
2. Describe the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach. How is it different from the Grammar Translation Method?
3. Explain the principles of Communicative Language Teaching with suitable classroom examples.
4. Discuss Task-Based Language Teaching. Explain the stages of a task-based lesson with an example.
5. What are Humanistic Approaches to language teaching? Discuss any two methods in detail.
6. Compare and contrast any two ELT methods studied in this course, and state which one you would prefer for teaching beginners, giving reasons.
7. Design a short micro-lesson plan using techniques from at least two different ELT methods, and explain your choices.

Model Short Answers for Quick Revision**Q. What is the Grammar Translation Method?**

Model Answer: The Grammar Translation Method is a traditional way of teaching a foreign language that developed in Europe for teaching classical languages like Latin. It focuses on reading literary texts, learning grammar rules by heart, and translating passages between the target language and the mother tongue. Speaking and listening are almost completely ignored, and the mother tongue is used freely to explain meaning. While it builds strong reading and grammar knowledge, it fails to develop real communication skills.

Q. What is the Structural-Oral-Situational Approach?

Model Answer: The Structural-Oral-Situational Approach is a method developed in Britain that teaches language orally through carefully graded sentence structures presented within real-life situations. It uses drills such as repetition and substitution to build accuracy and correct habits, and it avoids using the mother tongue in the classroom. It gave much more importance to speaking than the Grammar Translation Method, though it has been criticised for being too mechanical.

Q. What is Communicative Language Teaching?

Model Answer: Communicative Language Teaching is a modern approach that aims to develop learners' communicative competence — their ability to use language appropriately and effectively in real social situations. It uses authentic materials, learner-centred activities such as role plays and information-gap tasks, and treats mistakes as a natural part of learning, valuing fluency alongside accuracy.

Q. What is Task-Based Language Teaching?

Model Answer: Task-Based Language Teaching organises a whole lesson around the completion of a meaningful task, such as solving a problem or sharing information, rather than around a grammar point. Learners use whatever language they know to complete the task (pre-task, task cycle), and the teacher highlights useful language only after the task is finished (language focus), connecting grammar study directly to learners' real communicative needs.

Q. What are Humanistic Approaches?

Model Answer: Humanistic Approaches are methods of language teaching that give as much importance to learners' feelings, confidence, and identity (the affective domain) as to grammar and vocabulary. Methods such as Total Physical Response, the Silent Way, Suggestopedia, and Community Language Learning try, in different ways, to lower anxiety and create a supportive classroom atmosphere so that learners can learn language more comfortably and confidently.

All the best for your studies and your examinations!