ENGLISH TEACHING METHODS

Study Material by

Imrul Kayes Alam Sarkar

Asst. Professor & HOD

Dept. of English, S.F.S Mahavidyalaya

Throughout the history of teaching languages a number of different teaching approaches and methodologies have been tried and tested with some being more popular and effective than others. If you’re just beginning your TEFL career, it would be beneficial to be familiar with a few of these.

The Direct Method

If you’ve ever heard the Direct Method being taught, you may have rightly mistaken it for some sort of military drill, which is not far off as it was first established in France and Germany in the early 1900’s to assist soldiers to communicate in a second language quickly.

The direct method of teaching English is also known as the Natural Method. It’s used to teach a number of different languages not just English, and the main idea of the Direct Method is that it only uses the target language that the students are trying to learn.

Its main focus is oral skill and it is taught via repetitive drilling. Grammar is taught using an inductive way and students need to try and guess the rules through the teacher’s oral presentation.  
Today popular forms of the Direct Method are Callan and Berlitz.

The Grammar Translation Method

Just like its name suggests, this method of teaching English is grammar heavy and relies a lot on translation. This is the traditional or ‘classical’ way of learning a language and it’s still commonly used when learning some languages. Some countries prefer this style of teaching and the main idea behind this method is that the students learn all grammar rules, so they’re able to translate a number of sentences. This is particularly common for those students who wish to study literature at a deeper level.

The Audio Lingual Method

The Audio Lingual Method otherwise known as the New Key Method or Army Method is based on a behavirourist theory that things are able to be learned by constant reinforcement. However, just like in the army when someone behaves badly (or in this case bad use of English), the learner receives negative feedback and the contrary happens when a student demonstrates good use of English.

This is related to the Direct Method and just like its predecessor it only uses the target language. The biggest difference between the Audio Lingual Method and the Direct Method is its focus of teaching. The Direct Methods focuses on the teaching of vocabulary whereas the Audio Lingual Method focuses on specific grammar teachings.

The Structural Approach

As the name suggests, the method is all about structure. The idea is that any language is made up of complex grammar rules. These rules, according to this approach need to be learnt in a specific order, for example the logical thing would be to teach the verb “to be” prior to teaching the present continuous which requires using the auxiliary form of the verb “to be.”

Suggestopedia

This is a behaviourist theory and related to pseudoscience. This method relies heavily on students’ belief about the method’s effectiveness. This theory is intended to offer learners various choices, which in turn helps them become more responsible for their learning.

It relies a lot on the atmosphere and the physical surroundings of the class. It’s essential that all learners feel equally comfortable and confident. When teachers are training to use the Suggestopedia method, there’s a lot of art and music involved. Each Suggestopedia lesson is divided into three different phases – 1. Deciphering 2. Concert Session 3. Elaboration.

Total Physical Response

Total Physical Response, otherwise known as TPR is an approach that follows the idea of ‘learning by doing’. Beginners will learn English through a series of repetitive actions such as “Stand up”, “Open your book”, “Close the door”, and “Walk to the window and open it.” With TPR, the most important skill is aural comprehension and everything else will follow naturally later.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The idea behind this approach is to help learners communicate more effectively and correctly in realistic situations that they may find themselves in. This type of teaching involves focusing on important functions like suggesting, thanking, inviting, complaining, and asking for directions to name but a few.

The Silent Way

The Silent Way emphasises learner autonomy. The teacher acts merely as a facilitator trying to encourage students to be more active in their learning. The main of this way of teaching is for the teacher to say very little, so students can take control of their learning. There’s a big emphasis on pronunciation and a large chunk of the lesson focuses on it. This method of learning English follows a structural syllabus and grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation are constantly drilled and recycled for reinforcement. The teacher evaluates their students through careful observation, and it’s even possible that they may never set a formal test as learners are encouraged to correct their own language errors.

Community Language Learning

This is probably one of the English teaching methods where the student feels the safest as there’s a great emphasis on the relationship and bond between the student and teacher. Unlike a lot of the other methods and approaches of teaching English as a Second Language, a lot of the L1 (mother tongue) is used for translation purposes.

Task Based Language Learning

The main aim of this approach to learning is task completion. Usually, relevant and interesting tasks are set by the teacher and students are expected to draw on their pre-existing knowledge of English to complete the task with as few errors as possible.

The Lexical Approach

The Lexical syllabus or approach is based on computer studies that have previously identified the most commonly used words. This approach in teaching focuses on vocabulary acquisition and teaching lexical chunks in order of their frequency and use. Teachers of the Lexical Approach place a great emphasis on authentic materials and realistic scenarios for more valuable learning.

**THE DIRECT METHOD OF TEACHING ENGLISH  ITS AIM AND PRINCIPLE, ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES**

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·         *Since the earliest times, there have been many changes in the ways of learning and teaching of English language.*

·         *Let us have a look at the direct methods of learning /teaching the English language.*

·         *Since the grammar-translation method wasn’t very effective in preparing students to use the target language communicatively, the direct method became popular.*

***What is meant by direct method of teaching English?***

·         The method Direct is named “direct” because meaning should be connected directly with the target language without translation in to the native language.

·         Procedure

·         Only English used

·         A lot of teacher-students dialogues, later systematic  teaching of grammar and vocabulary

·         Mainly speaking, both communication and stressed a grammatical syllabus

·         The Direct teaching method is a method of foreign and second language teaching which consist that only the target language should be used in class and meaning should be communicated “directly” by associating speech forms with action, objects, mime, gesture and situations.

·         The direct method has one very basic rule: no translation is allowed. In fact, the direct method receives its name from the fact that meaning is to be connected directly with the English language, without going through the process of translating in to the students’ native language.

***Characteristics of direct method of teaching English:-***

·         *The direct method of teaching English is one the most widely known methods. It enjoyed immense popularity because it overcame the two major defects of the Grammar-Translation method. It substituted “Language contact” for “Grammar recitation” and “Language use” for translation.*

·         *The salient feature of the direct method of English teaching as follows:*

*A.      Emphasis on oral language*

*B.      Intensive speech practice, usually with training in phonetics.*

*C.      The exclusive use new language.*

*D.      The approach initially inacceptable any choice to the mother tongue either for exercise on translation or for clarification of vocabulary and grammar.*

*E.       It was hopefulness expected that by banishing the language from the classroom the students would be compelled to do their thinking in the new medium.*

*F.       The learner experiences the new language in the same way in which he has experienced his mother tongue.*

***Aims of direct method of teaching English:-***

·         *The direct method aims at establishing a direct bond between experience and expression. According to the direct method, the students should think directly in English.*

·         *There should be no intervention of the mother tongue in the translation method the student comes across a sentence in the English language (say E).  He immediately thinks of its native language equivalent (say N), and then he thinks of the idea or the concept underlying that sentence. So in the translation method the link is like this:*

*E----------> N-------------> C*

·         *Where’ E ‘stands for the English language, N for the native language and c for the concept.*

·         *In the direct method there is no intervention of the native language. So the link is like this:*

*E-------------> C*

·         *The direct method aims at developing an instinctive unerring language sense in the people.*

***The principles of the Direct Method in teaching English:-***

**1.       Reading in the target language should be taught from the beginning of the language instruction; however, the reading skill will be developed through practice with speaking. Language is primarily speech. Culture consists of more than the fine arts (e.g. in this lesson we observed the students studying geography and cultural values.**

**2.       Objects (e.g., realia or pictures) present in the immediate classroom environment should be used to help students understand the meaning.**

**3.       The native language shouldn’t be used in the classroom.**

**4.       The teacher should demonstrate, not explain or translate. It is desirable that students make a direct association between the target language and meaning.**

**5.       Students should learn to think in the target language as soon as possible. Vocabulary is acquired more naturally if students use it in full sentences, rather than memorizing.**

**6.       The purpose of language learning is communication (therefore, students need to learn how to ask questions as well as answer them).**

**7.       Pronunciation should be worked on right from the beginning of language instruction.**

**8.       Self-correction facilitates language learning.**

**9.       Lesson should contain some conversational activity—some opportunity for students to use language in real contexts. Students should be encouraged to speak as much as possible.**

**10.   Grammar should be taught inductively. There may never be an explicit grammar rule given.**

**11.   Writing is an important skill, to be developed from the beginning of language instruction.**

**12.   The syllabus is based on situations or topics, not usually on linguistic structures.**

**13.   Learning another language also involves learning how speakers of that language live.**

Advantages of Direct Method in Teaching English:-

·         The following are the advantages of the Direct Method in teaching English:-

·         Direct method helps learner to acquire correct pronunciation.

·         It provides better understanding

·         Time saving

·         Helped in teaching idioms

·         It provides better fluency of language

·         Based on psychological principle

·         No gap between active and passive vocabularies.

**1.     It is natural method:**

·         In the direct method the order of teaching is observing, listening, speaking, reading and writing. This is the natural order of learning a language. The method makes use of demonstration and conversation.

**2.     It gives fluency of speech:**

·         *As a lot of attention is paid to oral training in this method, the students acquire fluency of speech. This is the reason why students who are taught by the direct are fluent speakers as compared to those who are taught by the translation method.*

***3.     It improves pronunciation:***

·         As the students are made to speak a lot and they are also taught phonetics, their pronunciation improves.

**4.     It aids written work:**

·         Fluency of speech leads to case in writing.  To express themselves in writing, the students have only to learn spellings, if a students can express as himself clearly in speaking, he can express himself in writing as well.

5.     It facilities the study of literature:

·         It is believed that since the student acquires an ear for the language in direct method, it facilities the study of literature.

**6.     It makes use of audio-visual aids:**

·         Audio-visual aids are used in the direct method. This makes the lesson interesting.

**Disadvantages of Direct Method Teaching of English language:-**

·         Direct method is difficult as there no use of mother language.

·         It isn’t economical as it is requires various teaching aids.

·         Mayn’t be suitable for average or weaker students.

·         It requires competent teachers.

·         It gives overemphasis on listening and speaking skills.

·         It isn’t effective in early stages of learning.

**1.     It is an incomplete method:**

·         Direct method lays too much emphasis on speaking. It neglects reading and writing. The tendency is to give insufficient attention to reading and not to teach written work systematically.

**2.     It requires efficient teachers:**

·         Every teacher can’t make a success of the direct method. Only that teacher can work out this method successfully, who is good at English? Especially conversational English.

**3.     It requires linguistic minded students:**

·         Direct method can succeed only with those students who are linguistically minded, that is, students who have got a fine ear for the language. Only the clever child can profit by this method.

**4.     Material facilities aren’t available:**

·         Direct method requires the use of audio-visual aids, but these aren’t available in a majority of our schools.

**5.     The classes are over-crowded:**

·         Small classes are needed for the direct method so that the teacher can pay individual attention. But in a majority of schools the classes are very large.

**6.     It is difficult for explanation:**

·         The meaning of new words in the direct method is explained by material association, explanation in the target language and use in suitable context. The mother tongue is not used although in certain cases its use more economical and effective in telling meaning.

**GRAMMAR-TRANSLATION METHOD OF TEACHING ENGLISH**

As English teachers we are always on the lookout for effective and interesting ways to stimulate our language learners. Various teaching methods are aimed at this goal. The purpose of this report is to investigate the Translation Method that is widely used by a large number of teachers. This method is better known as the Grammar-Translation Method and considered to be a classical method of teaching English. The philosophy behind this method is that the foreign language can be taught or learn through translation. Here each phrase or sentence of English is taught by translating it into mother tongue. The Grammar-Translation Method instructs students in grammar and provides vocabulary with direct translations to memorize.

The Grammar-Translation Method derived from traditional approaches to the teaching of Latin and Greek and it was the predominant method in Europe in the 19th century. It was rather widespread for learning foreign languages, though by the end of the century moves towards the Direct Method were noticed.

The most relevant principles of this method can be summarized as follows:

- It emphasizes the study and translation of the written language, as it is considered superior to spoken language.

- Reading and writing are the main language skills.

- The student's native language is the medium of instruction and used as well to compare with the language studied.

- The structural patterns of two languages are compared and this comparison makes learning more clear and firm.

- The fundamental principle of proceeding from known to unknown is followed throughout.

- Successful learners are those who translate each language into the other, though they cannot communicate orally.

- Students have to know verb conjugations and other grammatical paradigms.

- The knowledge of rules helps the learners to avoid any types of mistakes.

- Teachers play an authoritarian role in the classroom and the predominant interaction is between teacher-student.

The Grammar-Translation Method focuses on the teaching of the foreign language grammar through the presentation of rules together with some exceptions and lists of vocabulary translated into the mother tongue. Translation is considered to be the most important classroom activity. The main procedure of an ordinary lesson follows this plan: a presentation of a grammatical rule followed by a list of vocabulary and, finally, translation exercises from selected texts.

Other activities and procedures can be the following: answering comprehension questions on the text; students find antonyms and synonyms words in the text; vocabulary is selected from the reading texts and memorized; sentences are formed using new words; fill-in-the-blank exercises; writing compositions on the topic.

This method has a number of advantages given below:

1. By telling the meaning of the word or sentence in mother tongue, the teacher can at once make the students understand.

2. The students are able to learn many items of English by comparison with mother tongue.

3. The comprehension of the students can be tested very easily.

4. Knowledge is acquired gradually, by traversing the facts of language and the syntactic mechanisms, going from simplest to the most complex.

5. Learning grammar, the students examine the texts developing awareness that language constitutes a system which can be analyzed.

There are some very obvious disadvantages of this method:

1. No account of present-day language usage is presented. Norms are imposed from the great literary authors.

2. Secondary grammatical points, lists of forms and examples receive a lot of attention; some definitions and explanations are often incoherent because of their heterogeneous criteria. Thus, facts about the language are confusing for the students.

3. It gives a predominant place to morphology but neglects syntax. Therefore, rules enabling the learners to construct systematically correct complex sentences are not presented.

4. Translations are often unsatisfactory as they are done word by word.

5. Students have to learn a lot of grammatical terms and too much weight falls on their memories. Frustration on the part of students and lack of demands on teachers are the effects of this method.

So, the teaching of grammar consists of a process of training in the language rules which must make it possible to all the students to express their opinion correctly, to understand the remarks which are addressed to them and to analyze the texts which they read. The objective is that by the time they leave college, the students control the tools of the language which are the vocabulary, grammar and the orthography, they are able to read, understand and write texts in various contexts. Unfortunately, this method gives little attention to listening and speaking skills, and the result is usually inability of some students to use the language for communication.

We find that this method has a few both merits and draw-backs. It can be successfully used at higher educational institutions for teaching foreign languages for professional communication, but it must be combined with other methods. We consider that the teachers should use a variety of methods to teach a second language as each student is unique and will respond well to a particular method. A good teacher should make use of the items that he or she has and the learning styles of the students. Adapting your style to your class can be an effective teaching method.

**Audio Visual Method**

The audiovisual method was first developed by the CREDIF term in France in the 1950s. This method is intended for teaching everyday language at the early stage of second/foreign language learning. It was based on a behaviourist approach, which held that language is acquired by habit formation. Based on assumption that foreign language is basically a mechanical process and it is more effective if spoken form precedes written form. The stress was on oral proficiency and carefully- structured drill sequences (mimicry/memorisation) and the idea that quality and permanence of learning are in direct proportion to amount of practice carried out.

**The uses of audio-visual methods in teaching:**

1. Audio-visual methods in teaching strengthen an instructor’s verbal presentation

2. convey information mainly via sound and image instead of by text.

3. Students often benefit from the visual/sound appeal of audio-visual methods in teaching

**The Principle of Audio Visual Method**

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a. Selective

b. Preparation

c. Physical control

d. Proper Presentation

e. Response

**The Techniques in Audio Visual Method:**

1. The Lesson begins with the filmstrips and tape-presentation.

2. The materials are explained by the teacher through pointing, demonstrating, selective listening, question and answer.

3. The dialogue is repeated several times and memorized by frequent replays of tape-recording and filmstrips or by language laboratory practice.

4. Students are gradually emancipated by the filmstrip and tape-recorder.

**The Advantages**

a. The students are easy to understand the material because they are not only listen but also see the presentation.

b. The students are fluent in speaking.

c. Audio Visual Method enhance student learning and create a more inviting atmosphere.

**The Disadvantages**

a. Basic method of teaching is repetition.

b. Mechanical drills of early Audio-Visual approach is boring, mindless and counter productive.

c. Audio-Visual materials were open to same sort of misuse.

d. Audio Visual method doesn’t develop writing and reading skill.

e. New materials necessitated extensive use of equipment with all associated problems of black-out, extension leads, carrying tape-recorders from classroom to classroom.

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