UNIT: 2. MAJOR METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH

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2.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, we raised and suggested suitable answers to some basic questions about methods and approaches, its meaning, importance and differences. Now you might be well versed with the basic concept of methods and approach. Approach is a broader term than method. In a class for transacting any content a particular approach along with the specific method is important. Teaching learning process to be effective in classroom, method of teaching and approach to be followed is very important. In this unit we will basically be dealing different kinds of methods involved in teaching of English.

In present unit we will be dealing with various methods involved in teaching of English language like grammar-translation, bilingual, direct and audio lingual method.

2.2. OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- describe various methods of teaching English;
- understand how these methods can be used in different situations;
- understand merits and demerits of each methods; and
- differentiate between methods of teaching English.
2.3. Grammar-Translation Method

This method is called the translation method. It is also called as the classical method. It is the oldest method of teaching English. It is used widely in Indian schools. This method has two philosophical bases i.e. Grammar is the soul of language and a foreign language can be easily learnt through translation. This method as Tickoo said: “came to English Language teaching in most of Asia in general and India in particular with support in the long- established tradition of teaching classical languages in the United Kingdom. The system of education in the country served as a model for schools in most of its colonies. The psychological beliefs that prevailed then were (a) that classical languages with their intricate systems of grammar were capable of training human faculties including memory, and (b) that learning these languages was part of a truly liberal education. Teaching and learning primarily aimed at the ability to read full texts rather than to communicate orally in everyday situations”. Basically grammatical structures are kept in mind while teaching English language like “I am going to school” in this sentence the structure is grammatically analysed in terms of tense, subject, predicate, verb etc. and the is translated into native language as "Main ja rahi/raha hu" or vice versa.

2.3.1. Principle

This method is based on three principles i.e.

- Translation interprets foreign phraseology best,
- In the process of interpretation, the foreign phraseology is assimilated,
- The structure of a foreign language is best learnt when compared and contrasted with that of the mother-tongue.

2.3.2. Characteristic of the method

In this method the English teacher translates each and every word, phrase and sentence of English into mother tongue of the students. This is the oldest method of teaching English in our country. The unit of teaching is word. Mother-tongue dominates. Grammatical rules are explained by the teacher. In this method text-book occupies an important place. The text-book has all reading material, specific graded vocabulary and each lesson has some new words. Thus the lesson starts with the meaning of words and then explains the meaning of phrases and sentences.
2.3.3. Merits of Translation method

It saves time so it is economical method. It helps in enhancing the student vocabulary. It follows the maxim, "From known to unknown". It helps in having better and clear understanding of word meanings. This method can be easily used even in the overcrowded classrooms. It explains grammatical rules therefore it gives correct knowledge of English. This method can be used in every situation. This method tries to establish a strong link between new ideas and old ideas. It is convenient for the teacher because material aid is not needed. The unit of teaching is word and not sentence. This method saves teacher's labour. We can test the comprehension of our pupils by this method. Sometimes it is found very useful in the senior classes for explaining complex ideas, abstract thoughts and meanings.

2.3.4. Demerits of Translation method

In this method no emphasis is put on speaking, reading and writing. In this method speech is neglected. The students are not provided practice in oral work. This method fails to teach correct articulation, intonation and pronunciation. Translation method attempts to teach English through rules and not by use. It stops the power of thinking freely. Too much emphasis is given on grammar. This method is dull because the student does not take active part in learning process. This method is not based on psychological principles which are must for learning process. It is against the maxim, "from whole to part". It develops the translation habit among the students. Literal translation rains the sense and beauty of a sentence. It helps to develop booking English but prevents the delicate expression. In English language we come across some structure which cannot be translated into Indian languages. The structure of two different languages could not be similar. So the technique of teaching through translation delays the process of learning the structure of a foreign language. This method is unnatural because it does not help the learners to learn the foreign language as they learn their mother-tongue. It completely neglects silent reading, model reading and rapid reading. This method is uninteresting method because in this method students are only passive listeners. Learning by this method lasts only upto examinations, because students learn rules by cramming.

Grammar-Translation method is one of the reasons of following standards of English in India. In spite of so many demerits the translation method is still the most commonly used method in Indian school. It can thus be concluded that this method has been universally
condemned. Even then it continues to be popular with most of English teachers as well as English medium schools also in India.

2.4. Direct Method

It is one of the best method in teaching English. The method originated in France in 1901. It is also called as the natural method or reformed method. The direct method of teaching an English language came as a reaction against the translation-cum-grammar method. It is the method of teaching English through conversation, discussion and reading without use of the pupil's language, without translating and without the study of formal grammar. In this the student is encouraged to think directly in English. This method could be defined "as a method of teaching English language, through conversation, discussion and reading, in the language itself, without use of pupil's language, without translation and without the study of formal grammar. The first words are taught by pointing to objects or pictures or by performing actions."

Check your progress

Note: a) Write your answer in the space provided after each item.
   b) Compare your answers with those given in the end of the unit.

1. Explain the basic principle behind grammar-translation method?

2. What are the merits of grammar-translation method?
For example, in a reading lesson to class V, a new word ‘watch’ occurs. If we associate it with its intermediate in the vernacular, i.e. ‘Gharee’, we are teaching the meaning indirectly; but if on the other hand, we associate the word with an actual ‘watch’ or with the picture of a watch, we are teaching the meaning directly.

2.4.1. Principle

It brings thought, experience, expression and language closer. It lays more stress on listening and speaking English. Mother-tongue is completely avoided in this method. The pupil gets an exposure to objects through the direct method. It emphasizes the establishment of a direct bond between word and idea. It follows full sentences not words. Pupils senses of listening, seeing, smelling, feeling, touching etc gets the first hand knowledge and as there is no hurdle of translation the thoughts, concepts, idea, word or object is fully grasped by his senses. It completely ignores the translation-grammar method. In this method vocabulary is used directly. In the initial stage it lays emphasis purely on oral work. The teacher helps students to build up good speech habits. Good speech habits are the basis for good writing habits. Audio-visual material to illustrate the words, history, literature etc. of the foreign nation whose language is to be taught is extensively used. In this method the role of teacher is very important.

2.4.2. Characteristics

In this method the teacher either shows the object or its picture or gives the meaning indirectly, through synonym, inference, definition or explanation. Thus a direct contact between foreign words and concept is established. In this way mother tongue is not used at all. This method follows the maxim; "From simple to complex" and "From concrete to abstract. Many questions are asked by the teacher when teacher is teaching. In this method, grammar is taught inductively. Audio-Visual material is used extensively to explain the meaning. In this method a direct bond is established between word and idea, word and experience. The auditory impressions and motor activities, that is listening and speaking plays a very important role in picking up of language skills.

2.4.3. Merits

It is an interesting method as it involves many activities. It helps to make understanding of English easier. In this method time and energy which are needed in teaching through mother tongue are saved, as there is a direct contact established with the object that is introduced. The students are never dull in this of teaching. They have to use their sense organs to feel all the
objects in the class. They cannot thus lose their interest in the class. In this method cramming of words and their meanings is discouraged. It helps in improving the pronunciation of the child.

In this method the use of audio-visual aids becomes easy. It develops the linguistic sense and makes the students active. It is based on psychological principles. It bridges the gap between the active and the passive knowledge. It enables the learners to express their thoughts and feelings directly in English. It helps the pupil to acquire a practical command of language. It requires correctness and activity on the part of both the tutor and the taught. The pupil can speak fluently, they can also write fairly, quickly and correctly. It lays emphasis on speech, as oral drill is conducted again and again.

2.4.4. Demerits

It is an incomplete method. It promotes the oral aspect of language learning and ignores reading and writing aspects of language learning. In this method grammar is not taught systematically. This method makes only an aural-oral appeal. It is an expensive method as a lot of audio-visual aids are needed. In this method much time is consumed in creating life situations. It is very laborious method on the part of the teacher because teacher has to spend a lot of time for the preparation of the lesson. It is not suitable for all students. It suits only those students who are linguistically minded. Direct method ignores translation completely. Only a limited number of words can be directly associated with their meanings or objects they re-present. There are certain words in English, the definition or explanation of which, is difficult to explain only in English. In the Indian conditions where the classroom are over-crowded and even the proper seating arrangement is not available for the learners. This method is inconvenient and impractical. This method is not popular in Indian because of shortage of teachers who can teach English through this method. This method gives less importance on systematic written work and reading lesson. Many times it becomes quite difficult to bring word meaning and child's experience together. P. Gurrey and Dr. West do not consider it a method. In their opinion it is principle which can be used along with same method. Because of these demerits the method has failed to yield the desire results. Even then this method is superior to translation-cum-grammar method.

In the end we can say that this method has its limited utility and cannot be used in big classes of our school. Only the public schools with better facilities can use this type of method of teaching.
2.5. Bilingual Method

In our schools, the most common way of teaching English is the bilingual and translation method. The teacher mostly reads and transforms the text into mother tongue of the child. Meanings of the words are given in the language of the learner. After the lesson is over, yet another procedure is used in the form of dictation, to fix up the knowledge into the child's mind. Bilingual method is recently devised by Prof. C.J. Dodson Wales. In this method two languages, one that is to be learnt and the other mother-tongue, are used. In this method mother-
tongue is used to achieve the target language English. Dodson, who is its propounder, lays down the following, as the aims and objectives of this way of teaching English. The leaner should see that he is:

(i) Making fluent and accurate approaches to the spoken word first;
(ii) In the later stage is to make a similar approach to the written word; and
(iii) To achieve Bilingualism in the strictest form in the long run.

This method is a midway between two old methods, viz. translation-cum-Grammar method and direct method. In this method, mother-tongue is used to explain the mailings of words, phrases, idioms, sentences structure and grammatical rules. The world bilingual applies to a person who knows two languages, the mother-tongue and second language. Our country is the best example of it. This method allows the use of the mother tongue though restricted to the teacher only and in this way this method comes near the translation method to a certain extent.

2.5.1. Principle

While teaching English we have only to provide the child with mother-tongue equivalent without duplicating the situation. Only equivalents are to be given in the bilingual method, for the words in the mother-tongue or vice-versa and the learner is the gainer of two languages, side by side. Mother-tongue is used only for the explanation and the word meaning and that too only by the teacher of English class. Only the teacher is to use the mother-tongue.

2.5.2. Characteristics

In this method the unit of teaching is a sentence. Rigorous practice is undertaken in sentence pattern. Rules of grammar are not taught separately as is done in grammar-translation method. Mother-tongue is used when it is necessary to explain the difficult area of language. It emphasizes on creating situations, by giving the mother-tongue equivalent of English words. Word for word translation is not done in this method. Translation is done by teacher only to explain the subject-matter. Pupils are given a lot of practice in the drill of sentence patterns. In Indian conditions, however this method is suitable both for the teachers and the students because of its time saving characteristics.

2.5.3. Merits

It gives emphasis on speech practice. It does not require specially trained teachers. This method suits both rural and urban schools. It makes use of linguistic habits formed during learning
mother-tongue. Not such of audio-visual aids are required in this method. It saves time, energy and labour of the teacher. Students taught by this method learn much more than the students taught with the help of other methods. Pupil can learn two languages by this method. It provides greater practice in speaking English. Even an average teacher of English can teach the lesson successfully through this method.

2.5.4. Demerits

This method is still in an experimental stage. Other aspects like reading, writing are ignored. Students are passive listeners. Grammar is not taught systematically to the learner in this method. This method stops students from thinking freely. It is not so useful in teaching secondary and senior secondary level classes. It is sometimes rather impossible to provide a correct mother-tongue equivalent. Sometimes it becomes very difficult to bring word meanings and child's experience together. A contrast between the features of the two language is likely to confuse students. It teacher fails to handle the method properly he is likely to degenerate to translation method.

Prof. H.N.L. Shastri fo C.I.E.F.L., Hydrabad has experimented and found that the Bilingual. Method is quite effective in Indian conditions. This method has a social, economical and cultural background which suits to our conditions. The important contribution of this method is that it had made possible for the students to get both quantitative and qualitative acquisition of language skills.

Check your progress

Note: a) Write your answer in the space provided after each item.
        b) Compare your answers with those given in the end of the unit.

5. What are the basic considerations while teaching through bilingual method?

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6. What are the merits of bilingual method?
2.6. Audio-Lingual Method

The audio-lingual method is a style of teaching used in teaching English language. Audio-lingual Method was widely used in the 1950s and 1960s. It is based on behaviorist theory, which professes certain traits of living things, and in this case humans, could be trained through a system of reinforcement. The correct use of a trait would receive positive feedback while incorrect use of that trait would receive negative feedback. This approach to language learning was similar to another, earlier method called the direct method. Like the direct method, the audio-lingual method advised that students should be taught a language directly, without using the students' native language to explain new words or grammar in the target language. However, unlike the direct method, the audio-lingual method did not focus on teaching vocabulary. Rather, the teacher drilled students in the use of grammar.

Audio lingual method is a method for second language teaching which emphasised the teaching of listening and speaking before reading and writing.

Methodology

There are four parts of audio lingual method:

1. Repetition
2. Inflection
3. Replacement
4. Restatement

1. Repetition: The students repeat (copy) what the teacher says. For example:

   Teacher: I want to buy a cake.
   Student: I want to buy a cake.

2. Inflection: The teacher says a word or sentences and the student change the form. For example:

   Teacher: I want to buy a cake.
Student: I wanted to buy a cake.

3. Replacement: The teacher says a sentence and the student replace a word in the sentence. for example:
Teacher: I want to buy a pineapple cake.
Student: I want to buy a apple.

4. Restatement: The teacher says a sentence and the student rephrase the sentence. for example:
Teacher: Tell me to come inside.
Student: Come in.

In this method the students first hear a language, later they speak later they speak the language and after that they read and write it.

2.6.1. Principle

The basic principles behind this method are:

- Emphasis is on acquisition of patterns in common everyday dialogue i.e the emphasis was not on the understanding of words, but rather on the acquisition of structures and patterns in common everyday dialogue. These patterns are elicited, repeated and tested until the responses given by the student in the foreign language are automatic.

- It emphasised that language was not acquired through habit formation but through repetition and memorization of standard phrases. It ignored the role of context and knowledge in language learning.

As the study of linguistics developed, it was discovered that language was not acquired through a process of habit formation, and that errors were not necessarily bad.

2.6.2. Characteristics

Some characteristics of this method are:

- **Oral skills** are used systematically to emphasize communication. The foreign language is taught for communication, with a view to achieve development of communication skills.

- Practice is how the learning of the language takes place. Every language skill is the total of the sets of habits that the learner is expected to acquire. Practice is central to all the
contemporary foreign language teaching methods. With audio-lingual method, it is emphasized even more.

- Oral learning is emphasized. Stress is put on oral skills at the early year of the foreign language course and is continued during the later years. Oral skills remain central even when, later, reading and writing are introduced. Learners are asked to speak only what they have had a chance to listen to sufficiently. They read only the material used as part of their practice. They have to write only what they have read. Strict order of material, in terms of the four skills, is followed.

**2.6.3. Merits**

Listening and speaking skills are emphasized and, especially the former, rigorously developed. The use of visual aids is effective in vocabulary teaching. The method is just as functional and easy to execute for larger groups. Correct pronunciation and structure are emphasized and acquired. It is grounded on a solid theory of language learning.

**2.6.4. Demerits**

The behaviorist approach to learning is now discredited. It does not pay sufficient attention to communicative competence. Only language form is considered while meaning is neglected. Equal importance is not given to all four skills. It is a teacher-dominated method. It is a mechanical method since it demands pattern practice, drilling, and memorization over functional learning and organic usage. The learner is passive role; the learner has little control over their learning.

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**Check your progress**

**Note:** a) Write your answer in the space provided after each item.

b) Compare your answers with those given in the end of the unit.

7. What is the basic principle behind audio-lingual method?

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2.7. Let us sum up

In this unit we have discussed about various methods of teaching English. We have also discussed the principles and merits as well as demerits of teaching English using these methods.

The benefits of English would only be our possession, provided we employ proper ways and means, techniques, methods, skills and practices of teaching English, in the best possible ways. All the methods have some qualities and drawbacks both. An English teacher has to do a lot of pick and choose before they finally settle to use one or other of these methods of teaching English.

2.8. Questions for reflection

- Discuss the applicability of Grammar-Translation method of teaching English in present school system?
- Suggest ways to improve Grammar-Translation method of teaching English?
- How for does audio lingual method help in the actual acquisition of a English language? What are the limitations of this method?
- Design a lesson plan using bilingual method and grammar-translation method of teaching English?
- Differentiate between direct method and grammar-translation method?

8. What is the difference between audio lingual method and direct method?
2.9. Answers of check your progress

1. The principle behind grammar-translation method is that translation interprets foreign phraseology best; in the process of interpretation the foreign phraseology is assimilated; the structure of a foreign language is best learnt when compared and contrasted with that of the mother-tongue.

2. The merit of grammar-translation method is that it saves time so it is economical method. It helps in enhancing the student vocabulary. It follows the maxim, "From known to unknown". It helps in having better and clear understanding of word meanings. This method can be easily used even in the overcrowded classrooms. It explains grammatical rules therefore it gives correct knowledge of English. This method can be used in every situation.

3. Direct method is the method of teaching English through conversation, discussion and reading without use of the pupil's language, without translating and without the study of formal grammar. In this the student is encouraged to think directly in English. Its merit is that it is an interesting method as it involves many activities. It helps to make understanding of English easier. In this method time and energy which are needed in teaching through mother tongue are saved, as there is a direct contact established with the object that is introduced. The students are never dull in this of teaching.

4. Characteristics of direct method is that in this method the teacher either shows the object or its picture or gives the meaning indirectly, through synonym, inference, definition or explanation. Thus a direct contact between foreign words and concept is established. In this way mother tongue is not used at all. This method follows the maxim; "From simple to complex" and "From concrete to abstract.

5. The class from which English teaching is started; the age, ability and capacity of students to be taught; the objectives to be achieved by teaching of English; availability of teaching aids; size of class; location of school i.e. urban or rural.

6. The merit of this method is that it gives emphasis on speech practice. It does not require specially trained teachers. This method suits both rural and urban schools. It makes use of linguistic habits formed during learning mother-tongue. Not such of audio-visual aids are
required in this method. It saves time, energy and labour of the teacher. Students taught by this method learn much more than the students taught with the help of other methods.

7. The basic principles behind this method is that its emphasis is on acquisition of patterns in common everyday dialogue i.e. the emphasis was not on the understanding of words, but rather on the acquisition of structures and patterns in common everyday dialogue and also it emphasised that language was not acquired through habit formation but through repetition and memorization of standard phrases.

8. The difference is that unlike the direct method, the audio-lingual method did not focus on teaching vocabulary. Rather, the teacher drilled students in the use of grammar.

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2.10. References and Suggested reading


https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Audio-lingual_method

http://www.slideshare.net/sheilacheiii/tefl-the-audiolingual-method

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qBq_mcrbC8


http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/20567/10/10_chapter%203.pdf