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AN ASSESSMENT OF LANGUAGE TEACHING TECHNIQUES AND APPROACHES- CHARACTERISTICS AND LIMITATIONS

¹Nazia Firdaus and ²Dr. Shamshad Begum

¹Research Scholar, ²Assistant Professor and Department of Education & Training, Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad

¹Nazia.firdaus093@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Teaching language methods and approaches have contributed to the theory and practice of language instruction. Many arguments exist regarding their value and compatibility. This study aims to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of different prominent styles of instruction and methods. Grammar Translation Method, Audio-lingual method, Direct Method, Communicative Language Teaching Method, Situational Method, Structural Method, and Natural Method in order of priority. To improve comprehension and execution of further pedagogical practices.

Keywords: Teaching technique, Grammar- translation method, Audio-lingual method, communicative language teaching method, Characteristics and Limitations.

INTRODUCTION

The background of language instruction is long, fascinating, and sometimes controversial; there has been a dispute about instructional strategies in the previous century. Even though a lot of the methods—such as the Communicative Teaching Method (CTM), the Audio-lingual Method (ALM), the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), and others—have well-known names. In reality, they can be difficult to comprehend because, despite their vague definitions, methods are more than one strategy or one specific technique. These techniques are elements of theories to teach languages, partly due to practical experience, intuition, and inventiveness, and partially through theoretical consideration (new psychological research and advancements in language ideas and perspectives on learning a language). As a result, they combine many views about language teaching with particular areas of teaching and learning languages.

Characteristics and Limitations of Teaching Techniques and Approaches

1. Grammar Translation Method

The Grammar-Translation Method, as its name infers, emphasizes on teaching grammar in second languages. Its main technique is translation, into and out of the target language. Speaking and listening accept little to no methodical consideration in practice; reading and writing are given important attention. To help students learn a second language, their unique tongue is kept as the position system. It is a teacher-centred model in which language beginners are passive and teachers are viewed as authorities. The campaigners have been criticising the Grammar Translation Method from a variety of angles. The limitations of practice methods never free the learner from the governance of the first language, according to some critics, and the method regularly causes students to become frustrated by making them remember an endless list of useless grammar rules and vocabulary. Some challengers state that the approach enhances minimal attention to the student's communicative competence. The Grammar-Translation Method is still frequently used despite severe evaluations. Why? Since explicit grammar education can sustain communicative language teaching by helping students become more aware of the form and structure of the target language, there is no intrinsic fight among the two approaches. Furthermore, by attaining a second language, the first language can serve as a reference system and eliminate misinterpretations. After that, considering formal aspects of the target language and translating as a practice method placed the student in an interactive problem-solving scenario. Ultimately, the Grammar-Translation Method seems to be a rather simple approach to implement and places few demands on educators, which may be precisely the reason for its wide acceptance.

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2. The Audio-Lingual Method

The audio-lingual method was the first to freely announce that it was grounded in psychology and linguistics. The vivid, structural and contrasting linguistics of the 1950s and 1960s are reproduced in audio-lingualize. Its psychological foundation is behaviourism, which emphasizes successful, error-free language acquisition via the eyes of operant conditioning, stimulus and response, and reinforcement. It seems that learning a language contains learning its integral parts, or phonemes, as well as the rules that determine how these parts are put together to arrangement of words, sentences and phrases. As such, it was defined by the separation of the verbal skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and the audio-lingual abilities' dominance over the graphic skills. This method emphasises definite practice strategies, like mimicking pattern and drills, and chiefly presents the language through dialogues. With this technique, speaking and listening were now front and centre, and repetition exercises in language labs were provided on cassette recordings.

3. The Direct Method

By using the language of choice for instruction and conversation in the language classroom and avoiding the use of the first language and translation as a strategy, the direct method drastically differs from the Grammar-Translation Method. Early education is beginning to emphasise spoken common language above literary language. According to this approach, learning a language was compared to learning a first language, and the psychology of the relationship was frequently used to explain the learning process. The direct method was an early effort to integrate language use into the context of language acquisition. It encouraged teachers to be creative and resulted in the development of new language learning strategies like oral narratives, dictation and imitation, emphasizing questions and answers, and demonstrating pictures and objects, among others. However, this method will inevitably lead to two questions: how to prevent misinterpretations without translating (particularly, some abstract ideas), without using the source language; and how to use this approach beyond the elementary level of language learning. Moreover, instructors using this approach have to be native speakers or possess near-native fluency in the foreign language they teach; yet, in fact, fulfilling these prerequisites can be challenging.

4. Communicative Teaching Method

Under the effect of British applied linguists (such as John Firth, M.A.K.Halliday, who stressed the functional and communicative potential of language), sociolinguistics works (Dell Hymes, and W.Labov) and some philosophy work (J. Austin and J. Searle), the communicative method was advocated in language teaching. It saw the need to focus on communicative proficiency rather than on mere mastering of structures.

This communicative teaching approach aims to make communicative competence the ultimate goal of language instruction by creating procedures for teaching the four skills that highlight the interdependence of language and communication. It encourages significant accomplishment of tasks as well as sincere engagement in activities. It implies that the student finds meaning in the language and facilitates the process of learning. While language learners are expected to be negotiators, instructors are anticipated to be planners, guides, analysts, counsellors, or group process managers. Unquestionably, the communicative approach quickly gained popularity and is currently the foundation of language training in many nations. This is because it is not only increasing the students' interest in language schooling but also enhancing their verbal development and communicative proficiency. However, there were problems with the original upsurge and great excitement surrounding it, as well as an example instructing at every level. How does one evaluate such a strategy? To what extent is it suitable for teachers who are not native speakers? When students are expected to take tests that simply assess grammar, how can it be applied? Naturally, these issues will help us use the communicative method more successfully. Is it possible to use this way of teaching at all levels? How can one assess such an approach? How appropriate is it for instructors who are not native speakers? How can it be used when students take exams based solely on grammar? These problems will, of course, enable us to apply the communicative method more effectively.

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5. Situational Method

In the situational methods of teaching in English, there is a chief emphasis on language acquisition through situations and real-life situations. Key elements include:

Role-Playing: Students contribute in role-playing activities to repetition language in specific contexts, progressing their capacity to communicate practically.

Contextual Learning: Language is taught to students in natural settings, helping students comprehend how to use language properly.

Authentic Materials: Includes real-world properties such as discussions, films, and books that students are most probable to encounter separate the classroom.

Functional Language: Focuses on teaching language purposes, such as requesting, inviting, or act contrite, rather than just grammatical forms.

Interactive Learning: Encourages communication between the students, encouraging collaborative learning and real-world use of language.

6. Structural Method

English language instruction focuses on the organized procedure of language elements, highlighting grammar, lexis, and sentence structure. This method involves teaching language as a set of structures students can use to form correct sentences. A key component of the structural method:

Grammar Focus: Prioritizes understanding and applying grammatical rules, such as part, tense, and sentence construction.

Simplicity: Introduces language in a rational advancement, opening with simple structures before moving to more complex ones.

Contextualization: Structures are taught within meaningful situations to help students comprehend their use in actual communication.

Repetition and Reinforcement: Regular evaluation and preparation of structures to aid retaining and fluency.

Controlled Practice: Frequently includes drills and exercises where students rehearsal specific structures repeatedly.

7. Natural Method

The Natural Approach to English language instruction emphasizes on acquisition language and how apprentices learn their first language. Some key features include:

Listening and Speaking First: Encourages listening and speaking before reading and writing, reflecting the natural instruction of language attainment.

Focus on Meaning: Allows apprentices to understand language via context by putting more emphasis on conceptualization and communication than strict grammatical constraints.

Low Anxiety: Produces a relaxed environment, reducing burden so students feel relaxed making mistakes and experimenting with language.

Delayed Production: Permits learners to take their time previously speaking, considerate that fluency develops gradually.

CONCLUSION

Each procedure has contributed original elements and strived to tackle specific issues related to language acquisition. They possess different theoretical basics, varied historical settings, and various social and educational necessities. To execute these strategies successfully and effectively within the classroom, teachers should assess

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the learners' individuality, current language competence level, communicative necessities, and the successive environment in which learners will use English, among other influences. In summary, no particular method can assure a positive result.

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