



Methods of Teaching English

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Abstract:

Teacher is a thinking human being. His/her full potential can be reached only if he/she is encouraged to think and develop as an individual and a professional. Teachers always know the teaching aids can be used effectively to capture and sustain the attention of a class. Very often, these aids are used by teachers to put across or explain a concept in the best possible ways to learners. In teacher-preparation programmes today, there is more attention to techniques for teaching English. The article makes an emphasis on various methods of teaching English in class rooms

Key words: Teacher, human being, fundamental, knowledge

Introduction:

'He who cannot do, can teach', is an adverse slogan which does not suit for the present day education system. Language teaching is a challenge. Teaching English in rural areas is a hell on earth. The students are afraid of the language as if it were a dangerous spirit. It is lack of proper awareness and fundamental knowledge in lower levels. The cultural background of the student and parent illiteracy are also the major hurdles to hamper the interest of the students. There are certain methods to teach English effectively.

Grammar Translated Method:

The grammar translation method had its origin in Germany and was popular from the 1840s to the 1940s. The earliest grammar translation course for the teaching of English was written in 1793 by J. C. Fick

It is a way of learning a language through a detailed study of its grammar. It helps the learner to apply rules of grammar in translating the sentences from mother into target language or vice versa. The

first language is maintained as the reference system in acquisition of the second language. Grammar is taught through the presentation and study rules. The learner is required to attain high standards in translation. Vocabulary is taught through bilingual wordlists, reference to dictionaries and memorization of words and their meanings. The method focuses mainly on reading and writing with little emphasis on listening and speaking. The mother tongue of the learner is used to explain new items and make comparisons with their equalants in the target language.

The Texts: The teacher first reads the given passage, and then explains its content and the meanings of new words in the mother tongue. Rules of grammar are taught elaborately followed by practice in writing paradigms etc.

In this method, the teacher is totally dependent on the text as he/she follows the given lessons and articles rigidly. The teacher has a little scope for innovative planning to incorporate the actual needs of the learner in the class



room. The learner is therefore exposed only literacy language. Communications skills are neglected with little attention to correct pronunciation. The learner does not play active role in the use of the target language. His/her role is rather passive.

The Structural Approach: The structural approach is an outcome of the experiments carried out in language teaching. It is the presentation and practice of carefully selected grammatical structures. Speech is the basis of language teaching. The language items are selected and practiced in meaningful sentences. The language items which are commonly used by native speakers in their day-to-day language are selected for teaching. The approach is based on the assumption that language learning is a matter of habit formation.

In this approach language items are first taught orally. Reading and writing follow the oral work. Language is primarily speech and therefore the spoken form is given priority over reading and writing.

Humanistic Approach: The Humanistic Approach to language teaching/learning has evolved through investigations into the nature of individuals and philosophical conclusions drawn through the investigations. The approach tends to see language learning as a process which engages the whole person and not just the intellect. It takes into account the emotional and spiritual needs of an individual also.

Two methods are generally considered to reflect the philosophy of humanistic approach in the fullest

manner. They are 1. The silent way and 2. Community language learning.

The Direct Method: In the later nineteenth and early twentieth century Henry Sweet, an English philologist set about modifying and improving 'the direct method' as it was called by the turn of the century. Sweet divided the language of target language into five stages namely mechanical, Grammatical, idiomatic and lexical, literary and Archaic. Pronunciation of words and sentences are mastered thoroughly in the stage of Mechanical. In the Grammatical stage. Grammatical categories in the text are identified and taught. The teaching of grammar is graded from easy to difficult. Later in the next stage graded texts from contemporary literature are studied. In the fifth stage of Archaic, older literature with particular emphasis on its lexical and syntactical items is studied.

The Audio Lingual Method: The audio Lingual method treats each language skill separately; Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. This method focuses primarily on skills of listening and speaking. According to Moulton's first slogan, Language is speech, not writing. The skills of reading and writing are not neglected but the focus throughout remains on listening and speaking. Dialogues are the main feature of audio-lingual syllabus. They are the chief means of presenting language items. They also provide learners an opportunity to practice, mimic a model and memorize bits of language. The language laboratory is introduced as an important teaching aid. The audio-lingual method shows an easy way to



learn language without burdening the intellect with problem solving as in the grammar translation method.

The Reading Method: The development of the reading method includes some new features into the English language teaching field. The objective of reading method is to make learners fluent readers. In a reading method class, the first few weeks are spent in oral work so that a strong bond between sound and print could be created to facilitate inner speech. The reading method for the most part produces students who are unable to comprehend and speak the language beyond the very simplest exchanges.

The Bilingual Method: The Bilingual Method is built around situations. In the bilingual method the use of the mother tongue is allowed. A true bilingual is described as a person who can jump from one language to another easily and talk fluently about any situation either in the mother tongue or the target language

either equal ease. Fluency in language skills is achieved in each situation. Mastering of skills is not seen as a long term, a painful process. The bilingual method largely helps to free teachers from a feeling of guilt for using the mother tongue occasionally in the class room.

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