

“Methodology of a teacher in the teaching process: My experience”

**Sayma Khan
Student ID: 05203002**

**Department of English and Humanities
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BRAC University, Dhaka

Methodology of a teacher in the teaching process: My experience

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**Sayma Khan
Student ID: 05203002**

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1. Introduction:

English is one of the most widely spoken languages of the world and it is considered as an international language. The need of English is increasing day by day in our country so schools, colleges and universities are putting great emphasis on teaching this language properly. In order to do that for managing the classroom, making lesson plans and observing learner's performance a teacher should follow some methods. To take any class it does not mean that the teacher would just enter and stand in front of the class and deliver the lecture. The learners have to follow some methods which can guide us how to take the class. By the help of these methods I have understood my students' needs, progress and their position of learning state. The procedures I used as my teaching methods and techniques are significantly effective for students to learn.

I have done my internship as a substitute teacher in Happy Times International School and it was a great experience for me. I have learnt lots of things from my experience. I applied some methods while teaching. So far I believe that these methods have been successful because I have received a positive response from the majority of my students. This paper is briefly based on the language teaching methods and through my overall teaching experience where I have applied those methods.

International Congress of Linguists, proclaimed the linguistics principles on which language teaching methodology should be based: "*Language is speech, not writing.....A language is a set of habits.....Teach the language, not about the language.....A language*

is what its native speakers say, not what someone thinks what they ought to say.....*Language are different*" (Rivers 1964:5). But a method cannot be based simply on a theory of language. It also needs to refer to the psychology of learning and to learning theory.

2. Literature Review:

2.1 The Grammar-Translation Method:

The Grammar-Translation method is a foreign language teaching method .The main aim of which is to become skilled in a target language with the help of the native language. In this method classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language. Latin has been studied for centuries, with the prime objectives of learning how to read classical Latin texts, understanding the fundamentals of grammar and translation, and gaining insights into some important foreign influences Latin has had on the development of other European languages. The method used to teach it overwhelmingly bore those objectives in mind, and came to be known as the *Classical Method*. It is now more commonly known in Foreign Language Teaching circles as the *Grammar Translation Method*.

Now it is not the only concern on the study of the target language but also to reconsider the grammar of the native language. The main characteristic of this method is, exactly as its name suggests, a focus on learning the rules of grammar and their application in

translation passages from one language to other. This method is most appropriate for teaching a second language. The main principles of this method related to the teaching of literature and grammar. We also know that speaking or any kind of spontaneous creative output is not enough for target language. Speaking is not enough for target language we need both reading and writing to gain knowledge of target language. So, its focus is on grammar rules, the memorization of vocabulary and translations of texts and also doing written exercises. The goal of this method is to be able to read and write literary masterpieces correctly.

Yet the Grammar Translation Method is still common in many countries - even popular. Brown attempts to explain why the method is still employed by pointing out "*It requires few specialized skills on the part of teachers. Tests of grammar rules and of translations are easy to construct and can be objectively scored. Many standardized tests of foreign languages still do not attempt to tap into communicative abilities, so students have little motivation to go beyond grammar analogies, translations, and rote exercises.*" (*Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*, 1994:53)

Characteristics of Grammar-Translation method:

- Classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language.
- Little attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis.

- Long elaborate explanations of grammar are given in details.
- Little or no attention is given to pronunciation.
- Focus is on reading and writing skill.

Principles of Grammar-Translation method:

- The primary skills to be developed are reading and writing. Little attention is given to speaking and listening, and almost none to pronunciation. Here we see that we have to give more attention on the rules and structure grammars to understand the language in a proper way. So, the students can be able to write out the answers to reading comprehension questions.
- The teacher is the authority in the classroom. It is very important that students get the correct answer. So the roles are very traditional. The students do as s/he says so they can learn what s/he knows.
- It is important for students to learn about the form of the target language. This method is most appropriate for teaching a second language. The main principles of this method is related to the teaching of literature and grammar.
- Students should be conscious of the grammatical rules of the target language. It helps them to reach the in depth of target language.

Techniques of Grammar-Translation method:

- **Translation of a Literary Passage:** Students translate a reading passage from the target language into their native language. The reading passage then provides the focus for several classes: vocabulary and grammatical structures in the passage are studied in subsequent lessons.
- **Reading Comprehension Questions:** Students have to find out the information in the passage, making inferences and relating to it with their personal experience. So, students answer questions in the target language based on their understanding of the reading passage.
- **Antonyms/Synonyms:** Here students find out the antonyms and synonyms for words or set of words.
- **Deductive Application of Rule:** At first students get the idea about the grammar rules and their exceptions and after that they apply them to new examples.
- **Memorization:** The students are given the grammar rules and examples and are told to memorize them. They memorize native-language equivalents for target language vocabulary words.

- **Use Words in Sentences:** By the application of this method students can create sentences to illustrate and use of new words if they know the meaning.
- **Composition:** The teacher gives the students a topic to write about in the target language. The topic is based upon some aspects of the reading passage of the lesson.

2.2 Audio-Lingual Method:

This method is based on the principles of behavior psychology which emphasizes more on environment or human behavior. New material is presented in the form of dialogue. Based on the principle that language learning is habit formation, the method fosters dependency on mimicry, memorization of sets of phrases and over learning. It is inductive because here practice and habit-formation is more important. The more we practice we will learn the language so, it depends on our practice. It also, unlike the Direct Method, has a strong theoretical base in linguistics and psychology. Charles Fries of the university of Michigan led the way in applying principles from structural linguistics in developing the method, and for this reason, it has sometimes been referred to as the 'Michigan Method'. Here the teacher's role is central and active, it is teacher-dominated method. Here dialogues are used for repetition and memorization. And also

has correct pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation are mostly emphasized on this method. After a dialogue has been presented and memorized, specific grammatical patterns in the dialogue are selected to be taught.

The prominent behaviorist B.F. Skinner stated, "*We have no reason to assume...that verbal behavior differs in any fundamental respect from non-verbal behavior, or that any new principles must be invoked to account for it*" (Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching, 1957: 10).

Characteristics of Audio-Lingual method:

- The medium of instruction is the target language.
- It is based on behaviorism.
- Language learning is habit-formation
- More appropriate for listening and speaking.
- The meaning of words can be learned only in a linguistic and cultural context.
- Students repeat each line of the dialogue.

Principles of Audio-Lingual method:

- The purpose of language learning is to learn how to use the language to communicate. Teachers actually want their students to be able to use the target language communicatively. In order to do this, they believe students need to over learn the target language, to learn to use it automatically without stopping to think.
- The teacher is directing and controlling the language behavior of his/her students. S/he is also responsible for providing her students with a good model for imitation. So, Students are taken to be the imitators of the teacher's model or the tapes.
- New vocabulary and structural patterns are presented through dialogues. The dialogues are learned through imitation and repetition. Drills are conducted based upon the patterns present in the dialogue.
- Positive reinforcement helps the students to develop correct habits. On the other hand, errors are carefully avoided because they lead to the formation of bad habits. When errors do occur, they should be immediately corrected by the teacher.
- Students should learn to respond to both verbal and nonverbal stimuli. So teachers can use spoken cues and picture cues for students to respond.

- The native language and the target language have separate linguistic systems. They should be kept apart so that the students' native language interferes as little as possible with the students' attempts to acquire the target language.
- There is little or no grammatical explanation. Grammar is taught by inductive analogy rather than deductive explanation.

Techniques of Audio-Lingual method:

- **Repetition drill:** Students are asked to repeat the teacher's model as accurately and as quickly as possible. This drill is often used to teach the lines of the dialogue.
- **Dialogue memorization:** Dialogue or short conversations between two people are often used to begin a new lesson. Here students memorize the dialog through mimicry; students usually take the role of one person in the dialogue and the teacher the other. After the dialogue has been memorized, pairs of individual students might perform the dialogue for the rest of the class.
- **Transformation Drill:** Teacher provides a sentence that must be turned into something else, for example a question to be turned into a statement, an active sentence to be turned into a negative statement, etc.

- **Question-and-answer Drill:** The drill gives students practice with answering questions and students should answer or ask questions very quickly. This gives students practice with the question pattern.
- **Complete the Dialogue:** Selected words are erased from a dialog that students have learnt. Students complete the dialogue by filling the blanks with the missing words.

2.3 Communicative Language Teaching:

The main goal of these methods is for students to learn to communicate in the target language. Communicative language teaching makes use of real-life situations that necessitate communication. The teacher sets up a situation that students are likely to encounter in real life. Unlike the Audio-lingual method of language teaching, which relies on repetition and drills, the communicative approach can leave students in suspense as to the outcome of a class exercise, which will vary according to their reactions and responses. The real-life simulations change from day to day. Students' motivation to learn comes from their desire to communicate in meaningful ways about meaningful topics. It helps student to develop perfectly grammatical structures or acquire native-like pronunciation. This means that successfully learning a foreign language is assessed in

terms of how well learners have developed their communicative competence, which can loosely be defined as their ability to apply knowledge of both formal and sociolinguistic aspects of a language with adequate proficiency to communicate.

The communicative approach could be said to be the product of educators and linguists who had grown dissatisfied with the Audio-lingual and grammar-translation methods of foreign language instruction. They felt that students were not learning enough realistic, whole language. They did not know how to communicate using appropriate social language, gestures, or expressions; in brief, they were at a loss to communicate in the culture of the language studied. In the 1970, the Communicative Language Teaching was developed. Here students can use the language authentically and also be involved in classroom exchanges where students engage in real communication with one another so it became quite popular. In the classroom, CLT often takes the form of pair and group work requiring negotiation and cooperation between learners, fluency-based activities that encourage learners to develop their confidence, role-plays in which students practice and develop language functions, as well as judicious use of grammar and pronunciation focused activities.

Margie S. Berns, an expert in the field of communicative language teaching, writes in his book explaining Firth's view that "*language is interaction; it is interpersonal activity and has a clear relationship with society. In this light, language study has to look at the use of language in context, both its linguistic context and its social, or situational, context (who is speaking, what their social roles are, why they have come together to speak)*" (Berns, 1984, p. 5).

Characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching:

- It emphasizes on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom.

Principles of Communicative Language Teaching:

- The target language is a vehicle for classroom communication, not just the object of study. Here teacher gives the students the directions for the activity in the target language.
- One function can have many different linguistic forms. Since the focus of the course is on real language use, a variety of linguistic forms are presented together. The emphasis is on the process of communication rather than just mastery of language.

- The teacher facilitates communication in the classroom. In this role, one of his major responsibilities is to establish situations likely to promote communication. During the activities he acts as an adviser, answering students' questions and monitoring their performance.
- Another important principle of CLT is the use of authentic materials. It is considered desirable to give students an opportunity to develop strategies for understanding language as it is actually used.
- Errors are tolerated and seen as a natural outcome of the development of communication skills. Since this activity was working on fluency, the teacher did not correct the student, but simply noted the error, which he will return to at a later point.
- Students should be given an opportunity to express their ideas and opinions. And the students also get the opportunities for cooperative interactions with their fellow students and the teacher.

Techniques of Communicative Language Teaching:

- **Authentic materials:** Here students are exposed to the use of natural language in a variety of situation. As a lesson a teacher can use a real newspaper article. Teacher can assign students homework, requiring that they listen to a live radio or television broadcast.
- **Scrambled sentences:** The students are given a passage (a text) in which the sentences are in a scrambled order. This may be a passage they have worked with or one they have not seen before. Here they are told to unscramble the sentences so that the sentences are restored to their original order.
- **Role play:** Role playing is very important in CLT because they give students an opportunity to practice communicating in different social contexts and in different social roles.

2.4 Total Physical Response:

Total physical Response (TPR) is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action; it attempts to teach language through physical activity. TPR is developed by James Asher, a professor of psychology at San Joes State University. This is a method of language teaching that capitalized on the way children naturally learn

their first language, through the transformation of perceptions into conceptions and then the expression of those conceptions using language. In this method students listen to their teacher and the teacher uses the target language communicatively from the beginning of instruction. The students do not speak at first. The teacher helps her students to understand her by using pictures and occasional words in the students' native language and by being as expressive as possible.

This method is considered a general approach to foreign language instruction which has been named 'the Comprehension Approach'. It is called this because of the importance it gives to listening comprehension. Most of the other methods we have looked at have students speaking the target language from the first day. In this method students learn the language first with understanding and after that they proceed to production. So, this method is less concerned with student production and more concerned about the students comprehensible input.

Basically TPR reflects a grammar-based view of language. Asher states that "*most of the grammatical structure of the target language and hundreds of vocabulary items can be learned from the skillful use of the imperative by the instructor*" (Techniques and Principles in language Teaching, 1977:4)

Characteristics of Total Physical Response:

- Here teacher directs and students "act" in response - "The instructor is the director of a stage play in which the students are the actors"
- Listening and physical response skills are emphasized over oral production.
- Students are not required to speak until they feel naturally ready or confident enough to do so.
- Grammar and vocabulary are emphasized over other language areas.
- Spoken language is emphasized over written language.

Principles of Total Physical Response:

- The student's understanding of the target language should be developed before speaking. So at beginning students say nothing. And the target language should be presented in chunks, not just word by word.
- Students can learn through observing actions as well as by performing the actions themselves. And the teacher is the director of all student behavior. Here students are the imitators of their teacher.
- Students will begin to speak when they are ready. And students learn the language first with understanding and after that they proceed to production.

- Here students are expected to make errors when they first begin speaking. Teachers should be tolerant of them and only correct major errors.

Techniques of Total Physical Response:

- **Using commands to direct behavior:** It should be clear from the class we observed that the use of commands is the major teaching techniques of TPR. The commands are given to get students to perform an action; the action makes the meaning of the command clear.
- **Role reversal:** Students command their teacher and classmates to perform some actions. Ashar says that students will want to speak after ten to twenty hours of instruction, although some students may take longer. Students should not be encouraged to speak until they are ready.

3. Implementation of theories into practice:

As an intern I worked in a school where I taught English literature and language for three months to gain practical knowledge about teaching. It was a part of my learning process and I was assigned as a substitute teacher of KG-II. My objective of this internship was to implement the methods we had learnt and to see how those methods worked in real classroom setting. I was using the text book and board and other classroom equipments as my primary resources. For my teaching approach, I was following both GTM (Grammar-Translation Method) and CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) methods. In some cases I also incorporated Audio-lingual and TPR (Total Physical Response) method. In my literature class I strongly followed GTM and for language classes I followed CLT. The sections that follow describe my overall experience in the last three months.

3.1 How I applied GTM while teaching Literature class:

For any literature class it is common that we have to be efficient in reading and writing. That is why students should learn the rules of grammar and structure properly otherwise they will not be able to comprehend anything. As a teacher, I believe that language is set of structure, which one needs to master to be able to use it accurately. So, I had chosen Grammar-Translation method which helps them to become skilled in English tremendously. In Grammar-Translation method we are using mother tongue as a medium of instruction so it was easier for me to teach them without difficulty. For my students

first I gave them the comprehension and asked them to read. The comprehension was about Fairy-tales and its title was “Snow White”. After reading the whole passage I explained it. There were some difficult words which were unfamiliar to them. So I explained those words in L1 (our native language). When the students had finished reading and translating the passages I asked them some questions to check whether they have understood the passage or not. Some of the sample questions were, “What is said about the passage?”, “What happens to Snow White’s step mother at the end?” when students have no more questions, I asked them to write the answers to the comprehension questions. The questions are in English, and the students were instructed to write the answers to them in English as well. Then I designed activities and the students had to do it. I proved them with some statements; *the king takes a new wife, who is beautiful but very cruel*. The activity was that they had to find out whether it was true or false. I also told them to correct the false ones substituting them with the correct information. I also explained those words into our mother tongue which were complicated for them. I also underlined the spellings from the passage and told them to learn it immediately. When they finished their learning I asked them one by one to come and write the spelling on the black-board. In this way I taught one unit by using GTM and this method was very effective while taking their literature classes.

3.2 Application of Audio-Lingual method while teaching Literature class:

In some cases, as my teaching approach I also incorporated Audio-lingual method. This method drills the students with the use of grammatical sentence patterns. It is a teacher-dominated method so the role of the teacher is central and active. As a teacher I wanted the students to be able to use English in a communicative way. As my students were small and in primary level I have to direct and control their language behavior. Again I used this method in the question-answers session because there they had to memorize it. This method is not that much effective as GTM.

3.3 Application of CLT method while teaching Language class:

I believe that students are most benefited by interacting with other learners to enhance their conversation skills as opposed to solely listening to me. That is why I divided the whole class into two groups, so they can interact with each other. Basically I wanted to increase the student interaction time as it gives them more practice which they require. Here my responsibility was to monitor their individual performances. So, I usually divided the whole class into groups and told them to work together for an activity. I gave each group some words to make sentences with. After completing their work they shared what they had written with another group. I found that students were more comfortable with their classmates rather than with me. I also put weaker students together for group activities where I can give them extra support. I also used to show them some pictures

and I involved the students from the beginning to talk about the pictures. I used adapted material, mostly from the picture books and I simplified them according to the students' level. It was easier for me to motivate them at first. After getting response about the picture I gradually engaged the students through classroom discussion. They participated actively in the class though some of the students were still hesitant. When I taught them paragraph writing at first I asked some warm up questions for their participation. For example- 'Myself' I did brainstorming to get the ideas and asked students to come and write whatever they think about themselves. I also facilitated them if they don't know any spelling of words. When I checked their script I found that most of the students made mistakes with 'b' and 'd'. They always used these two letters interchangeably. After completing their class work I tried to give them the corrections and feedback individually. I could manage this, as I had a relatively small class. So, teaching in language class I had identified that most of the students were eager to engage themselves in any task as it was very important to them to maintain their own self image. And I also mentioned to them that they are going to evaluate on their individual performances. If they performed more they will get more marks. I actually did this for motivating them to work. I found that CLT is very effective to teach them language rather than any other methods.

3.4 How I applied TPR method while teaching Language class:

I also used TPR method to teach language through physical activity. I was also using my gestures to help clarify my instructions and explanations to the students. There are many words that my students did not understand so in that case I had to use my gesture and posture for their better understanding. Sometimes I used blackboard and drew a picture to help them to understand. I taught them 'action words' like smiling, running, jumping, unhappy etc. I used to perform it. In this type of case I used my gesture so that they can easily understand. I used this method as a supplementary of CLT while teaching their language classes. It is not effective like CLT.

4. Recommendation:

In my three months experience I have observed that young learners are energetic, lively and it is easier to motivate and every teacher should make the best use of it. From my observation, I found that they were relatively well-prepared. They listened to what I had said but some of them should not grasp my instructions and did the wrong things. In this case I had to repeat the instruction until they understood me. I also noticed that when I told them to check their partner's copy they became more excited having been assigned this task. I think it is a new dimension for them where they get the authority. They are improving a lot. And I also noticed they made some silly mistakes every time. And this

happened because when they worked they talk too much and cannot revise. They like to work in groups because they take it as a game. The process I was using as my teaching approach and techniques were significantly effective for students to learn. Sometimes I did not finish the lesson because of the limitation of the time and the other reason was to maintain the appropriate discipline in the class. So I wish that if the time duration was enhanced by 10 minutes I think I could have managed it properly. The approach I was using as my teaching methods and techniques were significantly effective for students to learn. However, to further motivate students to focus on their education, I wanted to take them outside the class on a relevant field trip. I feel this would not only broaden their horizons and give their learning a new dimension, but also give them practical opportunities to put what they learn in school to use.

5. Conclusion:

This paper is all about engaging students in their Literature and Language classes for successful learning and it's the reflection of my internship. So far I believe these methods have been successful because I have received positive response from the majority of my students. To improve learners' level a teacher has to deal with them compassionately. While checking the scripts teachers have to be lenient as teachers are the source of vital motivation for the learners. It was a great experience for me and I have learnt lots of

things from this experience. By the help of these methods I have understood my students' needs, progress and their position in the process of learning. The procedures I used as my teaching methods and techniques were significantly effective for students to learn. And this approaches guided me to take the classes perfectly. Without these methods second language learning will remain incomplete and to ensure that students have to learn it from an early age.

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