

Modern teaching methods and strategies Part I

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Overview of the presentation

- 1) The definition of the **method , methodology, teaching strategies**
- 2) Traditional methodologies
- 3) Overview of different **approaches and methods of language teaching:**
 - **Grammar translation GM**
 - **Direct method DM**
 - **Audio-lingual method ALM**
 - **Silent Way SW**
 - **Suggestopedia SUG**

Definition of the method

- The **'method'** (Webster's Third New International Dictionary)

"a procedure or process for attaining" a goal or

"a systematic procedure, technique" or *"a set of rules"* (Method).

"methods have form and consistency,"

methods *"have definite steps or stages and sub-behaviours that are recurrent and applicable to various subject matters"*

„a well staged procedure to teach a new language.“

Methodology

- Webster's Third New International Dictionary, *methodology is "a body of methods, procedures, working concepts, rules and postulates employed [...] in the solution of a problem or in doing something"*
(Methodology)
- This expression can be used as an equivalent to the words ***teaching and strategy***.

Teaching strategies

- K.T. Henson (2008) states, that “***strategies*** represent a complex approach to teaching which often contains a mixture of teaching methods, utilizing a number of techniques with each method”
- **Language teaching methodology**, or teaching in this sense, is a set of methods based on the same rules and having a common aim, e.g. to encourage students to use the language, involve the students in the lesson, or explain the language to students who have to listen attentively.

Traditional Methodology

- its aims,
- philosophy,
- and procedures,
- and some examples of its methods

Traditional methodology (1)

- A very typical feature of traditional methodology is the “*teacher-dominated interaction*”
- The teaching is deeply *teacher-centred*, where *teachers serve as the source of knowledge* while *learners serve as passive receivers*”
- ‘**jug and mug**’ – the knowledge being poured from one receptacle into an empty one.”

Traditional methodology (2)

- “being in a class in the presence of a teacher and listening attentively’ is [...] enough to ensure that learning will take place” (Scrivener, 2005).
- To sum up, the traditional methodology puts the responsibility for teaching and learning mainly on the teacher and it is believed that if students are present in the lesson and listen to the teacher’s explanations and examples, they will be able to use the knowledge.

Traditional methodology (3)

- *“emphasis was placed on the formal side of the language”*
- *“it was assumed that language learning meant building up a large repertoire of sentences and grammatical patterns and learning to produce these accurately and quickly in the appropriate situation”* (Richards, 2008).
- Based on the above mentioned opinions is *“the traditional view that the English language consisted of a battery of grammatical rules and a vocabulary book”* (Broughton, 1994).

Traditional methodology (4)

- traditional methodology does not present the language as a means of communication.
- “language [as] a body of esteemed information to be learned, with an emphasis on intellectual rigor” (White, 1998).
- the knowledge of grammar and items of vocabulary are necessary to master the language a person who knows the rules and the lexis is able to understand and speak the target language.

Grammatical competence

- J. C. Richards (2008) *“earlier views of language learning focused primarily on the mastery of grammatical competence”*.
- Grammatical competence refers to the knowledge we have of a language that accounts for our ability to produce sentences in a language. It refers to knowledge of building blocks of sentences (e.g. parts of speech, tenses, phrases, clauses, sentence patterns) and how sentences are formed. (Richards, 2008)

Emergence of grammar translation method

- appeared in the first half of the 19th century
- Was one of the non-scientific methods.
- Historically its main aim was to appreciate the literature in L2
- L2 grammar helps them to learn L1 grammar and help them grow mentally

Principles of GT method (1)

- 1) Learning to read in L2 literature – written language is superior to spoken language. L2 culture was literature and fine arts.
- 2) Translation from L2 to L1 and vice versa.
- 3) Communication is not emphasised
- 4) Reading and writing – superior.
- 5) Authority and fussy corrections.

Principles of GT method (2)

- 6) L1 equivalents for L2 words
- 7) L1/L2 similarities emphasized
- 8) From superior to content
- 9) Deduction over induction
- 10) L2 learning – a mental exercise
- 11) Explicit and conscious knowledge of L2 grammar
- 12) Memorisation of grammatical paradigms.

Grammar-Translation Method (1)

- According to Richards, this approach was “*based on the belief that grammar could be learnt through direct instruction and through a methodology that made much use of repetitive practice and drilling*” (Richards, 2005)
- the most typical features of the grammar-translation method, which are “[its] rules, [its] examples, its paradigms [...] and related exercises” (Broughton, 1994).
- White’s assertion that “***grammar translation involves the learning and application of rules for the translation of one language into another***” (White, 1998).

Grammar translation method (2)

- Tharp's statement that in language teaching the essential issue was "*rules to be memorized, grammatical text analysis, and literal translation*".
- White states that "*vocabulary is learnt as isolated items and words are combined according to rule*" (White, 1998).
- "*there is no oral or pronunciation work, since it is the written language which is taught, and 'mental discipline' is stressed rather than any ability actually to use the language*" (White, 1998).

Advantages and disadvantages of the traditional methodology.

- *doing a little bit of translation and using students' native language in class [...] is both economic and effective in explaining a concept"*
- conceptual differences in the two languages are disclosed and help students establish correct concepts in English
- *"by making mistakes the learner is practising the wrong thing and developing undesirable habit"*
(Broughton, 1994).

The structure of the lesson

- in no circumstances should some routines be broken. Typical procedures:
- *revision of the previous lesson*
- *Explanation of a new subject matter and practical application of rules by doing exercises*
- *Setting assignments for the next lesson*

Disadvantages of traditional grammar translation method

- Reading seems to have more to do with deciphering than with reading in one's mother tongue (Tyler, 2008).
- the lack of speaking and pronunciation practice in traditional teaching methodology (White, 1998, Broughton 1994).
- learners experienced significant frustration at the moment of realizing that they were not able to speak in common life situations (Broughton, 1994).
- Writing has been used as a form of punishment

Conclusion of traditional grammar translation method

- The language as a body of grammatical rules and an enormous number of words that are combined according to the rules.
- Traditional methodology thus focuses on grammatical structures and isolated items of vocabulary.
- Students are expected to learn the rules and the items of lexis, and it is supposed that they will be able to use the language.
- The primary skills, such as reading, writing, listening and speaking, are generally taught at an insufficient level.

Grammar translation method was challenged by:

- Natural methodologists
- Linguists interested in phonetics
- The reform movement
- Natural method gave rise to the **Direct method.**
- Still GT method has its proponents and is still used in some parts of the world. Why?

Direct method

- **Direct method (DM)** grew to prominence at the beginning of the 20th century and it is one of the nonscientific methods similar to Grammar translation method.
- DM is a movement towards a scientific method and it is based on child language acquisition.
- Frankie wrote on direct association between form and meaning.
- Saussure made a distinction between language and substance.

Teaching DM

- To Saussure language is the form not a substance
- In addition Sauvour banned translation and the use of mother tongue in language classroom.
- The weakness of GM made DM very popular
- The basic principle : the use of L1 is a sin and the connection between L2 and meaning should be direct.

Teaching DM principles

- 1) Language is primarily speech. Culture includes more than fine arts. Reading is taught from the beginning.
- 2) Concrete objects are used to make a direct link between form (language) and meaning.
- 3) Mother tongue has almost no role.
- 4) Demonstration is preferred to explanation and translation.
- 5) Vocabulary in use is emphasized to boost thinking in English. (Real use in real sentences)

Teaching DM principles (2)

- 6) Oral communication is the goal.
- 7) Pronunciation receives primary attention – focus on form.
- 8) Self-correction is preferred over teachers' correction.
- 9) Lessons should provide the chances for real life conversations.
- 10) Grammar is taught inductively or implicitly.

Teaching DM principles (3)

11) Like reading, writing is practiced from the beginning. Four language skills are together.

12) Lessons are topic based and not structurally designed.

13) Language and culture are interwoven.

Notes on DM:

- ✓ Fluency over accuracy (unlike GM);
- ✓ *Immediate correction* by self-correction or teacher's indirect correction. An error is like a sin.
- ✓ Student's knowledge *about* L2 is not evaluated as it was in GM.
- ✓ Overemphasized natural language acquisition usage for classroom learning situations.
- ✓ Lacking a firm basis in applied linguistics and psychology of learning.
- ✓ Placing so much emphasis on the teacher rather than on a textbook.

The weaknesses of DM

By 1920s the direct method (Berlitz method in USA) started to decline. DM lead to **Audio-lingual method (ALM)**.

At the same time **Situational Language Teaching** (Oral Approach) was popular in Europe and Contrastive Analysis gained importance.

About the same time Eclecticism – the idea that language teaching should undergo an ongoing reform – was also proposed and supported.

Teaching ALM

- GT and DM were popular until the World War II .
- The Audio-Lingual Method was developed in the USA. Why?

Teaching ALM

- **Audio- Lingual method (ALM)** is *the first scientific method* since it has roots both in psychology and linguistics.

Language teaching ALM

- **Psychology:**
- Skinner
- (1930s- 50s)
- **Behaviourism**
- **Linguistics:**
- Bloomfield
- (1930s- 50s)
- **Structuralism**

Teaching ALM principles (1):

- 1) Form appears inside the context, not in isolation. For example, a dialogues is used to introuce a new structure.
- 2) L1 and L2 have two systems and they are treated differently to avoid interference.
- 3) The teacher is a model. His native-like accent does not matter.
- 4) Language learning is habit formation and habits should be repeated in oorder to get fixed in mind.
- 5) Errors are barriers to habit formation (inhibition).

Teaching ALM principles (2):

- 6) Communication is the prior goal
- 7) A sentence includes several slots and each slot needs a special part of speech.

(E.G. **John is satisfied with the** (a noun is needed after the article,

E.G. **John is satisfied with the concert.** (a noun or an adjective is needed)

8) Positive reinforcement is preferred to no/negative reinforcement. (Note: behaviourism – stimulus (a dialogue), response (verbal response by a learner) , reinforcement – by the teacher)

Teaching ALM principles (3):

- 9) Stimuli can be verbal/non-verbal.
- 10) Language is a set of patterns or structures. Pattern practice leads to over-learning of a desired verbal behaviour (habit formation).

Teaching ALM: Linguistic structuralism(1)

- a) Language is a system of forms, from smaller units such as sounds to bigger units such as sentences.
- b) Structuralism studies the distribution of units within the system (e.g., a morpheme, an allomorph)
- c) Structuralism is a reaction to mentalist and traditional approach to grammar.
- d) In structuralism all languages are equally developed.

Teaching ALM: Linguistic structuralism(2)

e) Language is equal to speech

f) Language can be learnt through mastering the building blocks (elements) of the Form system.

g) Rule ordering process involves *addition, deletion, and transposition* of grammatical elements.

11) Automatic repetition is the result of overlearning – Drilling and mechanical repetition.

12) The teacher is an orchestra leader. Activities : mechanical repetition and drilling, meaningful exercises and communicative activities

Teaching ALM:

13) Learning structural patterns comes before vocabulary. Students sometimes repeat unknown or meaningless words. Form is more important.

14) L2 learning is similar to L1 acquisition. Rules are implicit from the examples.

15) Contrastive analysis of L1 and L2 shows the areas of difficulty.

16) The „natural order“ should be adopted in L2 acquisition . NOTE: acquisition is preferred to learning.

17) Culture is discussed within the language.

Teaching ALM techniques:

- ✓ Dialogue memorisation
- ✓ Backward build up drills
- ✓ Repetition drills
- ✓ Chain drills.
- ✓ Single-slot substitution drills
- ✓ Multiple -slot substitution drills
- ✓ Transformation drills
- ✓ Questions and answer drills
- ✓ Use of minimal pairs
- ✓ Completing the dialogues
- ✓ Grammar games.

The Silent Way (SW)

- Although Audio-lingualism is widely used all over the world, it was heavily criticised in the 1960s.
- Both Behaviourism (Psychological foundation) and Structuralism (linguistic foundation) were severely criticised by psychologists and linguists.
- *Behaviourism* was followed by *cognitive psychology* and
- *Structuralism* - by *transformational-generative linguistics*.

Teaching SW: Basic concepts

- 1) Human is creative so mimicry, memorisation, repetition and parrot learning (Behaviourism) do not lead to real learning.
- 2) Language teaching is not confined to a limited number of structures (as opposed to structuralism). Best evidence: sentences that children make in early life.
- 3) Language learning is not an outcome of habit formation. It is the process of creative rule formation (Cognitive psychology).

Teaching SW: Basic concepts (2)

4) Cognitive psychology puts more emphasis on creative thoughtful and mentalist processes. Learners from hypothesis to creative rule formation – to discover rules of L2.

5) Language learning is not a passive stimulus-response- behaviour process, Learners are actively involved in discovering L2 rules.

NOTE: In general Cognitive science deals with the scientific study of thinking, reasoning, and the intellectual processes of the mind.

Teaching SW: Basic concepts (3)

6) -Generative Transformational theory (proposed by Chomsky in 1953) is the model for the description of all the languages.

-GT theory, with the system of rules, shows the knowledge that a native speaker uses in forming grammatical sentences.

-In GT theory internalised grammar of a language - competence - enables one to create and to understand totally new sentences.

Teaching SW: Basic concepts (4)

- Competence enables us to tell what are and what are not possible sentences in a language (implicit knowledge).
- *Competence* is different from *performance*, which is the actual use of the language by individuals.
- 7) Errors are inevitable, a natural sign of learning/acquisition. They show the learner is testing its hypothesis. Learning progress is gradual step by step process.

Basic concepts of SW (continued)

8) All the four skills are worked on from the beginning. Form and meaning are both important.

Silent Way was not an outcome of Cognitive psychology, but in line with it. That is, both assign an active role to the learner.

In both of them – Cognitive psychology and Silent Way teaching is subordinate to learning. Both of them are learning and learner-centered, not teaching-centered.

Teaching SW principles:

- 1) The teacher goes from familiar to unfamiliar. (EG. starts with L2 sounds that are similar to L1 sounds).
- 2) The teacher speaks very little when needed. His silence motivates them to participate more actively.
- 3) The teacher is not a model. His gestures work. Students' "self criteria" for correctness are emphasised. The student takes the responsibility for self – learning.
- 4) Students' actions show if they have learnt.
- 5) Students help each other.
- 6) The teacher uses gestures and L1 to help them learn.

Teaching SW principles (2):

7) Students' familiar knowledge helps them to learn the unfamiliar (new context). The teacher's interference is very little.

8) Reading is worked on at the beginning but after speaking.

9) The teacher's silence leads to the student's autonomy: learner-centeredness.

10) Meaning is perceived through perceptions (senses) not translation.

11) Group cooperation is the norm.

12) Little praise and punishment.

Teaching SW principles (2):

- 13) Errors are important, they are the road signs.
- 14) Self correction over the teacher's correction.
- 15) Students listen to each other.
- 16) Learning rates are different. Perfection is not the target.
- 17) Learners are attentive.
- 18) Meaningful practice is preferred to repetition.
- 19) Logical presentation of language elements from familiar to unfamiliar.

Teaching SW principles (3):

- 20) Feedback from students informs the teacher.
- 21) No homework: sleeping practice.
- 22) Syllabus is structure-based.
- 23) Structures are not presented in a linear way.
- 24) Skills (speaking, reading and writing) reinforce each other.

Teaching Suggestopedia (SUG):

- Suggestopedia (superlearning):
- Psychological barriers are the main obstacles and the main causes for failure in language learning. These barriers should be removed.
- These barriers are fear of bad performance, limited ability to learn and failure, so our full mental powers are not revealed.

Suggestology:

- How to harness and redirect mental capacity for maximum learning. It is based on:
Desuggestion – unloading mental reserves of unwanted memories
- and **Suggestion** – loading the reserves with facilitating memories.

Basics of Suggestology

- 1) Authority the teacher's CV, his belief in his method and his manner are valued (the placebo effect).
- 2) Infantilisation: students take on the role of a child: games, songs, gymnastic exercises, etc.

Teaching SUG principles (1):

- 1) Learning is facilitated in comfort
- 2) Students must respect and trust the teacher's authority
- 3) The teacher „desuggets“ the barriers: L2 learning is fun.
- 4) Students' imagination is activated (Suggestion)
- 5) Students' confidence is raised (Suggestion)
- 6) Choosing new names and biographies enhances the feeling of security.
- 7) Easy to handle dialogues come first.

Teaching SUG principles (2):

- 8) Students' are off the form and on the communication
- 9) The lessons enhance possitive Suggestions.
- 10) Grammar and vocabulary are taught very superficially.
- 11) Mother tongue and translation are used to transfer meaning.
- 12) Language level is conscious level and music is subconscious level. They go together. Decoration of the environment is so important.
- 13) Homework is done in the morning and at night.

Teaching **SUG** principles (3):

- 14) Dramatisation and fantasy reduce the barriers of learning
- 15) The arts (music, drama...) should be the part of learning.
- 16) Novelty is motivation of learning. Learning activities are varied.
- 17) Infantilisation is the key to learning. A childlike attitude helps a lot.
- 18) Errors are tolerated and corrected later on indirectly.

Materials of teaching SUG

- **Two kinds of materials:**
- *Direct support:* texts and tapes
- *Indirect support:* classroom decoration and music. Musical background leads to relaxed body and alert mind.
- Students are required to talk *ex tempore*, not from *memorised lines*.
- The text should be emotionally and motivationally powerful. They should have literary value as well.
- Students are immersed in the method and forget about their past.