

Overview of Language Teaching Methodology

<https://www.google.com/search?q=METHODS+%26+APPROACHES++GRAMMAR+TRANSLATION+METHOD>

The word "methodology" is itself often misinterpreted or ill-understood. It is usually given lip-service as an explanation for the way a given teacher goes about his/her teaching, a sort of umbrella-term to describe the job of teaching another language. Most often, methodology is understood to mean *methods* in a general sense, and in some cases it is even equated to specific teaching *techniques*. It does (or should) in fact mean and involve much more than that.

Methodology

The study of pedagogical practices in general (including theoretical underpinnings and related research). Whatever considerations are involved in "how to teach" are methodological.

Approach

Theoretical positions and beliefs about the nature of language, the nature of language learning, and the applicability of both to pedagogical settings.

Method

A generalized set of classroom specifications for accomplishing linguistic objectives. Methods tend to be primarily concerned with teacher and student roles and behaviors and secondarily with such features as linguistic and subject-matter objectives, sequencing, and materials. They are almost always thought of as being broadly applicable to a variety of audiences in a variety of contexts.

Curriculum/Syllabus

Designs for carrying out a particular language program. Features include a primary concern with the specification of linguistic and subject-matter objectives, sequencing, and materials to meet the needs of a designated group of learners in a defined context.

Technique

Any of a wide variety of exercises, activities, or devices used in the language classroom for realizing lesson objectives.

Principles of Language Learning

Language learning principles are generally sorted into three sub-groupings: *Cognitive Principles*, *Affective Principals* and *Linguistic Principles*. Principles are seen as theory derived from research, to which teachers need to match classroom practices. Here are some brief summaries of the principles that fall into each grouping:

Cognitive Principles

- **Automaticity**: Subconscious processing of language with peripheral attention to language forms;
- **Meaningful Learning**: This can be contrasted to *Rote Learning*, and is thought to lead to better long term retention;

- **Anticipation of Rewards:** Learners are driven to act by the anticipation of rewards, tangible or intangible;
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- **Intrinsic Motivation:** The most potent learning "rewards" are intrinsically motivated within the learner;
- **Strategic Investment:** The time and learning strategies learners invest into the language learning process.

Affective Principles

- **Language Ego:** Learning a new language involves developing a new mode of thinking - a new language "ego";
- **Self-Confidence:** Success in learning something can be equated to the belief in learners that they *can* learn it;
- **Risk-Taking:** Taking risks and experimenting "beyond" what is certain creates better long-term retention;
- **Language-Culture Connection:** Learning a language also involves learning about cultural values and thinking.

Linguistic Principles

- **Native Language Effect:** A learner's native language creates both facilitating and interfering effects on learning;
- **Interlanguage:** At least some of the learner's development in a new language can be seen as systematic;
- **Communicative Competence:** Fluency and *use* are just as important as accuracy and *usage* - instruction needs to be aimed at organizational, pragmatic and strategic competence as well as psychomotor skills.

METHODS & APPROACHES

GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD

Latin and Ancient Greek are known as "dead" languages, based on the fact that people no longer speak them for the purpose of interactive communication. Yet they are still acknowledged as important languages to learn (especially Latin) for the purpose of gaining access to classical literature, and up until fairly recently, for the kinds of grammar training that led to the mental dexterity considered so important in any higher education study stream.

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 (appropriately!) as the *Classical Method*. It is now more commonly known in Foreign Language Teaching circles as the *Grammar Translation Method*.

It is hard to decide which is more surprising - the fact that this method has survived right up until today (alongside a host of more modern and more "enlightened" methods), or the fact that what was essentially a method developed for the study of "dead" languages involving little or no spoken communication or listening comprehension is still used for the study of languages that are very much alive and require competence not only in terms of reading, writing and structure, but also speaking, listening and interactive communication. How has such an archaic method, "remembered with distaste by thousands of school learners" (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:4) persevered?

It is worth looking at the objectives, features and typical techniques commonly associated with the Grammar Translation Method, in order to both understand how it works and why it has shown such tenacity as an acceptable (even recommended or respected) language teaching philosophy in many countries and institutions around the world.

Objectives

Most teachers who employ the Grammar Translation Method to teach English would probably tell you that (for their students at least) the most fundamental reason for learning the language is give learners access to English literature, develop their minds "mentally" through foreign language learning, and to build in them the kinds of grammar, reading, vocabulary and translation skills necessary to pass any one of a variety of mandatory written tests required at High School or Tertiary level.

Some teachers who use the method might also tell you that it is the most effective way to prepare students for "global communication" by beginning with the key skills of reading and grammar. Others may even say it is the "least stressful" for students because almost all the teaching occurs in L1 and students are rarely called upon to speak the language in any communicative fashion.

More conservative teachers from more conservative countries are even likely to be put out by anyone merely questioning the method, and a typical response could be "because that's the way it's always been done - it's the way I learned and look, now I'm a professor". The point being, the method is

institutionalized and considered fundamental. Such teachers are probably even unaware that the method has a name and can be compared alongside other methods.

Key Features

According to Prator and Celce-Murcia (1979:3), the key features of the Grammar Translation Method are as follows:

- (1) Classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language.
- (2) Much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words.
- (3) Long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given.
- (4) Grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words.
- (5) Reading of difficult classical texts is begun early.
- (6) Little attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis.
- (7) Often the only drills are exercises in translating disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother tongue.
- (8) Little or no attention is given to pronunciation.

Typical Techniques

Diane Larsen-Freeman, in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (1986:13) provides expanded descriptions of some common/typical techniques closely associated with the Grammar Translation Method. The listing here is in summary form only.

- (1) Translation of a Literary Passage
(*Translating target language to native language*)
- (2) Reading Comprehension Questions
(*Finding information in a passage, making inferences and relating to personal experience*)
- (3) Antonyms/Synonyms
(*Finding antonyms and synonyms for words or sets of words*).
- (4) Cognates
(*Learning spelling/sound patterns that correspond between L1 and the target language*)
- (5) Deductive Application of Rule
(*Understanding grammar rules and their exceptions, then applying them to new examples*)
- (6) Fill-in-the-blanks
(*Filling in gaps in sentences with new words or items of a particular grammar type*).
- (7) Memorization
(*Memorizing vocabulary lists, grammatical rules and grammatical paradigms*)
- (8) Use Words in Sentences
(*Students create sentences to illustrate they know the meaning and use of new words*)
- (9) Composition
(*Students write about a topic using the target language*)

Comments

Many people who have undertaken foreign language learning at high schools or universities even in the past 10 years or so may remember many of the teaching techniques listed above for the Grammar Translation Method. They may also recall that the language learning experience was uninspiring, rather boring, or even left them with a sense of frustration when they traveled to countries where the

language was used only to find they couldn't understand what people were saying and struggled mightily to express themselves at the most basic level.

Very few modern language teaching experts would be quick to say that this is an effective language teaching method, and fewer would dare to try and assert that it results in any kind of communicative competence. As Richards and Rodgers (1986:5) state, "It is a method for which there is no theory. There is no literature that offers a rationale or justification for it that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology, or educational theory."

And 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." (1994:53)

Digression:

I myself studied Swedish as a foreign language at university level in Australia, and I was taught according to a rather conservative approach that involved both the Grammar Translation Method and the Audiolingual Method. At the end of three years study I could read and write Swedish rather well, had studied several novels and poems by famous Swedish literary figures, and could pass a grammar test with scarcely a problem. Ironically, when I went to study in Sweden at the end of that period, I was endlessly frustrated with my strange accent and lack of colloquial vocabulary, the constant stumbling through menial utterances - and yet always impressed Swedes with my correct application of grammar/sentence structure and my familiarity with their literature and the cultural aspects that accompanied it. In hindsight, I would have to say that I found that the language learning process highly stressful and frustrating, but in the end it paid off. The end justifies the means? Personally I wish the "means" could have been more effective and enjoyable from the outset.

I also studied Old Norse and Old English at university level - of course using the Grammar Translation Method. I found these languages much more interesting and far less stressful, because my goal from the outset *was* to learn how to read and access the literatures in their original forms. I was learning Swedish primarily in order to learn how to communicate with Swedes and function happily in Sweden.

My personal conclusion is simple: the Grammar Translation Method was developed for the study of "dead" languages and to facilitate access to those languages' classical literature. That's the way it should stay. English is certainly not a dead or dying language (understatement of the century!), so any teacher that takes "an approach for dead language study" into an English language classroom should perhaps think about taking up Math or Science instead. Rules, universals and memorized principles apply to those disciplines - pedagogy and communicative principles do not.

THE DIRECT METHOD

Towards the end of the late 1800s, a revolution in language teaching philosophy took place that is seen by many as the dawn of modern foreign language teaching. Teachers, frustrated by the limits of the Grammar Translation Method in terms of its inability to create communicative competence in students, began to experiment with new ways of teaching language. Basically, teachers began attempting to teach foreign languages in a way that was more similar to first language acquisition. It incorporated techniques designed to address all the areas that the Grammar Translation did not - namely oral communication, more spontaneous use of the language, and developing the ability to think in the target language. Perhaps in an almost reflexive action, the method also moved as far away as possible from various techniques typical of the Grammar Translation Method - for instance using L1 as the language of instruction, memorizing grammatical rules and lots of translation between L1 and the target language.

The appearance of the "Direct Method" thus coincided with a new school of thinking that dictated that all foreign language teaching should occur in the target language only, with no translation and an emphasis on linking *meaning* to the language being learned. The method became very popular during the first quarter of the 20th century, especially in private language schools in Europe where highly motivated students could study new languages and not need to travel far in order to try them out and apply them communicatively. One of the most famous advocates of the Direct Method was the German Charles Berlitz, whose schools and Berlitz Method are now world-renowned.

Still, the Direct Method was not without its problems. As Brown (1994:56) points out, "(it) did not take well in public education where the constraints of budget, classroom size, time, and teacher background made such a method difficult to use." By the late 1920s, the method was starting to go into decline and there was even a return to the Grammar Translation Method, which guaranteed more in the way of scholastic language learning orientated around reading and grammar skills. But the Direct Method continues to enjoy a popular following in private language school circles, and it was one of the foundations upon which the well-known "Audiolingual Method" expanded from starting half way through the 20th century.

Objectives

The basic premise of the Direct Method is that students will learn to *communicate* in the target language, partly by learning how to *think* in that language and by not involving L1 in the language learning process whatsoever. Objectives include teaching the students how to use the language spontaneously and orally, linking meaning with the target language through the use of realia, pictures or pantomime (Larsen-Freeman 1986:24). There is to be a *direct* connection between concepts and the language to be learned.

Key Features

Richards and Rodgers (1986:9-10) summarize the key features of the Direct Method thus:

- (1) Classroom instruction is conducted exclusively in the target language.
- (2) Only everyday vocabulary and sentences are taught.
- (3) Oral communication skills are built up in a carefully traded progression organized around question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students in small, intensive classes.
- (4) Grammar is taught inductively.
- (5) New teaching points are taught through modeling and practice.
- (6) Concrete vocabulary is taught through demonstration, objects, and pictures; abstract vocabulary

is taught by association of ideas.

- (7) Both speech and listening comprehension are taught.
- (8) Correct pronunciation and grammar are emphasized.

Typical Techniques

Diane Larsen-Freeman, in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (1986:26-27) provides expanded descriptions of some common/typical techniques closely associated with the Direct Method. The listing here is in summary form only.

- (1) Reading Aloud
(Reading sections of passages, plays or dialogs out loud)
- (2) Question and Answer Exercise
(Asking questions in the target language and having students answer in full sentences)
- (3) Student Self-Correction
(Teacher facilitates opportunities for students to self correct using follow-up questions, tone, etc)
- (4) Conversation Practice
(Teacher asks students and students ask students questions using the target language)
- (5) Fill-in-the-blank Exercise
(Items use target language only and inductive rather than explicit grammar rules)
- (6) Dictation
(Teacher reads passage aloud various amount of times at various tempos, students writing down what they hear)
- (7) Paragraph Writing
(Students write paragraphs in their own words using the target language and various models)

Comments

The Direct Method is undoubtedly a highly effective method in terms of creating language learners who are very competent in terms of using the target language *communicatively*. However, as pointed out above, it requires small class sizes, motivated learners and talented teachers in order to succeed really well. It is also an unfortunate fact of life that students of foreign languages these days need more than just the ability to communicate confidently - they need to be able to demonstrate grammatical accuracy and good reading skills in order to succeed in both national and international language testing systems. It becomes something of an issue in countries where English language learning is primarily EFL-based (that is, English as a Foreign Language) and there is a distinct shortage of both (1) the opportunity to apply the language communicatively in real-life situations outside the actual classroom, and (2) teachers who have the required level of native or native-like ability in the target language and the creativity to provide realistic examples to illustrate what elements of the language actually mean.

Some of the teachers who go on to practice this kind of methodology tend to be native speakers who travel to foreign countries where they have no ability in the local language. In many cases they are not even aware they are following what is known as the "Direct Method" - they are trying to make the best out of a difficult classroom situation where creativity and constant (careful) use of the target language are required to make up for teachers' shortcomings elsewhere, whether that be a lack of ability in the students' mother language or a lack of knowledge about various pedagogic approaches to language teaching.

In an interesting development, it is not at all uncommon to find a blend of teaching techniques consisting of partner teachers - one a native speaker with no knowledge of the local language, culture or educational system, the other a local teacher who speaks English as a second or foreign language. The native speaker is often referred to as the "conversation teacher", and represents the "global communication" aspect of a marketing strategy so important for private language institutes. The local teacher may be known as the "grammar and translation" half of the overall package, the teacher who can use the students' mother language to control their behavior, put them at ease and explain how the grammar works. In essence, this kind of teaching teamwork is an often unconscious effort to combine the Direct Method with the Grammar Translation Method in an attempt to provide a (basically misguided) "holistic" approach to teaching the language - the basic premise being that the shortcomings of one are covered by the other and vice-versa. There are even institutes that consider themselves "advanced" because they employ a native-speaking teacher who has a "Direct Method" style approach in combination with a local teacher who teaches according to a blend of the Grammar Translation Method and the Audiolingual Method (that is, the local teacher sometimes or often uses L1 to explain the grammar, but for the rest of the time applies the kind of rote-learning and over-learning of forms typical of the Audiolingual Method).

How well does such a combination of styles work for the average language learner? In my opinion, the two styles undermine rather than complement each other, and inject both unnecessary extra confusion into the language learning process as well as what could be termed "stereo-typical roles" for teachers based purely on nationality.

I will admit that I myself have been through what I call the "Direct Method for Initial Classroom Survival" phase, basically because I didn't know better and felt that with it I was achieving some measure of tangible success as a teacher of "communicative English". Having (hopefully!) reached a somewhat more enlightened outlook through both experience and research, I realized that there is a fundamental flaw to the Direct Approach that has nothing to do with ensuring the students achieve a sufficient level of proficiency in English structure and reading. Like many other "modern" language teaching methods that preceded the "communicative approach", the Direct Method contains nothing in its essential theory and principles that deals with the learners themselves - cognitive and affective principles orientated around stepping into the boots of the students and looking out at the strange and confusing landscape of the foreign language they are asking (or being asked) to learn.

The Direct Method was an important turning point in the history of foreign language teaching, and represented a step away from the Grammar Translation Method that was progressive and heading in the right direction. I would encourage teachers to view the method in exactly the same way - not a bad way to teach but a long way short of the big picture modern language teaching methodology is attempting to achieve.

THE AUDIO LINGUAL METHOD

The next revolution in terms of language teaching methodology coincided with World War II, when America became aware that it needed people to learn foreign languages very quickly as part of its overall military operations. The "Army Method" was suddenly developed to build communicative competence in translators through very intensive language courses focusing on aural/oral skills. This in combination with some new ideas about language learning coming from the disciplines of descriptive linguistics and behavioral psychology went on to become what is known as the Audiolingual Method (ALM).

Objectives

Just as with the Direct Method that preceded it, the overall goal of the Audiolingual Method was to create *communicative* competence in learners. However, it was thought that the most effective way to do this was for students to "overlearn" the language being studied through extensive repetition and a variety of elaborate drills. The idea was to project the linguistic patterns of the language (based on the studies of structural linguists) into the minds of the learners in a way that made responses automatic and "habitual". To this end it was held that the language "habits" of the first language would constantly interfere, and the only way to overcome this problem was to facilitate the learning of a new set of "habits" appropriate linguistically to the language being studied.

Key Features

Here is a summary of the key features of the Audiolingual Method, taken from Brown (1994:57) and adapted from Prator and Celce-Murcia (1979).

- (1) New material is presented in dialog form.
- (2) There is dependence on mimicry, memorization of set phrases, and overlearning.
- (3) Structures are sequenced by means of contrastive analysis and taught one at a time.
- (4) Structural patterns are taught using repetitive drills.
- (5) There is little or no grammatical explanation. Grammar is taught by inductive analogy rather than deductive explanation.
- (6) Vocabulary is strictly limited and learned in context.
- (7) There is much use of tapes, language labs, and visual aids.
- (8) Great importance is attached to pronunciation.
- (9) Very little use of the mother tongue by teachers is permitted.
- (10) Successful responses are immediately reinforced.
- (11) There is great effort to get students to produce error-free utterances.
- (12) There is a tendency to manipulate language and disregard content.

Typical Techniques

Larsen-Freeman, in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (1986:45-47) provides expanded descriptions of some common/typical techniques closely associated with the Audiolingual Method. The listing here is in summary form only.

- (1) Dialog Memorization
(*Students memorize an opening dialog using mimicry and applied role-playing*)
- (2) Backward Build-up (Expansion Drill)
(*Teacher breaks a line into several parts, students repeat each part starting at the end of the sentence and "expanding" backwards through the sentence, adding each part in sequence*)
- (3) Repetition Drill

(Students repeat teacher's model as quickly and accurately as possible)

(4) Chain Drill

(Students ask and answer each other one-by-one in a circular chain around the classroom)

(5) Single Slot Substitution Drill

(Teacher states a line from the dialog, then uses a word or a phrase as a "cue" that students, when

repeating the line, must substitute into the sentence in the correct place)

(6) Multiple-slot Substitution Drill

(Same as the Single Slot drill, except that there are multiple cues to be substituted into the line)

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)

(8) Question-and-answer Drill

(Students should answer or ask questions very quickly)

(9) Use of Minimal Pairs

(Using contrastive analysis, teacher selects a pair of words that sound identical except for a single

sound that typically poses difficulty for the learners - students are to pronounce and differentiate the two words)

(10) Complete the Dialog

(Selected words are erased from a line in the dialog - students must find and insert)

(11) Grammar Games

(Various games designed to practice a grammar point in context, using lots of repetition)

Comments

Just as with the Direct Method, the Audio lingual Method represents a major step in language teaching methodology that was still aimed squarely at communicative competence. A teacher that can use the method well will generally be able to create what appear to be very "productive" students. The extensive and elaborate drills designed to facilitate overlearning and good "language habit forming" were an innovative addition to the techniques used to practice language, and many of them are featured as essential parts of "communicative" methods that followed the Audio lingual Method.

The method's original appearance under the name "The Army Method" is apt, and from it one ought not to be surprised that the method is all about highly controlled practice involving extensive repetition aimed at "habit forming". If you can imagine a squad of new military recruits doing marching drills in the exercise yard, listening to the terse commands and repeating the movements in various combinations until they become second nature and do not need to be "thought about", then you have yourself an effective picture of how the Audio lingual Method essentially works and creates the desired result. The experts representing descriptive linguistics at that time can be seen as disseminating the patterns required to perform the various marching drills piece by piece, and the behavioral psychologists dictated the various ways for the drills to be repeated in order to create an effective habit-forming process.

The (however slightly simplified) picture presented above ought to also indicate to the modern, enlightened and eclectic language teacher the obvious ways in which the Audio lingual Method falls far short of the overall goal of creating sustainable long-term communicative competence in

language learners. The linguistic principles upon which the theory was based emphasized surface forms of language and not the "deep structure". Cognitive principles aimed at explaining how learners learn and develop independent concepts were to change considerably in the period following the Audio lingual Method.

Still, there are reasons why the method is still popular, and perhaps even appropriate in certain educational contexts. In countries where one of the prime objectives of learning English is to take and achieve successful results in a variety of tests, and where many learners are not intrinsically motivated to learn English but do so because they feel they have to, the method is not without merits. The term "practice makes perfect" was coined at a time when the concept of practice was synonymous with repetition, and if English is seen as just "another subject to be learned", then the philosophy of repeating the required patterns until you get them right without needing to think about them does have a lot of supporters.

In my personal opinion, however, one of the key responsibilities of the modern day teacher of any discipline is to actively create and build intrinsic motivation in their learners, to empower them with the ability and confidence to "learn how to learn", to develop a sense of responsibility for their own development, and to regard peers as possible sources of learning as well. They should also be encouraged to experiment with and formulate their own ongoing set of language rules, and to deduct through active independent application where and how the rules need to be adapted. The idea that errors are a natural and even necessary part of the learning process needs to be encouraged and supported. The Audio lingual Method does nothing to address those issues, and as a whole is little more than a very effective way of running highly teacher-orientated classrooms designed to produce language users whose proficiency stems from some kind of "auto pilot" mentality.

There are ways in which the practice involved in the Audio lingual Method can be applied to approaches that have a bigger picture in mind. Audiolingual-based drills can be adapted and used in combination with effective error correction techniques to create an approach that is sensitive to affective factors, and can be followed up with techniques designed to create more independent experimentation and application. I do not in any way recommend it as a holistic approach to language teaching, but there are certainly aspects and techniques from the method that are effective if used properly and in combination with an appropriate range of other activities.

This new method incorporated many of the features typical of the earlier Direct Method, but the disciplines mentioned above added the concepts of teaching linguistic patterns in combination with something generally referred to as "habit-forming". This method was one of the first to have its roots "firmly grounded in linguistic and psychological theory" (Brown 1994:57), which apparently added to its credibility and probably had some influence in the popularity it enjoyed over a long period of time. It also had a major influence on the language teaching methods that were to follow, and can still be seen in major or minor manifestations of language teaching methodology even to this day.

Another factor that accounted for the method's popularity was the quick success it achieved in leading learners towards communicative competence. Through extensive mimicry, memorization and over-learning of language patterns and forms, students and teachers were often able to see immediate results. This was both its strength and its failure in the long run, as critics began to point out that the method did not deliver in terms of producing *long-term* communicative ability.

The study of linguistics itself was to change, and the area of second language learning became a discipline in its own right. Cognitive psychologists developed new views on learning in general, arguing that mimicry and rote learning could not account for the fact that language learning involved affective and interpersonal factors, that learners were able to produce language forms and patterns that they had never heard before. The idea that thinking processes themselves led to the discovery of independent language rule formation (rather than "habit formation"), and a belief that affective factors influenced their application, paved the way toward the new methods that were to follow the Audiolingual Method

COMMUNITY LANGUAGE LEARNING

In the early seventies, Charles Curran developed a new education model he called "Counseling-Learning". This was essentially an example of an innovative model that primarily considered affective factors as paramount in the learning process. Drawing on Carl Rogers' view that learners were to be considered not as a *class*, but as a *group*, Curran's philosophy dictated that students were to be thought of as "clients" - their needs being addressed by a "counselor" in the form of the teacher. Brown (1994:59), in commenting on this approach also notes that "In order for any learning to take place ... what is first needed is for the members to interact in an interpersonal relationship in which students and teacher join together to facilitate learning in a context of valuing and prizing each individual in the group." Curran was best known for his extensive studies on adult learning, and some of the issues he tried to address were the threatening nature of a new learning situation to many adult learners and the anxiety created when students feared making "fools" of themselves. Curran believed that the counseling-learning model would help lower the instinctive defenses adult learners throw up, that the anxiety caused by the educational context could be decreased through the support of an interactive community of fellow learners. Another important goal was for the teacher to be perceived as an empathetic helping agent in the learning process, not a threat.

The Counseling-Learning educational model was also applied to language learning, and in this form it became known as Community Language Learning. Based on most of the principles above, Community Language Learning seeks to encourage teachers to see their students as "whole" persons, where their feelings, intellect, interpersonal relationships, protective reactions, and desire to learn are addressed and balanced. Students typically sit in a circle, with the teacher (as counselor) outside the ring. They use their first language to develop an interpersonal relationship based on trust with the other students. When a student wants to say something, they first say it in their native language, which the teacher then translates back to them using the target language. The student then attempts to repeat the English used by the teacher, and then a student can respond using the same process. This technique is used over a considerable period of time, until students are able to apply words in the new language without translation, gradually moving from a situation of dependence on the teacher-counselor to a state of independence.

Objectives

The Community Language Learning method does not just attempt to teach students how to use another language communicatively, it also tries to encourage the students to take increasingly more responsibility for their own learning, and to "learn about their learning", so to speak. Learning in a nondefensive manner is considered to be very important, with teacher and student regarding each other as a "whole person" where intellect and ability are not separated from feelings. The initial struggles with learning the new language are addressed by creating an environment of mutual support, trust and understanding between both learner-clients and the teacher-counselor.

Key Features

The Community Language Learning method involves some of the following features:

- (1) Students are to be considered as "learner-clients" and the teacher as a "teacher-counselor".
- (2) A relationship of mutual trust and support is considered essential to the learning process.
- (3) Students are permitted to use their native language, and are provided with translations from the teacher which they then attempt to apply.
- (4) Grammar and vocabulary are taught inductively.

- (5) "Chunks" of target language produced by the students are recorded and later listened to - they are also transcribed with native language equivalents to become texts the students work with.
- (6) Students apply the target language independently and without translation when they feel inclined/
confident enough to do so.
- (7) Students are encouraged to express not only how they feel about the language, but how they feel about the learning process, to which the teacher expresses empathy and understanding.
- (8) A variety of activities can be included (for example, focusing on a particular grammar or pronunciation point, or creating new sentences based on the recordings/transcripts).

Typical Techniques

Larsen-Freeman, in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (1986:45-47) provides expanded descriptions of some common/typical techniques closely associated with Community Language Learning. The listing here is in summary form only.

- (1) Tape Recording Student Conversation
(Students choose what they want to say, and their target language production is recorded for later listening/dissemination)
- (2) Transcription
(Teacher produces a transcription of the tape-recorded conversation with translations in the mother language - this is then used for follow up activities or analysis)
- (3) Reflection on Experience
(Teacher takes time during or after various activities to allow students to express how they feel about the language and the learning experience, and the teacher indicates empathy/understanding)
- (4) Reflective Listening
(Students listen to their own voices on the tape in a relaxed and reflective environment)
- (5) Human Computer
(Teacher is a "human computer" for the students to control - the teacher stating anything in the target language the student wants to practice, giving them the opportunity to self correct)
- (6) Small Group Tasks
(Students work in small groups to create new sentences using the transcript, afterwards sharing them with the rest of the class)

Comments

Community Language Learning is an innovative approach that Brown (1994:58) lists as one of the "Designer" Methods of the Spirited Seventies". It is certainly unique in that it is one of the first methods to be developed that really focused on the feelings of the students and tried to address affective factors in learning (particularly for adult learners). It was also the first method to combine the field of language learning with the dynamics and principles of counseling.

Important and beneficial as that may be, it could be said that the method goes too far in the direction of affective factors at the expense of other considerations. It has been criticized for being *too* non-directive, and it certainly is not a method which could be recommended for students who are learning English as part of a standard, compulsory education curriculum. The method assumes that students intrinsically *want* to learn the new language, and that is not always the case. In a class where only half (or less) of the students actually want to be there, the principles of the group support/ dynamic are very likely to fall down.

The method has other limitations. The teacher must be fluent in both the target language *and* the students' mother language. It cannot be used for large or very large classrooms, and would be quite limited in terms of how it could be applied to classes of young learners, who tend to instinctively expect a certain amount of active direction from the teacher.

Still, the basic affective principle is a good one, and various Community Language Learning techniques can be used very effectively in combination with other methods. The tape recording and transcription elements are very useful, and any method which stresses the feelings and independent development of the learners themselves is one worth looking at and trying out in a variety of ways.

THE SILENT WAY

In addition to affective theories relative to language learning, another challenge to the Audiolingual Method was under way already in the sixties in the form of the *Cognitive Code* and an educational trend known as "Discovery Learning." These concepts most directly challenged the idea that language learning was all about mimicry and good habit-formation. An emphasis on human cognition in language learning addressed issues such as learners being more responsible for their own learning - formulating independent hypotheses about the rules of the target language and testing those hypotheses by applying them and realizing errors.

Objectives

Teachers using the Silent Way want their students to become highly independent and experimental learners. Making errors is a natural part of the process and a key learning device, as it is a sign that students are testing out their hypotheses and arriving at various conclusions about the language through a trial and error style approach. The teacher tries to facilitate activities whereby the students discover for themselves the conceptual rules governing the language, rather than imitating or memorizing them - Brown (1994:63) expresses this as being a process whereby "students construct conceptual hierarchies of their *own* which are a product of the time they have invested."

In addition to the idea that students become more autonomous learners and "develop their own inner criteria for correctness" (Larsen Freeman, 1986:62), another key objective was to encourage students to work as a group - to try and solve problems in the target language together.

Based on these principles and using the techniques described below, it was hoped that students would eventually be able to actively use the language for self-expression, relating their thoughts, feelings and perceptions.

Key Features

Richards and Rodgers (1986:99) describe the key theories underlying the Silent Way:

- (1) Learning is facilitated if the learner discovers or creates rather than remembers and repeats what is to be learned.
- (2) Learning is facilitated by accompanying (mediating) physical objects.
- (3) Learning is facilitated by problem-solving involving the material to be learned.

Cuisinere rods (small rods of varying color and length) are typically used in this method to introduce vocabulary and syntax, along with colorful wall charts. Instruction in this method typically starts with sounds, the basic building blocks in any language. The teacher usually provides single words or short phrases to stimulate the students into refining their knowledge of the language with as little correction/feedback from the teacher as possible.

Typical Techniques

Larsen-Freeman, in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (1986:66-68) provides expanded descriptions of some common/typical techniques closely associated with the Silent Way. The listing here is in summary form only.

- (1) Sound-Color Chart
(*The teacher refers students to a color-coded wall chart depicting individual sounds in the target language - students use this to point out and build words with correct pronunciation*)
- (2) Teacher's Silence
(*Teacher is generally silent, only giving help when it is absolutely necessary*)
- (3) Peer Correction

(Students encouraged to help each other in a cooperative and not competitive spirit)

(4) Rods

(Rods are used to trigger meaning, and to introduce or actively practice language. They can symbolize whatever words are being taught and be manipulated directly or abstractly to create sentences)

(5) Self-correction Gestures

(Teacher uses hands to indicate that something is incorrect or needs changing - eg. using fingers as words then touching the finger/word that is in need of correction)

(6) Word Chart

(Words are depicted on charts, the sounds in each word corresponding in color to the Sound-Color Chart described above - students use this to build sentences)

(7) Fidel Chart - click [here](#) to see an example

(A chart that is color-coded according to the sound-color chart but includes the various English spellings so that they can be directly related to actual sounds)

(8) Structured Feedback

(Students are invited to make observations about the day's lesson and what they have learned)

Comments

Like almost all methods, this one has had its fair share of criticism. The method encourages the teacher to assume a distance that prevents him/her from providing direct guidance when at times such guidance would be helpful. It is criticized as being too focused on building structure, and misses out on cultural input through the language, and the silence of the teacher can prevent students from hearing many active models of correct usage that they may find useful. In trying to create a less teacher-orientated classroom, many say that the Silent Way goes too far to the opposite extreme.

Other problems are a little more practical in nature. Getting together the "classic SW" prerequisite materials can take a lot of time and money - there is the sound-color chart, 12 word charts each containing around 500 words, and 8 Fidel Charts for the English language alone. And don't forget the actual cuisiniere rods as well! In order to maximize the learning potential of students using the Silent Way, teachers would have to be prepared to invest quite heavily in materials.

A lot can be taken from the method, however, if adapted and combined with elements from other methods. Viewing language learning as an "exploratory" process for students, of hypothesis building and trying out, is a very valuable teaching principle. Having tried various SW-style techniques with Young Learners, I would have to say that they are amazingly effective, and students appear to enjoy the learning process much more when they have such an active role in it. However, I usually like to combine the cognitive elements with a lot of contextual language input, initial models, and peripheral language pointers/stimulators. "Finding out for oneself" is a very important part of my overall teaching philosophy, but not the be-all and end-all.

Some of Cattedagno's basic theories were that "teaching should be subordinated to learning" and "the teacher works with the student; the student works on the language". The most prominent characteristic of the method was that the teacher typically stayed "silent" most of the time, as part of his/her role as facilitator and stimulator, and thus the method's popular name. Language learning is usually seen as a problem solving activity to be engaged in by the students both independently and as a group, and the teacher needs to stay out of the way in the process as much as possible.

The Silent Way is also well-known for its common use of small colored rods of varying length (cuisinere rods) and color-coded word charts depicting pronunciation values, vocabulary and grammatical paradigms. It is a unique method and the first of its kind to really concentrate on cognitive principles in language learning.

When students create their own sets of meaningful language rules and concepts and then test them out, they are clearly learning through a discovery/exploratory method that is very different from rote-learning. This appears to have much more in common with the way people learn their native language from a very early age, and can account for the way children come out with new language forms and combinations which they have never heard before. The underlying principles here are that learners become increasingly autonomous in, active with and responsible for the learning process in which they are engaged.

Caleb Gattegno founded *The Silent Way* as a method for language learning in the early 70s, sharing many of the same essential principles as the cognitive code and making good use of the theories underlying discovery learning.

SUGGESTOPEDIA

In the late 70s, a Bulgarian psychologist by the name of Georgi Lozanov introduced the contention that students naturally set up psychological barriers to learning - based on fears that they will be unable to perform and are limited in terms of their ability to learn. Lozanov believed that learners may have been using only 5 to 10 percent of their mental capacity, and that the brain could process and retain much more material if given optimal conditions for learning. Based on psychological research on extrasensory perception, Lozanov began to develop a language learning method that focused on "desuggestion" of the limitations learners think they have, and providing the sort of relaxed state of mind that would facilitate the retention of material to its maximum potential. This method became known as Suggestopedia (but also - rather confusingly - Desuggestopedia) - the name reflecting the application of the power of "(de)suggestion" to the field of pedagogy.

One of the most unique characteristics of the method was the use of soft Baroque music during the learning process. Baroque music has a specific rhythm and a pattern of 60 beats per minute, and Lozanov believed it created a level of relaxed concentration that facilitated the intake and retention of huge quantities of material. This increase in learning potential was put down to the increase in alpha brain waves and decrease in blood pressure and heart rate that resulted from listening to Baroque music. Another aspect that differed from other methods to date was the use of soft comfortable chairs and dim lighting in the classroom (other factors believed to create a more relaxed state of mind).

Other characteristics of Suggestopedia were the giving over of complete control and authority to the teacher (who at times can appear to be some kind of instructional hypnotist using this method!) and the encouragement of learners to act as "childishly" as possible, often even assuming names and characters in the target language. All of these principles in combination were seen to make the students "suggestible" (or their fears of language learning "desuggestible"), and therefore able to utilize their maximum mental potential to take in and retain new material.

Objectives

The prime objective of Suggestopedia is to tap into more of students' mental potential to learn, in order to accelerate the process by which they learn to understand and use the target language for communication. Four factors considered essential in this process were the provision of a relaxed and comfortable learning environment, the use of soft Baroque music to help increase alpha brain waves and decrease blood pressure and heart rate, "desuggestion" in terms of the psychological barriers learners place on their own learning potential, and "suggestibility" through the encouragement of learners assuming "child-like" and/or new roles and names in the target language.

Key Features

Here are some of the key features of Suggestopedia:

- (1) Learning is facilitated in an environment that is as comfortable as possible, featuring soft cushioned seating and dim lighting.
- (2) "Peripheral" learning is encouraged through the presence in the learning environment of posters and decorations featuring the target language and various grammatical information.
- (3) The teacher assumes a role of complete authority and control in the classroom.
- (4) Self-perceived and psychological barriers to learners' potential to learn are "desuggested".
- (5) Students are encouraged to be child-like, take "mental trips with the teacher" and assume new roles and names in the target language in order to become more "suggestible".
- (6) Baroque music is played softly in the background to increase mental relaxation and potential to

take in and retain new material during the lesson.

- (7) Students work from lengthy dialogs in the target language, with an accompanying translation into the students' native language.
- (8) Errors are tolerated, the emphasis being on content and not structure. Grammar and vocabulary are presented and given treatment from the teacher, but not dwelt on.
- (9) Homework is limited to students re-reading the dialog they are studying - once before they go to sleep at night and once in the morning before they get up.
- (10) Music, drama and "the Arts" are integrated into the learning process as often as possible.

Typical Techniques

Larsen-Freeman, in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (1986:84-86) provides expanded descriptions of some common/typical techniques closely associated with Suggestopedia. The listing here is in summary form only.

- (1) Classroom Set-up
(Emphasis is placed on creating a physical environment that does not "feel" like a normal classroom, and makes the students feel as relaxed and comfortable as possible)
- (2) Peripheral Learning
(Students can absorb information "effortlessly" when it is perceived as part of the environment, rather than the material "to be attended to")
- (3) Positive Suggestion
(Teachers appeal to students' consciousness and subconscious in order to better orchestrate the "suggestive" factors involved in the learning situation)
- (4) Visualization
(Students are asked to close their eyes and visualize scenes and events, to help them relax, facilitate positive suggestion and encourage creativity from the students)
- (5) Choose a New Identity
(Students select a target language name and/or occupation that places them "inside" the language language they are learning)
- (6) Role-play
(Students pretend temporarily that they are someone else and perform a role using the target language)
- (7) First Concert
(Teacher does a slow, dramatic reading of the dialog synchronized in intonation with classical music)
- (8) Second Concert
(Students put aside their scripts and the teacher reads at normal speed according to the content, not the accompanying pre-Classical or Baroque music - this typically ends the class for the day)
- (9) Primary Activation
(Students "playfully" reread the target language out loud, as individuals or in groups)
- (10) Secondary Activation
(Students engage in various activities designed to help the students learn the material and use it more spontaneously - activities include singing, dancing, dramatizations and games - "communicative intent" and not "form" being the focus)

TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE

Already in the late 1800s, a French teacher of Latin by the name of Francois Gouin was hard at work devising 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. His approach became known as the *Series Method*, involving direct conceptual teaching of language using series of inter-connected sentences that are simple and easy to perceive, because the language being used can be directly related to whatever the speaker is doing at the immediate time of utterance (ie, one's actions and language match each other). His thinking was well ahead of his time, and the Series Method became swamped in the enthusiasm surrounding the other new approach at the time in the form of the Direct Method.

Objectives

One of the primary objectives underlying Asher's TPR methodology was that learning needed to become more enjoyable and less stressful. Asher thought that a natural way to accomplish this was to recreate the natural way children learn their native language, most notably through facilitating an appropriate "listening" and "comprehension" period, and encourage learners to respond using right-brain motor skills rather than left-brain language "processing".

Key Features

Here are some of the key features of the Total Physical Response method:

- (1) The teacher directs and students "act" in response - "The instructor is the director of a stage play in which the students are the actors" (Asher, 1977:43).
- (2) Listening and physical response skills are emphasized over oral production.
- (3) The imperative mood is the most common language function employed, even well into advanced levels. Interrogatives are also heavily used.
- (4) Whenever possible, humor is injected into the lessons to make them more enjoyable for learners.
- (5) Students are not required to speak until they feel naturally ready or confident enough to do so.
- (6) Grammar and vocabulary are emphasized over other language areas. Spoken language is emphasized over written language.

Typical Techniques

Larsen-Freeman, in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (1986:118-120) provides expanded descriptions of some common/typical techniques closely associated with TPR. The listing here is in summary form only.

- (1) Using Commands to Direct Behavior
(*The use of commands requiring physical actions from the students in response is the major teaching technique*)
- (2) Role Reversal
(*Students direct the teacher and fellow learners*)
- (3) Action Sequence
(*Teacher gives interconnected directions which create a sequence of actions [also called an "operation"] - as students progress in proficiency, more and more commands are added to the action sequence. Most everyday activities can be broken down into a sequence of actions*)

Comments

TPR has become a worldwide business, so it makes sense to try and determine which of the principles involved are business/marketing-orientated and which are strictly pedagogic. TPR.com would have you believe that you can use TPR as the be-all and end-all for language teaching, right up into very advanced levels.

I personally feel that the original theories underlying the method, orientated around creating an effective and stress-free listening period in combination with physical responses (the same way we all began learning our own native language as babies) are the safest ones to stick to. I therefore view it as an almost pre-requisite technique for teaching young students or older students at beginning levels, but a method that needs to be supplemented with other approaches as students progress in proficiency. In the same way, it is an excellent method for young/beginning teachers to learn, as TPR lessons tend to be a lot of fun and the techniques involved are relatively simple. As with any other method or technique style, overdoing it will eventually create boredom and a feeling of repetition, which is enjoyable for neither students nor teachers.

I have enjoyed using varieties of TPR for a long time, and if there is a weakness to be found it would have to be the difficulty involved in employing TPR for the purpose of teaching abstract language. Not all the things we do are "physical" and not all of our thinking is orientated around the visible physical universe. To some extent you can be innovative and even develop "physical" manifestations of abstract and/or mentally-based verbs and nouns, but it loosens the connection and thus weakens it. I personally try to limit TPR activities to the directly obvious, visible and physically "doable". I believe this makes it a great method for young learners before they develop enough cognitively to start considering more abstract concepts.

I have also experimented with a technique that I felt grew naturally out of the TPR sphere, which I called at the time "Total Conceptual Response." Through this technique, students were encouraged to draw pictures or symbols for words and/or phrases and units of meaning that are personal to them - a manifestation on paper representing their own perception of various concepts. They share these with fellow students to (1) see how effectively the representation transfers to other people, (2) to get fresh ideas on how to portray the language "visually", and (3) build up a personal language "picture dictionary" that portrays language conceptually rather than translating it. It tends to involve humor in the same way TPR does, but involves the students more personally and more creatively. The way one student conceptualizes "ambition" or "success" is usually different from other students, and it can be an entertaining process to see what drawings and symbols emerge. I liked the "Total Conceptual Response" technique because it had elements of learner autonomy and problem-solving, and actively moved students away from the habit of making direct translations back into their native language.

THE NATURAL APPROACH

Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell developed the Natural Approach in the early eighties (Krashen and Terrell, 1983), based on Krashen's theories about second language acquisition. The approach shared a lot in common with Asher's Total Physical Response method in terms of advocating the need for a silent phase, waiting for spoken production to "emerge" of its own accord, and emphasizing the need to make learners as relaxed as possible during the learning process. Some important underlying principles are that there should be a lot of language "acquisition" as opposed to language "processing", and there needs to be a considerable amount of *comprehensible input* from the teacher. Meaning is considered as the essence of language and vocabulary (not grammar) is the heart of language.

As part of the Natural Approach, students listen to the teacher using the target language communicatively from the very beginning. It has certain similarities with the much earlier Direct Method, with the important exception that students are allowed to use their native language alongside the target language as part of the language learning process. In early stages, students are not corrected during oral production, as the teacher is focusing on meaning rather than form (unless the error is so drastic that it actually hinders meaning).

Communicative activities prevail throughout a language course employing the Natural Approach, focusing on a wide range of activities including games, role plays, dialogs, group work and discussions. There are three generic stages identified in the approach: (1) Preproduction - developing listening skills; (2) Early Production - students struggle with the language and make many errors which are corrected based on content and not structure; (3) Extending Production - promoting fluency through a variety of more challenging activities.

Krashen's theories and the Natural approach have received plenty of criticism, particularly orientated around the recommendation of a silent period that is terminated when students feel ready to emerge into oral production, and the idea of comprehensible input. Critics point out that students will "emerge" at different times (or perhaps not at all!) and it is hard to determine which forms of language input will be "comprehensible" to the students. These factors can create a classroom that is essentially very difficult to manage unless the teacher is highly skilled. Still, this was the first attempt at creating an expansive and overall "approach" rather than a specific "method", and the Natural Approach led naturally into the generally accepted norm for effective language teaching: Communicative Language Teaching.

THE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING APPROACH

All the methods described so far are symbolic of the progress foreign language teaching ideology underwent in the last century. These were methods that came and went, influenced or gave birth to new methods - in a cycle that could only be described as competition between rival methods or even passing fads in the methodological theory underlying foreign language teaching. Finally, by the mid-eighties or so, the industry was maturing in its growth and moving towards the concept of a broad "approach" to language teaching that encompassed various methods, motivations for learning English, types of teachers and the needs of individual classrooms and students themselves. It would be fair to say that if there is any one umbrella approach to language teaching that has become the accepted "norm" in this field, it would have to be the Communicative Language Teaching Approach. This is also known as CLT.

Basic Features of CLT

David Nunan (1991:279) lists five basic characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching:

- (1) An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- (2) The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- (3) The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on the language but also on the learning process itself.
- (4) An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- (5) An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

CLT Features at Length

Finnochiaro and Brumfit (1983:91-93) compiled this list of CLT features way back in 1983 as a means of comparing it to the Audiolingual Method. Below each feature in blue italics is the feature of ALM to which it was being compared.

- (1) CLT: Meaning is paramount.
ALM: Attends to structure and form more than meaning.
- (2) CLT: Dialogs, if used, center around communicative functions and are not normally memorized.
ALM: Demands more memorization of structure-based dialogs.
- (3) CLT: Contextualization is a basic premise.
ALM: Language items are not necessarily contextualized.
- (4) CLT: Language learning is learning to communicate.
ALM: Language Learning is learning structures, sounds or words.
- (5) CLT: Effective communication is sought.
ALM: Mastery or "overlearning" is sought.
- (6) CLT: Drilling may occur, but peripherally.
ALM: Drilling is a central technique.
- (7) CLT: Comprehensible pronunciation is sought.
ALM: Native-speaker-like pronunciation is sought.
- (8) CLT: Any device which helps the learners is accepted-varying according to their age, interest, etc.
ALM: Grammatical explanation is avoided.
- (9) CLT: Attempts to communicate may be encouraged from the very beginning.
ALM: Communicative activities only come after a long process of rigid drills and exercises.
- (10) CLT: Judicious use of native language is accepted where feasible.
ALM: The use of the students' native language is forbidden.

- (11) CLT: Translation may be used where students need or benefit from it.
ALM: Translation is forbidden at early levels.
- (12) CLT: Reading and writing can start from the first day, if desired.
ALM: Reading and writing are deferred until speech is mastered.
- (13) CLT: The target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate.
ALM: The target linguistic system will be learned through the overt teaching of the patterns of the system.
- (14) CLT: Communicative competence is the desired goal.
ALM: Linguistic competence is the desired goal.
- (15) CLT: Linguistic variation is a central concept in materials and methods.
ALM: Varieties of language are recognized but not emphasized.
- (16) CLT: Sequencing is determined by any consideration of content function, or meaning which maintains interest.
ALM: The sequence of units is determined solely on principles of linguistic complexity.
- (17) CLT: Teachers help learners in any way that motivates them to work with the language.
ALM: The teacher controls the learners and prevents them from doing anything that conflicts with the theory.
- (18) CLT: Language is created by the individual often through trial and error.
ALM: "Language is habit" so error must be prevented at all costs.
- (19) CLT: Fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal: accuracy is judged not in the abstract but in context.
ALM: Accuracy, in terms of formal correctness, is a primary goal.
- (20) CLT: Students are expected to interact with other people, either in the flesh, through pair and group work, or in their writings.
ALM: Students are expected to interact with the language system, embodied in machines or controlled materials.
- (21) CLT: The teacher cannot know exactly what language the students will use.
ALM: The teacher is expected to specify the language that students are to use.
- (22) CLT: Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in what is being communicated by the language.
ALM: Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in the structure of the language.

Caveats

Brown (1994:78-80) warns that there are certain caveats in the field of language teaching when it comes to discussing CLT and one's support of the approach, saying that that support or belief needs to be "qualified". He warns against:

- (1) Giving "lip service" to the principles of CLT (because "no one these days would admit to a disbelief in principles of CLT; they would be marked as a heretic") without actually grounding one's teaching techniques in those principles, or making sure one indeed understands and practices according to the characteristics that make CLT what it is.
- (2) Overdoing certain CLT features, for example engaging in real-life authentic language to the exclusion of helpful devices such as controlled practice, or vice versa. Moderation is needed in combination with common sense and a balanced approach.
- (3) The numerous interpretations of what CLT actually "is". CLT is often a catchall term, and does not reflect the fact that not everyone agrees on its interpretation or application. Teachers need to be aware that there are many possible versions, and it is intended as an "umbrella" term covering a variety of methods.