

LINGVODIDACTIC LEARNING IN EDUCATION

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Abstract: This article examines four methods of foreign language learning: the Grammar and Translation Method, the Direct Method, the Audiolingual Method, and the Communicative Method. Each method is discussed in relation to its key characteristics and teaching approaches. Linguists' opinions are included to provide a critical evaluation of each method. The Grammar and Translation Method emphasizes reading and writing, the Direct Method highlights oral communication and natural language acquisition, the Audiolingual Method prioritizes repetition and memorization, while the Communicative Method focuses on meaningful communication and social interaction. By reviewing these methods and expert opinions, the article explores the implications of each approach in foreign language teaching.

Keywords: Foreign language, Direct method, Grammar and Translation method, Linguistics,

Learning foreign languages has become increasingly vital in today's globalized world. As international communication grows more essential, many individuals seek to learn new languages to enhance their communication skills in diverse settings. Numerous approaches and methods are available for teaching foreign languages, each

with its unique characteristics and benefits. This article provides a brief overview of four such methods and highlights their key features. Additionally, expert opinions are included to help readers understand the implications of these methods for language instruction.

Grammar and Translation Method

The Grammar and Translation method is one of the oldest language teaching techniques, widely used in Europe during the 19th century. Its primary goal is to teach written language, emphasizing grammar and vocabulary. The method follows a structured approach that involves analyzing texts in a foreign language, translating them into the native language, and, finally, producing texts in the foreign language.

The first step of this method focuses on presenting grammar rules in a logical sequence, starting with the basics and gradually moving toward more complex structures. These rules are then applied through translation and text analysis exercises, allowing students to practice and internalize the material.

In the next step, students translate texts from the foreign language into their native language. This exercise not only enhances their comprehension and interpretation skills but also aids in vocabulary acquisition.

The final stage encourages students to produce their own texts in the foreign language, helping them develop both written and spoken communication skills while improving fluency. Although the Grammar and Translation method has faced criticism for its heavy emphasis on grammar and translation, with some arguing that it does not sufficiently foster communicative abilities like fluency and listening, its structured, analytical approach can provide a solid foundation for more advanced communication skills. Despite its limitations, the method remains in use in certain schools and universities worldwide.

Opinions on the method are divided, with some defending its continued relevance. For instance, Eliot (1909) endorsed the Grammar and Translation method as the most effective way to teach foreign languages, advocating its structured focus on grammar.

The Foundation of Language

Eliot (1909) argued that the Grammar and Translation method forms the foundation for language learning, suggesting that translation is the best way to develop the ability to understand and produce texts in a foreign language. On the contrary, Krashen (1989) criticized this method, asserting that it does not foster effective communication skills. According to Krashen, language acquisition happens naturally through exposure to real communicative situations, and focusing on grammar and translation often results in rote learning without meaningful understanding.

Henderson (2016) offered a more balanced view, claiming that the Grammar and Translation method can be valuable when used alongside more communicative approaches. Henderson suggested that this method is especially helpful for students who already have a basic understanding of the language, as its emphasis on grammar and translation can reinforce and solidify their existing knowledge. In summary, there are differing perspectives on the effectiveness of the Grammar and Translation method. While some view it as an effective tool for developing grammar and translation skills, others believe it falls short in promoting communicative abilities. However, many agree that it can serve as a useful complement to more communicative methods.

Direct Method

The Direct Method is another long-standing approach to teaching foreign languages, characterized by its focus on oral communication and the exclusive use of the target language from the very beginning. This method mirrors the natural process of first language acquisition, where listening and speaking come before reading and writing. Its primary goal is to enable students to communicate in real-life situations, fostering the development of their communicative skills.

The Direct Method emphasizes teaching language through meaningful, real-world contexts and tasks that are familiar to learners. Teachers primarily use the foreign language in the classroom, minimizing the use of the students' native language to promote immersion. This approach helps students learn grammatical structures and vocabulary in an intuitive and practical way.

Moreover, the Direct Method places importance on correct pronunciation and intonation, considering these elements essential for effective communication. One of its main advantages is that it provides an authentic and immersive language experience, which can enhance student motivation and engagement. It is especially effective for teaching widely spoken modern languages such as English, French, and Spanish.

Limitations of the Direct Method

Despite its many advantages, the Direct Method does have some limitations. One challenge is the difficulty in assessing students' progress objectively and systematically, as the method focuses heavily on oral communication and interaction. Additionally, it may pose difficulties for students with lower proficiency levels, as they may struggle to follow instructions given entirely in a language they have not yet mastered.

In conclusion, the Direct Method is an effective approach to teaching foreign languages, particularly in terms of enhancing oral communication and providing immersive, authentic learning experiences. However, it is often more suited for advanced learners or those with specific goals, such as learning for business or travel purposes.

Several experts have shared their views on the Direct Method. Berlitz (1914), the creator of the well-known Berlitz language learning system, strongly supported the method, asserting that learning a foreign language should begin with speaking rather than with reading or grammar. Swan (1989) recognized the method's potential to improve communicative ability but argued that grammar is still essential for full language comprehension. Richards and Rodgers (2014) also acknowledged the

method's effectiveness for teaching communicative skills, though they noted it may be less suitable for beginners who require more grammatical guidance.

Brown (2000) emphasized that while the Direct Method offers learners a realistic experience of communicating in a foreign language, it should not be the sole approach in language education. Richards (2014) echoed this view, suggesting that the method is especially useful for learners focused on practical objectives like travel or work, but that it should be combined with other methods to provide a balanced language learning experience.

Audiolingual Method

The Audiolingual Method, which emerged as a dominant approach to foreign language instruction during the 1950s and 1960s, emphasizes repetition, memorization, and intensive oral and listening practice to develop communicative skills. This method was designed in response to the need for rapid and effective foreign language training, especially in military, diplomatic, and commercial contexts in the United States during World War II.

The Audiolingual Method is rooted in behaviorist theories of language acquisition, which posit that language is a habit that can be acquired through consistent practice and repetition. Consequently, the method focuses on imitation, repetition, and drilling, with students frequently engaging in oral and auditory exercises to internalize the target language. Common dialogues and phrases are often introduced to students, which are repeated until the language becomes automatic.

The communicative method is an approach to foreign language teaching that prioritizes authentic communication, real-life scenarios, and collaboration. It offers an effective alternative to traditional grammar-focused and translation-based methods, gaining widespread acceptance worldwide as a successful approach to language instruction.

Many experts in the field have shared their insights on the communicative method. Harmer (2007) considers it one of the most significant advancements in foreign language teaching, noting its task-based focus and emphasis on placing students at the center of the learning process. Richards (2014) highlights that this method is rooted in the idea of language as a communication tool, allowing students to practice in real-life situations and gain confidence in real-world communication. Rivers (1987) praises the method for its interactive nature, which fosters effective communication skills through student interaction. Larsen-Freeman (2014) also emphasizes the student-centered approach of the communicative method, lauding its adaptability for various teaching contexts.

In summary, the discussion surrounding the communicative method is dynamic and varied, reflecting its significance and ongoing development in foreign language education.

Final Thoughts

This article has explored four methods of foreign language learning, accompanied by expert opinions on their use in teaching. Each method comes with its own set of strengths and weaknesses, and it is essential for educators to consider these characteristics when selecting the most suitable method for their students. Furthermore, these methods should not be viewed as mutually exclusive but rather as complementary approaches. Teachers can combine different methods and strategies to best meet their learning objectives. The most effective method will depend on the specific learning context and the unique needs of the students.

Ultimately, the primary goal of foreign language teaching should be to facilitate meaningful and effective communication. To achieve this, teaching methods should be applied with flexibility and adaptability, ensuring they align with the learning goals.

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