
The Grammar-Translation Method, The Direct Method, and The Audio-Lingual Method

Risnawati Djauhar *

*University of South Florida
Correspondence: risnawati@usf.edu

Abstract

This article briefly presents the characteristics of different teaching methods, namely the grammar translation method, the direct method, and the audio-lingual method. Many authors have discussed each method separately and in this brief communication I will present the characteristics of each comparable method. The significance of the discussion in this article, theoretically and practically, can help teachers decide which method will work best for them and their students. By having knowledge about the characteristics of each method, teachers can make optimal use of the method they choose so that learning outcomes can be achieved optimally.

Keywords: *grammar translation method, direct method, audio-lingual method, teaching method, comparison.*

© Langua – 2021

1. Introduction

The three methods; The Grammar Translation Method, the Direct Method, and the Audio-Lingual Method in teaching a language target, have their own features. In order to improve students' understanding of four skills in English, teachers may choose the best method for their practice. Here are some characteristics owned by each method. Grammar Translation Method presents how language is learned by reading comprehension, understanding text given, and vocabularies memorization. Besides, it focuses on the accuracy of grammar and translation and this method main purpose is to learn a language target in order to read its literature from mental discipline and intellectual improvement.

The Audio-Lingual Method presents how students need to master the target language by listening, memorizing, and repeat the expression, also the vocabularies from a dialog given by the teacher. Extensive memorization, repetition, and over-learning of patterns are the key to the method's success, as students could often see immediate results (Alemi & Tavakoli, 2016). This method uses pictures called cues and audio as the teaching tools. Teachers need more effort in giving instruction and examples of phrases and sentences so that students can easily to imitate and memorize them well.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons
Attribution 4.0 International License

After the learners familiar with the dialog and able to respond it quickly and accurately, then teacher introduces them to the drills pattern based on grammatical structures which is connected in that dialog. The drill responded in personal or choral without written text

Turning to the Direct method, which is the opposite of the Grammar Translation Method feature. This method focuses on listening and speaking skills as students intend to be able to do direct communication using the target language. As Rivers, (1968, as cited in Mart 2013) note, students always understand to communicate language by listening and speaking a good way that depend-speech with the best action. In addition, both teachers and students become a good partner in the classroom process where students encourage to be more active. Moreover, the attractive activity in this method is using realia, pictures, and pantomime that encourage them to avoid translation. The direct Method is almost the same as The Audio-Lingual Method as both are Oral-based approaches, but lots of different are presented below.

2. Discussion

2.1. Communication

In terms of the ability to use the language, students need to master the vocabulary and grammar. Still, the most important thing is how the students can communicate with people with the right meaning. By this, the direct Method is suitable with communication for acquiring the main goals in language learning. Since the learning phrases and expression are the quickest part for them, which leads to interaction naturally, students can make conversation with the peers, express their feeling, and giving an opinion for achieving the communication goals. Besides, to apply this in the class, teachers need to provide linguistic feeling to express the words, phrases, and varieties of expression such as formal and informal ones with appropriate body language.

According to Duchackova (2006, as cited in Anosh et al. 2017), "must be resourceful in the way of body gestures and expression by the evidence that is against the linguistic feeling of physical or mental tiredness in the way of teaching language." A challenge for each teacher to have a creative way of giving some expressions and role plays for students to do a real interaction with the target language; the more effort teachers offer, the better their understanding.

2.2. Culture

Creating an attractive method in the classroom should involve varieties of practice that experience by direct Method using realia, especially in learning the culture. Firstly, Students in demonstrating understanding of the culture studied tend to focus on the idea and attitudes throughout native speaker behavior. Secondly, to let the students practice understanding products of the culture studied, either tangible (e.g., painting) or intangible (e.g., dance), teachers use direct Method for presenting the culture with pictures and real tools. For example, Korean teachers give the instruction of how the table manner in drink Dado (a traditional tea which only drunk by king and queen in the past centuries). The class involves a celadon-colored pot as the preferred color of Korea's Buddhist Goryeo dynasty and the small white cups that are smaller than Western teacups but are larger than the tiny Chinese ones. The students start by doing meditation as the first step and continuing practice based on the teacher's further instruction. By this, direct Method is very helpful and useful for culture studied.

2.3. Connection

This section does not fit with the direct Method because students do not only need to do communicate with other people but to do Interdisciplinary by reading comprehension more to expand knowledge of other areas. Jacob (1989) states that Interdisciplinary is a knowledge view and curriculum approach



that consciously applies methodology and language from more than one discipline to examine a central theme, topic, issue, problem, or work. The students can relate the information acquiring from other areas to the learning of language target. Consequently, the students have broadened the knowledge by the information they own.

2.4. Comparison

The first standard of comparison is focused on how students can compare the language target and their native language through linguistic elements. This is well-suited with direct Method in terms of self-correction technique where students experienced critical knowledge in the linguistic elements with practice naturally. On the other hand, expanding cultural understanding occurs in this standard since the learners are able to compare a product like in my previous explanation about Dado tea with their own product. This will be attractive in the class using the direct Method as it involves cultural exchange information among students and teacher.

2.5. Communities

Sharing knowledge and culture is one standard that students can achieve because of the direct Method. The learners can share the information either with friends or youngsters that have the same interest in language and culture studied. Moreover, students can use the language for an enjoyable purpose, such as access reality shows and movies with the related language and enrich their knowledge about both culture and language by traveling abroad.

The best feature of this method is students should do direct practice either with a peer or the teacher. To distinguish the three different methods, Anderson (2011) concluded based on the principles and techniques as below;

Table 1: Principles of the three methods.

No	Principles	Grammar Translation Method	Direct Method	Audio-Lingual Method
1.	Teacher goal	Reading comprehension	How to communicate	How to communicate
2.	Roles	Traditional	Teacher and students are a partner	Teachers are role model, and students are an imitator
3.	Characteristics	Translation and grammar-based	Roleplay, pictures, and realia	Imitation and repetition
4.	Language area	Vocabulary and Grammar	Spoken language	descriptive linguists (phonological, morphological, and syntactic)
5.	Evaluation	Written test	Interview	Vocabulary and Grammar assessment
6.	Feedback	Teachers give direct feedback and help for students' error	Self-correction	controlling and correct if it possible.



Table 2: Techniques used by the three methods

No	Grammar Translation Method	Direct Method	Audio-Lingual Method
1.	Translation (students can translate either written or spoken of the reading passage given by the teacher)	Reading aloud by students and then teacher helps to make the meaning clear by using gestures and tools.	Memorizing dialog
2.	Reading (students answer the question based on reading passage)	Direct questions and answer	Backward Build-up (Expansion) Drill
3.	Antonym and synonym exercise	Self-correction of the students with teacher instruction and help	Repetition Drill
4.	Memorizing words	Conversation	Chain Drill and Transformation Drill
5	Fill in the blank exercise	Fill in the blank exercise.	Single-slot Drill Substitution Drill
6.	-	Dictation and Paragraph Writing	Multiple-slot Drill Substitution Transformation Drill

The items on the principles of the three methods show how audio lingual-method and direct method have slightly the same aim and application at the classroom practice. Both focus on direct teaching that more focus on spoken purpose in the target language. Those methods nowadays have been changed the translation method as it is a monotonous method for a classroom activity. Following that, the third method's techniques present more drills for students' further cognitive development, and students treat with different drills based on the level of difficulties to develop each student's cognitive development.

3. Conclusion

Learning target language is essential for people who aimed for their further career and cognitive benefits, especially for students in this generation. The learning process not only needs to be focused on the academic achievement but also the language culture where the students also acquire at school activity such as learning target language with the direct method and the audio lingual-methods. Both methods help the students to develop their language and cultural performance as well. However, the grammar-translation method as a monotonous one has its own power for improving students reading and writing. Teachers in this way have their own choice for what preference methods to apply and usually teach based on lesson plan role, which literally covers four skills at once.



References

- Alemi, M., and Tavakoli, E. (2016). Audio Lingual Method. *Third International on Applied Research in Language Studies, 2016*, pp.1-5
- Anderson, M., Freeman, L.D. (2011). *Techniques & Principles in Language Teaching (Third Edition)*.
- Anosh, M., Batool, A, Batool, N., Iqbal, N. (2017). The Direct Method: A Good Start to Teach Oral Language. *International Journal of English Language Teaching, 5(1)*, 37-40.
<http://www.eajournals.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Direct-Method-A-Good-Start-to-Teach-Oral-Language.pdf>
- Jacobs, H. H. (1989). Interdisciplinary Learning in Your Classroom. *Introduction to our expert*.
<https://www.thirteen.org/edonline/concept2class/interdisciplinary/index.html>
- Mart, T. C. (2013). The Audio-Lingual Method: An Easy way of Achieving Speech. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 3(12)*, 63-65.
<https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.686.2&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- National Standards in Foreign Language Education. *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language, Inc.* 700 S. Washington St., Suite 210. Standards for Foreign Language Learning.
- The Provider of Asian Artistic Traditions (2004-2015). Blog: *Dado (Korean Tea Ceremony) – The Way of Tea*. http://www.antiquealive.com/Blogs/Dado_Korean_Tea_Ceremony.html
- Zillo, F. (1973) The Birth and Death of the Audio-Lingual Method: *US Department of Health, Education and Welfare National Institute and Education*.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED080005.pdf>

