

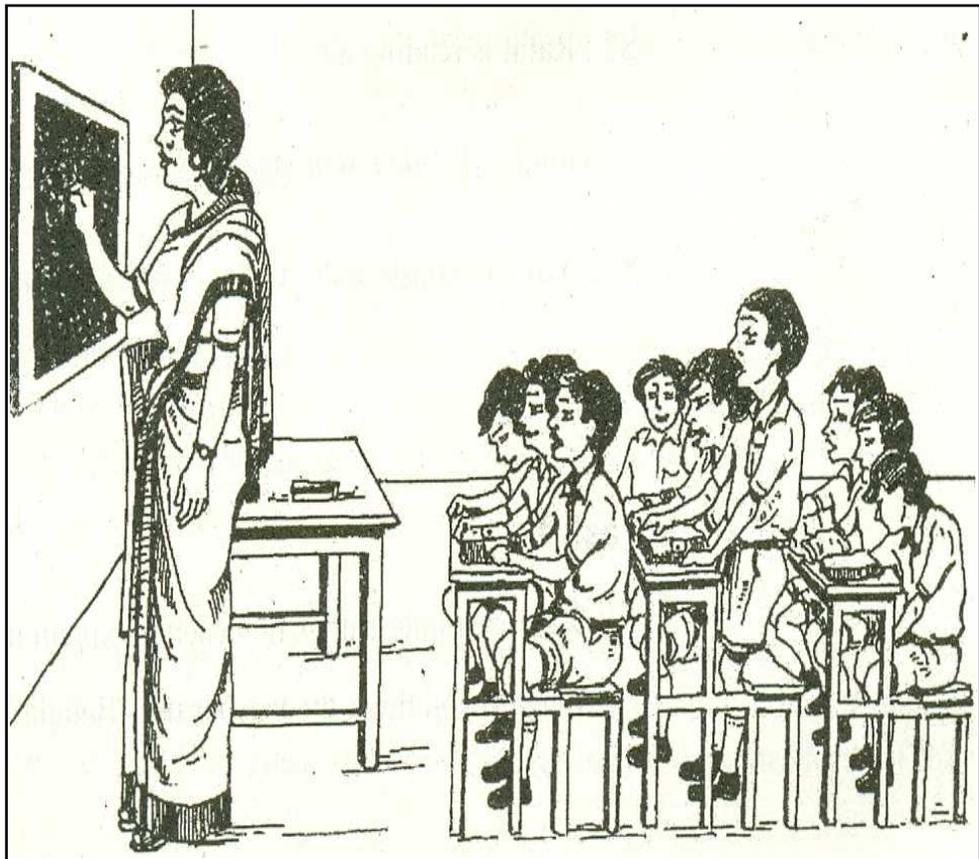
UNIT

5

METHODS & APPROACHES/ TEACHING METHODOLOGY

Introduction

After reading this unit you will be able to discuss the main theories and techniques of English Language Teaching (ELT) and choose the most appropriate method for teaching English to your students in class.



Picture 1: Classroom teaching.

LESSON

1

The Grammar Translation Method

Objective:

After reading this lesson you can identify the main characteristics of the grammar-translation method and discuss its advantages and disadvantages as a foreign language teaching methodology.

1.1

The Grammar Translation (GT) method is the oldest foreign language (FL) teaching method teachers have been using to teach English for many years.

Here is an example of a teacher using the GT method.

The teacher (T) first writes on the blackboard (bb)– **Present Continuous Tense** and then writes the rule and explains it.

T: The present continuous tense is used to describe what is happening now, e.g. I am reading a book. বা আমি একটি বই পড়ছি। যে tense দ্বারা বর্তমান কালে কোন কাজ চলছে বুঝায় তাকে present continuous tense বলে। So, subject বসে। number ও person অনুযায়ী 'be' verb যথা- (am, is, are) বসে। মূল verb এর শেষে -ing বসে।

Now, tell me what is the present continuous tense?

S1 : (reads out the rule in English and Bangla from the board)

T : *Good. Give me a sentence in the present continuous tense.*

S2 : Rafat is reading a book.

T : *Good; any other sentences ?*

S3 : You are speaking to us.

T : *Good.*

Task 1

1. What grammar rule is the teacher explaining in the example in point 1?
2. Why do you think the teacher uses Bangla?

1.2 Main Characteristics of the Grammar Translation Method

The following are the main characteristics of the Grammar Translation Method.

a. The Learning of Grammatical Rules

The grammar translation method gives importance to the learning of grammar rules in the FL by the students. Teachers teach the rules and students are expected to memorize these rules. The pattern of the sentence in the FL is also explained. For instance the teacher in the example says.

Subject বসে। number ও person অনুযায়ী 'be' verb + মূল verb এর শেষে- ing বসে। Students are expected to use the FL through an understanding of the grammar rules.

b. The use of examples and exercise to practise these grammar rules

In the example after the teacher explains the rule and the pattern of a sentence in the present continuous tense, s/he gives an example sentence of it. Then students are asked to give similar example sentences. Once students can do these, exercise will be given for practising the grammar point explained by the teacher, so that students are able to use the grammar rule learned.

c. Translation between mother tongue and foreign language

If you look again at the example you will find that the teacher translates. "I am reading a book" into Bangla. Furthermore the rule describing the present continuous tense is also translated into Bangla. Thus students learn English through translation into Bangla.

The teacher does this for s/he feels translations into the mother tongue or L1 will result in quicker and clearer understanding by the students.

This method also translates texts/poems/words of the FL into the L1.

d. Concentration on the Reading and Writing Skills

In the grammar translation method literary texts/poems etc. of the FL are taught. Thus, the reading skill is given importance. Everything in the FL is translated sentence by sentence into the L1. Even meanings of isolated words are given in the L1.

Written exercises are also set by the teacher for the students in this method. These written exercises are generally exercises using traditional language found in the FL texts. Thus, students learn to use a traditional form of the FL.

Two other language skills i.e. listening and speaking are hardly practised in the method.

Task 2

1. What are the main characteristics of the grammar translation method?
2. Do you think students being taught English by this method will learn to speak in English?

1.3 Disadvantages of the Grammar Translation Method

There are quite a few disadvantage of this method because of which in recent years the grammar translation method has not been a very popular foreign language teaching methodology.

The following are its disadvantages.

a. Language cannot be used Just by Learning Grammar Rules

A student a foreign language like English to use it real life situations. When a child learns his mother tongue, he learns to use it even before he becomes its grammar rules. Thus, to be able to use any language, it is not necessary to know grammar rules. Besides, when a teacher teaches grammar rules, he is teaching about the language instead of the language itself. Also, if one keeps thinking of grammar rules before using a sentence in the FL, one cannot naturally or spontaneously use the language. This over consciousness of grammar rules *hinders* rather than *facilitates* foreign language use. When we use our mother tongue, we hardly think of the grammar rule!

Hinders– ব্যাহত করা
Facilitates– সহায়তা করা

b. Frequent translations into the mother tongue give the habit of mental translation of the FL

Everytime the teacher translates sentences like 'I am reading a book' (আমি একটি বই পড়ছি) into the learners learn to understand the FL through L1. He will never learn to think in the FL or understand the FL without the support of L1. In other words whenever he needs to use the FL he will get into the habit of mentally translating it. This hampers learner's language useage as one cannot speak or write through continuous mental translations.

Also, frequent translations of the FL into L1 gives further practise of L1. The FL classroom is about the only place where learners get exposure to the FL as far as possible. Practice in the FL should be given. Through translations into L1, FL practise time becomes less.

c. The Listening/Speaking Skills are Ignored

The Grammar–Translation method gives importance to two skills i.e. reading and writing. The speaking skill and the listening skill too is neglected. When a child learns his L1 he learns first by listening and then by speaking.

The method of acquiring one's mother tongue should be the best method of language learning. But by neglecting the speaking skill, the grammar–translation method neglects development of speech in the FL, which is a basic function of all languages. This is why learners taught by the grammar translation method cannot speak in English and also have hardly any idea of pronunciation or intonation (see unit 7).

1.4. Advantages of the Grammar Translation Method

The grammar translation method has same advantages. The following are the advantages:

a. Translation into L1 gives Quick Understanding

When a piece of text or a word in the FL is translated into L1 students easily understand its meaning. This saves time and gives clearer understanding. Even grammar rules in the FL are taught through L1. As the learners' *grasp* of L1 is already good, thus ready comprehension takes place.

Grasp– বোঝার ক্ষমতা

b. A well Trained or Experienced Teacher is not Required

As the grammar translation method aims at teaching grammar rules and uses frequent translations into L1, so this method is easy to apply and does not acquire a well trained teacher.

Task 3

1. Do you think the grammar translation method should be used to teach English in Bangladesh? Give reasons for your answer.

REVIEW

Thus the grammar translation method is a method which is not too demanding on the teacher and translations into L1 help learners to understand the foreign language text easily. However, in spite of this advantage, the disadvantages are too many. For, learners taught by this method do not get sufficient practise in the target language and as a result are not able to use the FL properly.

The Direct Method

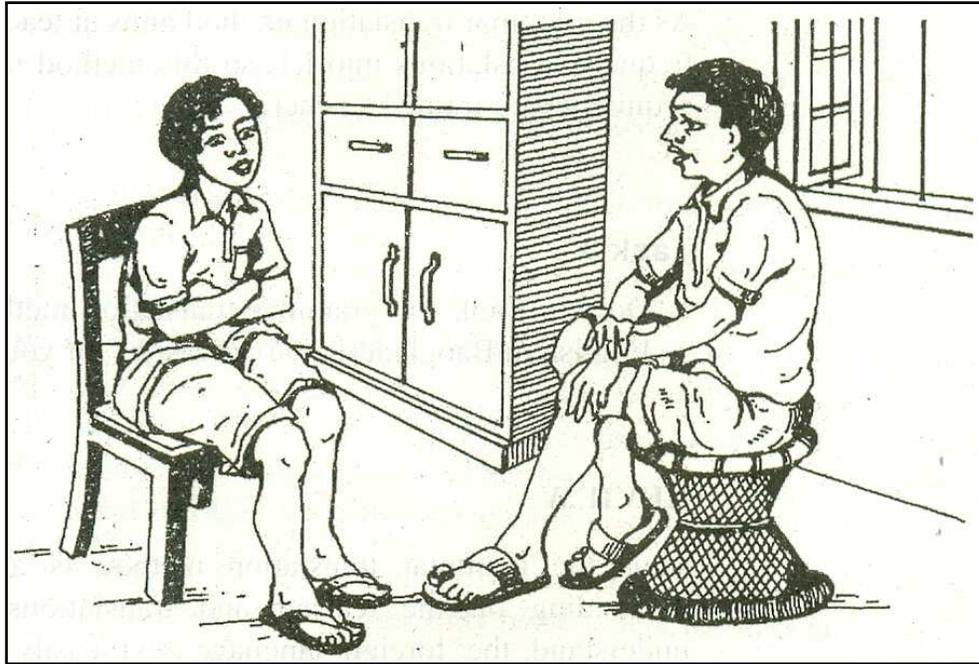
Objective:

After reading this lesson you can discuss the main principles of the Direct Method and its advantages and disadvantages as a foreign language teaching methodology.

2.1. Starter

Read the conversation between these two students.

Arif	:	আমার teacher সব সময় ক্লাসে English বলেন। আমরা না বুঝলে she mimes or acts. It's fun.
Rahim	:	আমার teacher ও English বলেন। কিন্তু খুব fast বলেন। আমরা সব সময় বুঝতে পারি না।



Picture 2: Two boys talking.

Task 1

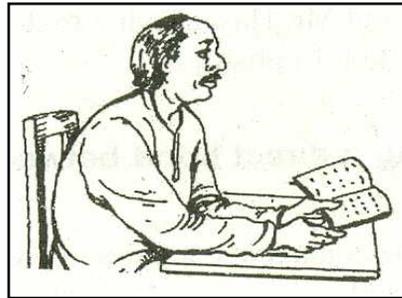
1. Do the teachers of these students use Bangla in the English class?
[No]
2. Do students always understand? What does one of the teachers do then? [No. uses questions]

From the above conversation it is clear that these two English teachers use English in the classroom and want their students to come in direct contact with English. They do not use Bangla at all. Only after learning how to speak are students initiated to reading and writing.

Task 2

1. Read the conversations below between two English teachers and their students.

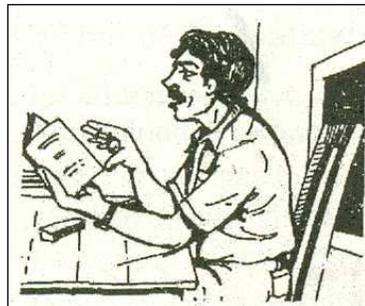
Dialogue 1



Picture of a teacher

T	: Good morning,...
SS	: (mutter).
T	: Listen (gestures SS to speak)
	Good morning, Miss Rahman. Ok?
	I'm Miss Rahman. Come on, you all say it....
	Good morning.
SS	: Good morning, Miss Rahman.
T	: Good morning. Right, I want you to listen.

Dialogue 2



Picture 3: Hasan, the new English teacher



Picture 4: Maruf, a student

T	:	Well students, let's introduce ourselves, shall we? I'm Hasan, your English teacher, and you?
S1	:	I'm Maruf.
T	:	Good. Now I want all of you to introduce yourselves to each other.
SS	:	(introduce themselves)

Answer the questions:

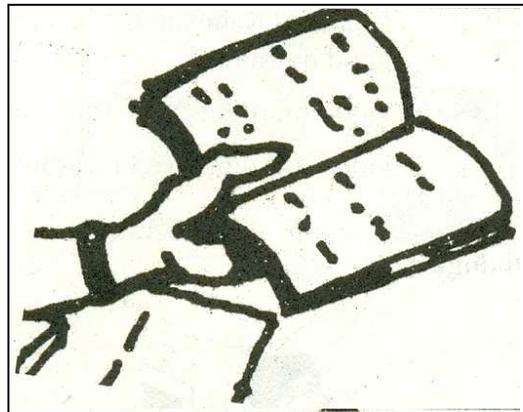
1. What are Miss Rahman and Mr. Hasan trying to do in their class?
[Help their students speak in English.]

2.2. Aims at Establishing a Direct Bond Between Experience and Expression.

The Direct Method emphasizes language learning by direct contact with the foreign language. Words and sentences which are more frequently used everyday are taught at first using real objects, models, pictures etc. where the meaning cannot be clearly shown, the teacher frequently uses miming, gestures and dramatization to express the meaning of the new word or structure. Abstract words are explained through words already learnt.

The following example of an English class shows how the English teacher is trying to establish a direct bond between the object book, (horse, monkey etc.) and the idea 'book'.

- T : (shows) what's this?
S1 : Book.



Picture 5a: A.

- T : Yes, good. Now what's this?

- S2 : Monkey.

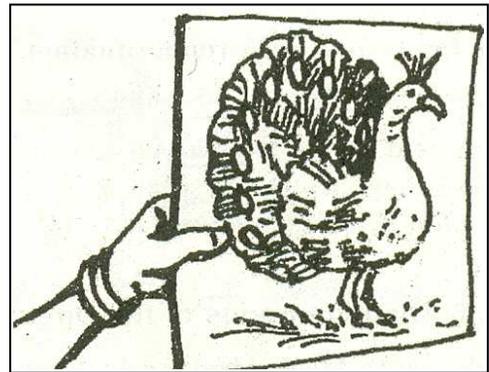
T : Very good. Now what about this?



Picture 5b: A Monkey

S3 : ময়ুর

T : Yes, say it in English. It starts with a 'p'. Come on who can say it? No body? Ok Peacock.
Everybody say 'Peacock'.



Picture 5c : A Peacock

2.3 No use of Explicit Grammar.

Immersed– ডুবে থাকে
Enveloped– ঢেকে

The Direct Method does not use formal or explicit grammar. So, memorization of grammar rules and definitions is discouraged and discarded. Everything is done in the FL, and students are *immersed* in a flow of examples in the FL, so much so that they are *enveloped* completely in it and are able to use the grammatical form as a matter of habit.

2.4 Use of Dramatization, Visual Aids, Gestates etc.

Look at pic. 5c the teacher has brought pictures of animals. S/he uses these to illustrate the meaning of the new words e.g. horse, monkey, peacock etc. In pic. 5b the teacher gestures to make SS understand she wants them to listen and speak. This teacher using the Direct Method

actively demonstrate the meaning of what they are saying through visual aids, dramatization etc. Students are also encouraged to speak through cues (e.g. pic.5c) and through questions (pic. 5c)

Task 3

1. From the above do you think a lesson in the Direct Method would be easy to teach? Why?
[No. Teacher has to be well prepared & trained]

2.5 Advantages of the Direct Method

The following are the important advantages of the Direct Method.

a. Gives Students Fluency in the FL.

As the students listen to the FL and are continuously encouraged to speak in it, they get a lot of oral practice and learners attain a good command over spoken English. They speak it with good pronunciation and stress as this is emphasized by the teachers.

b. Interesting Class-Room Situation.

In a Direct Method classroom visual aids, dramatization, special gestures are used by the teacher and students are kept actively involved in various classroom activities, so the learning situation becomes interesting and exciting. Students enjoy it and have no chance to feel bored.

2.6 Disadvantages of the Direct Method

The Direct Method has certain disadvantages which given below:

a. Reading and writing skills are neglected.

In the Direct Method the speaking skill is given a lot of importance while reading and writing skills are not given sufficient attention. Students therefore do not develop these skills properly.

b. The Direct Method is discouraging for the shy students.

Some students enjoy English being taught in the Direct Method. They are the ones who enjoy the mimes and gestures in class, but the shy students feel threatened the language and because they

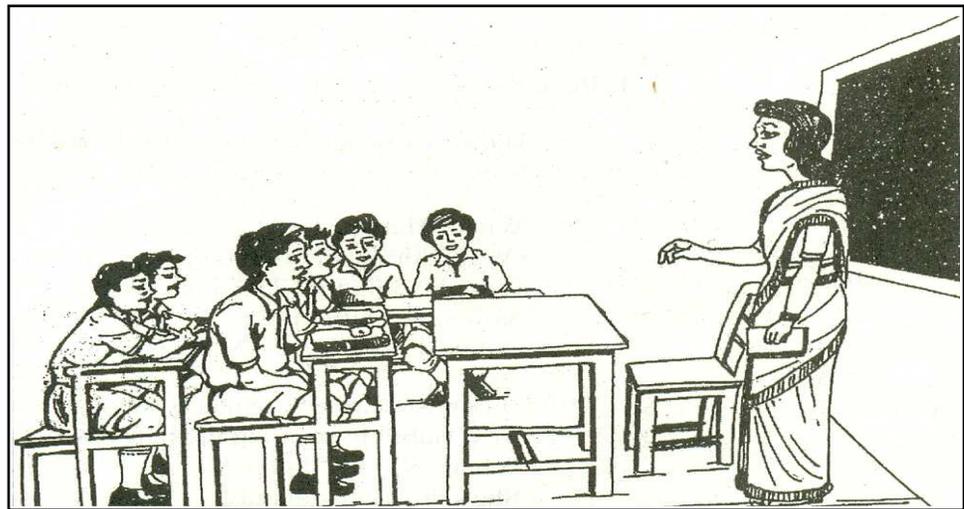
lack courage, they do not ask questions in class. As a result, they lag behind in learning the language.

c. No use of the mother tongue be a waste of time.

Classroom time is limited. To explain abstract words like beauty, honesty and sincerity or abstract ideas of poems or words completely in the mother tongue is a time consuming job. Sometimes in such cases the use of the mother tongue may prove a clear and easier method and may also save time.

d. Highly trained and skilled teacher required.

The teacher who would use the Direct Method needs to be highly trained and skilled and must have very good command of the target language. If the teacher is not efficient, students will not be able to follow the class and learning of the FL will not take place.



Picture 6: Classroom with a lady teacher.

Task 4

1. Complete the list given below.
2. Advantages and Disadvantages of the Direct Method.

Advantages	Disadvantages
1.	1.
2. Students enjoy the lesson	2. Some SS fail to follow the class.
3.	3.
4.	4.

REVIEW

The Direct Method aims at recreating the conditions of the mother tongue learning within the classroom by enveloping the learners completely in the target language. In doing so it over emphasizes the speaking skill while neglecting reading and writing, thus not considering all aspects of language teaching. A highly skilled teacher fully competent in the FL is required to teach. The classroom situation is interesting. Shy students however some times find it difficult to follow the class and lag behind.

The Structural/Situational Approach

Objective:

After reading this lesson you will be able to describe the principal characteristics of the Structural/Situational approach and identify its advantages and disadvantages.

3.1. Read the dialogue and then answer the questions given below.

T : Habib, can you clean the black board please?

Habib : Sure. (Cleans the black board)

T : What's Habib doing?

(Waits for an answer and then gives the answer herself)

He's cleaning the black board.

Now repeat after me.

Habib is cleaning the black board.

SS : Habib is cleaning the black board.

T : Yes, Habib is cleaning the black board.

What's Nasima doing?

She's drawing a picture.

Every body.. repeat.

Nasima's drawing a picture.

SS : Nasima's drawing a picture.

T : Good. Nasima/s drawing a picture.

Badrul, come here, please. Can you stand on one foot an keep the other one up?

Badrul : Yes, teacher. (Badrul stands with one foot up)

T : (To class) What's Badrul doing?

SS : He is standing with one foot up.

T : Very good. He's standing with one foot up.

Questions

1. What structure is the teacher trying to teach?
2. What technique does the teacher follow to teach that particular structure?

From the above classroom situation it is clear that the structural/situational approach is that kind of approach in language teaching where the new language is presented to the learners through situations and the learners practise the model sentences/structure.

3.2. Main Characteristics of the Structural/Situational Approach

The following are the main characteristics of the structural/situational approach.

a. Language to be Taught is Organized in Structures

According to the structural/situational approach learners should be taught sentences based on different real life situations. There can be many sentences based on a particular situation. These sentences are again based on a particular structure/or on structures. The structures are organized in such a manner that the students do not find them difficult to learn. The structures are graded too, i.e. the easy ones are taught first, the difficult ones are taught later. In order to gain proficiency in the use of the target language a learner must learn some essential or basic sentences patterns/structures which are presented in a graded manner.

The kind of approach where the new language is presented and practised in model sentence patterns or structures is called the Structural Situational Approach.

b. Much use is Made of Oral Repetition and Pattern Drilling

As of is more a matter of habit than knowledge and as habits can be developed only through practice, so practice in the use of the essential or basic sentence patterns or structures is given to the learner. Mere repetitions of sentences are of no help for the learner must be able to make the right choice of the structures at the right moment as a matter of automatic habit for him to be able to understand and produce the language freely.

The aim of rapid and intensive practice in these oral drills is to help the learner to gradually be able to make the right choice of the structure without any conscious attention and at the right moment.

c. Here is an Example of Oral Repetition and Pattern Drilling

- T : Arif, what does your father do?
 Arif : He is a doctor.
- T : Arif's father is a doctor.
 Everybody, repeat after me.
 Arif's father is a doctor.
- SS : Arif's father is a doctor.
- T : Good. Now let's change the word father for mother and keep the rest of the sentences as it is. So we would say, Arif's mother is a doctor. Everybody
- SS : Arif's mother is a doctor.
- T : Again.
- SS : Arif's mother is a doctor.
- T : Good. Now uncle.
- SS : Arif's uncle is a doctor.
- T : Very good. Now let's change the word doctor and put engineer there.
- SS : Arif's uncle is an engineer.
- T : Very good. Teacher.
- SS : Arif's uncle is a teacher.
- T : Good.

The teacher in this situation is doing a multiple substitution drill. This sort of pattern drilling is done in chorus. i.e. the whole class together and then checked individually.

d. Language is Always Presented and Practised within a Situation

In the Structural/Situational Approach, sufficient opportunities are given to the learners to hear the foreign language being used in meaningful situations and also practice is given to make them use it in such situations.

e. All the Four Language Skills are given due Importance

In the Structural/Situational Approach the four language skills are given importance. The listening speaking skills are given more emphasis in the early stages of FL learning as structural patterns are taught orally first in a meaningful situation. In later stages reading & writing skills are introduced to consolidate all that they

have learnt orally. Thus learners do not meet any language in print with which they are not familiar in speech.

f. Some use of the Mother Tongue is Made

The Structural/situational Approach persists on some use of the mother tongue in the FL classroom. This is used as a time saver to speed up explanations and to avoid complex mining of sentences in the target language. So the mother tongue is only used when it becomes difficult to explain words/phrases in the FL.

Task 2

1. Read the characteristics of the structural/situational approach carefully. Then keep your book aside and make a list of the important characteristics.
2. Complete the blanks in the following oral substitution drill

T : (showing picture of a boy)
Whose brother is he?

S1 : He is Karim's brother.



Picture 7: A boy

F : (showing picture of a girl)

S2 : She

T : (showing picture of)

S3 :



Picture 8: A girl

3.3. Advantage of the Structural/Situational Approach

The Structural/Situational Approach has advantages as structures in the FL are presented and practised in meaningful situations, thus making the classroom and interesting with nearly real life situations.

The following are the main advantages.

a. It is a Scientific Method

The structural/Situational Approach is based on the principles of behavioural psychology, structural linguistics and general pedagogy, thus making it a scientifically based approach. Structures are graded and are presented in a situation. Students recognize the structure well enough to be able to produce it themselves, prompted by the teacher. Learners therefore know what they are saying. Repeated drills in the structures result in habit formation enabling learners to understand and produce the FL freely.

b. Balanced Practise of all the Language Skills

The Structural/Situational Approach gives importance to all the four language skills. Learners are exposed to listening and speaking in the early years followed by reading and writing. Later on this helps them to get practice in all the four skills.

3.4. Disadvantages of Structural/Situational Approach

No method can be perfect. As such the S. S. A has some drawbacks. The following are its disadvantages.

a. Oral Drilling may Lead to Boredom

Too much of oral drilling of structures may make the learners feel bored while the class may become monotonous. Thus the teacher has to be experienced and well trained to lend variety to the drills.

b. Language is not a Mechanical Activity

Speech habits in foreign language cannot be formed efficiently just by mechanical oral drilling as it impossible to create. All real life situations in the classroom.

Task 3

Read section 3.3 and say whether the following statements are true or false. Write T for true and F for false in the spaces provided.

1.	A teacher following the structural/situational approach can make her class lively and interesting.	
2.	Too much of oral drilling is good for language learning.	
3.	According to the Structural/Situational Approach any structure can be taught any time.	
4.	In the Structural/Situational Approach students get a chance to practise two skills mainly, L and S.	
5.	Mechanical activities in class cannot ensure the formation of speech habits.	

REVIEW

The Structural/Situational Approach is a foreign language teaching method which teaches a language through structures which are graded. Some structures are taught at first while others later on. The structures are presented and practised in meaningful situations. This approach gives importance to oral drilling. The skills of reading and writing are also given importance. In this way all the four language skills receive proper attention. The mother tongue is also used sometimes. This approach aims at habit formation so that learners can understand and produce language naturally.

Task 4

What kind of situations would you create in your classroom to introduce the following structures to your students?

- This is/That is
- There is/There are

The Communicative Approach

Objective:

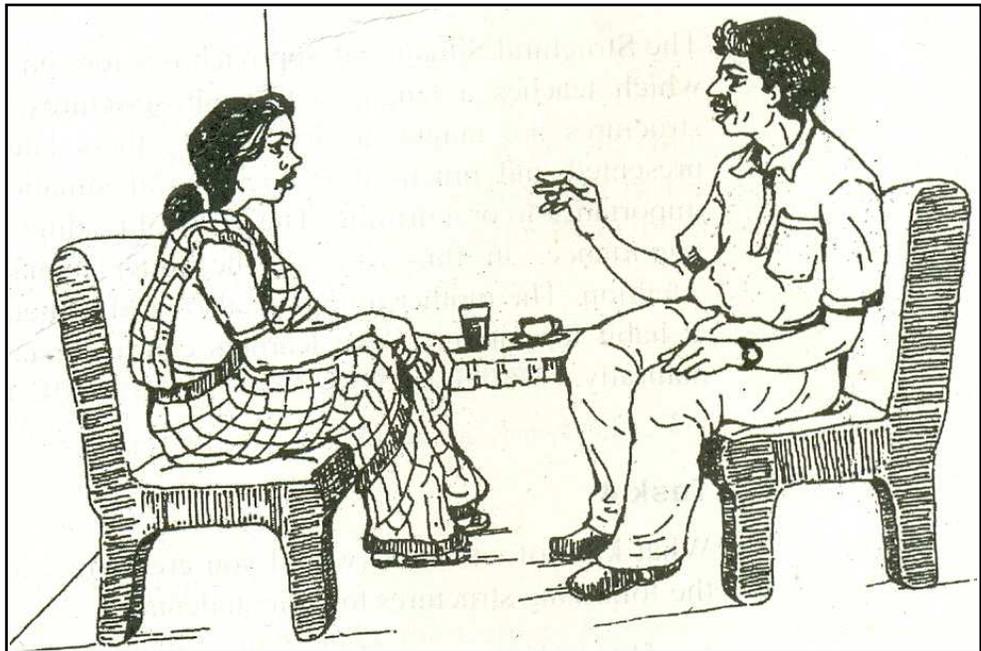
After reading this lesson you can identify the main characteristics of the communicative approach.

4.1. Read the dialogue below and answer the questions.

Dialogue 1

Rahim : Samira, can you sing?

Samira : No, not really. How about you?



Picture 9: Conversation

Rahim : Me too. I can't sing, but I can drive. Can you drive?

Samira : No, I can't, but my brother can.

How about cooking? Can you cook?

Rahim : No, I can't, but it doesn't take long to learn.

Questions:

1. Why are Rahim and Samira asking questions to each other?
2. Do you think Rahim and Samira knew the answers already?

In the above example, Rahim does not know if Samira can sing or not and his question is a real one. This kind of activity is a communicative activity and makes real use of language.

Now a days language teachers focus on the “communicative” process in foreign language learning, for teachers know that the aim of foreign language learning/teaching is to get students successfully communicating outside the classroom. So instead of teaching rules, patterns, definitions and other knowledge ‘about’ the FL, the point is to help students communicate in the foreign language in real life situations outside the classroom. This is the communicative approach.

4.2. Main Characteristics of the Communicative Approach

The following are the main characteristics of the communicative approach.

a. Emphasis on language in use (for communication) rather than on language as structure:

Read the following

Dialogue 2

T : (showing picture of boy swimming) Can you swim, S1?

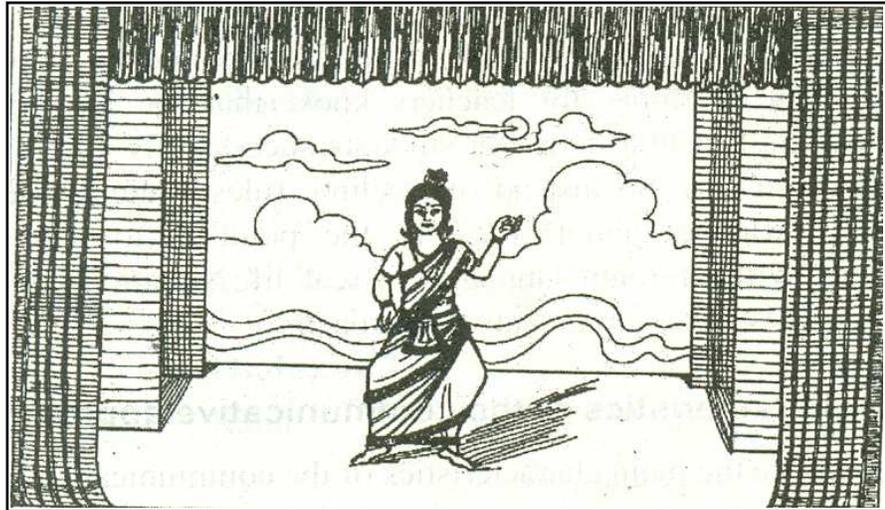
S1 : Yes.

T : Good, S2, can you swim?



Picture 10: A boy (15) swimming.

S2 : Yes.
 T : S2 ask me.
 S2 : Can you swim?
 T : No, I can't.
 (Showing picture of girl dancing)
 Ask me, S3.
 S3 : Can you dance?
 T : Yes, I can.
 Now, do you remember the questions?
 S1 ask S2 (showing the picture of girl dancing)



Picture 11: A girl dancing on the stage.

S1 : Can you dance?
 S2 : No I can't.
 T : Now ask your friends these questions and write your answers.

Name	yes	no	a little
ride a bike			
ride a horse			
play tennis			

Question

1. What is the sentence pattern being taught in Dialogue 2?

In Dialogue 2 the T does not begin by giving an explanation of the structure. She introduces the new structure by building in the student a need to use the new language item through his need to

ask and answer questions. The teacher does sufficient drilling to achieve a certain degree of fluency in the students. (S2/S3 asks T; S1 asks S2). This is then done in a real life context with students asking real questions to each other.

b. Language is Taught in Context

Look at Dialogue 2. After the students can ask and answer questions with can you...? With a certain amount of fluency, the T gives them a fresh communication task so as to provide them with an opportunity to use the language they have learnt. It is not an exercise from a grammar book they have to solve. They have to collect personal information by asking their friends "Can you ...?" questions and fill in the chart given by their T in Dialogue 2. This means they have to use the target language in a real life situation (as they ask and get true questions and answers) to complete the task. In other words language is taught in context.

c. Greater Emphasis on the Spoken Form

As communication in real life is largely spoken, so the communicative approach too puts a lot of emphasis on speech. Students are made to interact with each other through different oral tasks. As such students are encouraged to use the foreign language to complete the communicative tasks under the guidance, and not control of the teacher. This does not mean that the reading and writing skills are neglected.

d. Mother Tongue can be used as a Last Resort

In a communicative language class the teacher and the learners can both use the mother tongue as a *last resort* in order to avoid a break down of communication and help better understanding. this does not mean frequent use of the mother tongue in the classroom.

Last Resort– শেষ উপায়

e. Information Gap

For genuine communication to take place there must be information gap. When a question is asked in class nobody knows the answer excepting the person the question is asked to. The teacher or the SS do not know beforehand the information they would receive. So there is information gap in a communicative classroom.

Task 2

1. Look at Dialogue 2. Do you think the students will enjoy the communicative task their T has given them? Why?
2. Write a paragraph describing the communicative approach.

4.3 The Communicative Approach as a Foreign Language Teaching Methodology has Advantages.

The following is its main advantage.

a. Learners Find Interest in their Lessons.

The Communicative Approach involves the students in learning tasks like dialogues, role play etc. which makes them use the FL and keeps them interested. They practise using appropriate language forms as would encourage them to use the FL English in real life. For example if a learner in English learns how to ask for and give information in English in his class and if such a situation actually arises and a foreigner asks him for directions, he can do so with some confidence. This confidence motivates him to learn more English.

4.4 No Method is without some Disadvantages

The following is the main disadvantage of the communicative approach.

a. The Teacher has to be Trained and Proficient in the FL.

Communicative language work involves a lot of classroom activities like dialogues, role play, discussions and language games etc. It is difficult to carry out these activities in large classrooms, which is a common problem in our situation. The teacher must be well trained to handle a situation like this. Besides, a lot of the activities are oral activities. Unless the teacher is competent in the foreign language it will be difficult for her/him to teach effectively.

Task 3

1. Look at the English text book for class V. Do you think you could use it as a communicative textbook? Try it in your class.

REVIEW

The communicative approach therefore aims at developing communicative competence in the learners. Grammar is taught through language in use for communication, and not through rules, definitions etc. Students use the foreign language in various learning tasks in the classrooms which help them to gain confidence in using the target language outside the classroom in real life situations.