EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUES AND METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH FOR PRE-INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

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Abstract

This article examines successful strategies and approaches for instructing English to pre-intermediate students. It emphasizes approaches that improve language learning, develop communication abilities, and boost learner self-assurance. The article examines both conventional techniques and contemporary strategies, offering a balanced viewpoint for teachers engaging with pre-intermediate learners. The piece highlights effective methods like task-oriented learning, communicative language instruction, and the incorporation of technology to foster stimulating educational settings. Furthermore, it offers perspectives on classroom management, student motivation, and personalized instruction. By integrating theoretical frameworks with practical recommendations, the article provides significant insights for instructors of the English language.

Keywords: Teaching English, pre-intermediate stage, language learning, communicative approach, task-oriented education, classroom administration, student engagement, tailored instruction, instructional methods.

Introduction

Instructing pre-intermediate students in English offers distinct challenges and possibilities for teachers. At this point, students possess a basic grasp of English grammar and vocabulary but need additional improvement in fluency, precision, and self-assurance. The purpose of this article is to examine successful strategies and approaches that can be utilized in the classroom to aid the learning of pre-intermediate students.

Effective strategies for teaching language at this level entail achieving a balance

between grammar training, vocabulary development, and opportunities for communication. Educators must take into account various learning preferences, the requirements of students, and the cultural contexts of their pupils. Moreover, pre-intermediate learners gain from interactive and captivating tasks that promote active involvement and practical language application. The article will explore traditional and modern methods of teaching English, emphasizing their relevance and efficacy in different classroom environments.

Main part

Methods for teaching English have changed greatly over time. Different methods have been created to address various learning stages, including the pre-intermediate stage, where students are building more confidence with language fundamentals but still need organized assistance. This article investigates three traditional approaches—the Grammar Translation Method, the Direct Method, the Audio-Lingual Method, and the Silent Way—and looks into how each can be modified for teaching English at the pre-intermediate stage.

1. **The Grammar Translation Method** is a traditional language teaching strategy initially created for instructing classical languages such as Latin and Greek. It emphasizes mainly reading and writing, giving little consideration to spoken language abilities. This technique is based on the faculty psychology perspective of the 18th and 19th centuries, which highlighted cognitive abilities such as memory and reasoning.

Method Characteristics:

Strong dependence on the native language for clarifications.

Word list-based vocabulary development.

In-depth grammar explanations and emphasis on sentence construction.

Focus on examining challenging texts at the start of the course.

Students work on translating sentences or whole texts from their native language to the target language.

Benefits for Pre-Intermediate Learners:

Translation can swiftly elucidate the significance of words or expressions.

Students grasp concepts quickly when instructed in their native language.

It's a time-saving approach since it reduces the requirement for intricate explanations in the desired language.

The approach educates on the language instead of how to utilize it.

Does not prioritize verbal communication and impromptu language generation.

Student involvement is minimal, restricting interaction.

The emphasis is on grammar and syntax instead of practical communication.

Common Methods:

Converting literary excerpts from the native language into the target language.

Activities for reading comprehension emphasizing text analysis.

Recognizing synonyms and antonyms to enhance vocabulary.

Grammar tasks that include explanations of rules and subsequent sentence formation.

2. **The Direct Method** originated in Germany and France around 1900 as a response to the Grammar Translation Method1. It highlighted instructing languages in a manner similar to how children acquire their first language—by surrounding students with the target language and reducing the use of their native language.

Method Characteristics:

The native language is entirely disregarded during classes.

Emphasize verbal abilities, practicing speaking prior to reading and writing.

Contextual vocabulary instruction, linking words to actions or visuals.

Inductive grammar instruction involves students deducing rules from examples instead of receiving direct explanations.

Focus on accurate pronunciation and grammar by means of practice.

1https://www.reddit.com/r/languagelearning/comments/1jng7kv/how_high_would_you_prioritize_speaking_practice

Benefits for Pre-Intermediate Learners:

Offers a more authentic learning experience by engaging students in the target language.

Emphasizes the enhancement of speaking and listening abilities, essential at the pre-intermediate level.

Aids students in gaining vocabulary through context, facilitating retention and practical application in everyday scenarios.

Drawbacks: Can be challenging to execute in public schools because of limitations like budget, time, and class sizes.

Inexperienced teachers might struggle to implement the method successfully in various classroom environments.

Common Methods:

Exercises involving questions and answers, along with practice in conversation using the target language.

Creating and rehearsing sentences to assist learners in internalizing vocabulary and grammar.

Role-playing and gap-filling tasks for contextual vocabulary training.

3. **The Audio-Lingual Method**, also known as the Aural-Oral Approach[2], gained traction during World War II and was founded on behaviorist principles of language acquisition. It has similarities with the Direct Method but focuses more on grammar exercises and pattern repetition.

Characteristics of the Method:

Focus on grammatical structures and reiteration.

Errors are viewed as negative behaviors, and the focus is on making corrections.

Prioritize speaking skills ahead of reading and writing.

Cultural context plays a vital role in vocabulary instruction.

Benefits for Pre-Intermediate Learners:

2 https://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/using-generative-sentences-apply

Cultivates effective listening and speaking abilities that are essential at the pre-intermediate stage.

Visual tools, such as flashcards, can improve vocabulary acquisition.

Promotes quick repetition, aiding in the reinforcement of language structures.

Drawbacks: The approach may turn tedious because of its dependence on exercises and redundancy.

Learners have minimal chances to participate in creative or spontaneous language use.

Common Methods:

Dialogue exercises, where students echo and alter sentences.

Grammar exercises focused on the patterns shown in the conversation.

Exercises for listening comprehension to strengthen language structures.

4. **The Silent Way**, created by Caleb Gattegno [3], arose as a counter to behaviorist methods such as the Audio-Lingual Method. It showcases the move towards cognitive and constructivist theories of language acquisition, where learners are viewed as proactive problem solvers instead of passive receivers of knowledge. Gattegno was convinced that learners excel when provided with the opportunity to explore, uncover, and build their own comprehension of language functionality.

This approach is particularly remarkable due to its focus on learners, which can be tailored to assist pre-intermediate English students in achieving increased independence and a more profound comprehension of language structures.

Characteristics of the Silent Way:

Learner independence is essential: Students are motivated to assume accountability for their own education by means of exploration and self-improvement.

Limited teacher dialogue: The educator talks minimally, enabling students to take charge of their learning experience.

3 https://www.vaia.com/en-us/explanations/english/tesol-english/silent-way

Utilization of visual and tangible aids: Instruments like Cuisenaire rods and color-coded pronunciation charts are employed to depict vocabulary, syntax, stress, and intonation.

Problem-solving method: Lessons are structured as tasks for students to tackle, aiding them in cultivating cognitive techniques for comprehending language.

Emphasize pronunciation and precision: Phonemic awareness and stress patterns are introduced at the start and practiced using silent cues and demonstrations.

Benefits for Pre-Intermediate Learners:

Promotes imaginative thinking and profound analysis, aiding learners at this level to start transcending rote memorization.

Encourages lasting retention via inquiry-driven education.

Fosters learner self-assurance and autonomy, crucial for advancing to greater levels of skill.

Redirects attention from the educator to the learner's personal language instincts and thought processes.

Drawbacks: The absence of direct communication and engagement may not be ideal for every learner, particularly for those who are still honing their foundational communicative skills.

Limited teacher support can be frustrating or unclear for pre-intermediate students who still need direction.

It might be challenging to apply in larger classrooms or in educational systems where teachers are required to conduct more structured lessons.

Conclusion

In investigating different methods for structuring English instruction at the pre-intermediate level, we analyzed three separate approaches: the Grammar Translation Method, the Direct Method, and the Silent Way. Every one of these approaches offers

a distinct means of involving learners, showcasing various educational philosophies and catering to the differing requirements of language learners during this period.

The Grammar Translation Method provides a systematic, rule-oriented technique, perfect for those who require a strong grounding in grammar and vocabulary. Although frequently criticized for overlooking oral skills and communication, its focus on translation and writing tasks offers learners a clear understanding of the language's formal components.

The Direct Method emphasizes immersion in the target language, prioritizing oral skills and practical communication. It encourages language acquisition in a more organic, contextual setting, emphasizing speaking and listening. This approach is especially useful for promoting conversational fluency, though it might be challenging to apply in large groups or settings with limited resources.

The Silent Way provides a problem-solving method for learning that motivates students to take control of their educational journey. This approach encourages learner independence, creativity, and self-correction by reducing the teacher's role and incorporating visual aids and gestures. Although it promotes deep cognitive involvement and lasting retention, it can be difficult for pre-intermediate learners who still need additional guidance and interaction.

All of these approaches offer distinct advantages in the classroom, yet their success largely relies on the teaching context, student requirements, and classroom interactions. For pre-intermediate learners, a balanced strategy that integrates elements of these methods—emphasizing grammar comprehension, speaking practice, and learner independence—can offer a thorough route to language proficiency.

The ultimate objective is to establish a classroom where students not only study English but also utilize it proficiently in practical situations.

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