

## **PAPER 8**

### **PRINCIPLES OF LANGUAGE TEACHING**

Systematic language teaching presupposes a major task of preparation in which the limits of the course are fixed, inventory of the teaching items are prepared and the items are arranged in a sequence for presentation to the students. This is the task that can be so greatly improved by a framework of organization, a 'check-test' of pedagogic considerations on the one hand against the major grammatical categories on the other. Methodics is a framework of organization for language teaching in which the pedagogic techniques and linguistic theory cross fertilize each other. It is not the same as methodology which refers to pedagogical aspects of language teaching without necessarily any reference to linguistic categories.

Methods refer to particular well-defined sets of teaching procedures. But to prepare an inventory of teaching items, to limit it and to arrange it in an appropriate sequence, leads to a number of questions, chief of them are 'what kind of English? and for what purpose?' The items to be taught are absolutely determined by the answers to these questions, i.e. airline pilot.

RESTRICTION: Let us assume that in a given case it has been decided to teach spoken and written English of the present day based on the uses of educated people brought in England, in registers appropriate to discourse between people of the kind and in the context of the general education of the young. We have now restricted this amorphous notion of English to a number of workable corpus. The next set up is to consider the items occurring within the variety of the language, and then to select from these only a practical, workable item.

SELECTION: The criterion for selection is subjective, depending upon the likings and preferences of the individual author or education administrator. But if other external bases of selection exist, they should be discovered and used whenever possible. The obvious criterion is the frequency of occurrence, another is 'availability'. At least two other criterion exist: teachability and classroom needs which are essentially pragmatic in nature. Throughout this process of limitation, whether in choosing which register to teach or in selecting the items within that register, the process must be carried out at all levels of language. It is not enough to decide that the variety of English to be taught shall be one which employs Standard English Grammar, the kind of which is used with little variation by educated and professional people speaking English throughout the world, a decision has also to be made about the accent, i.e. about phonetics and phonology.

GRADING: After limitation, that is arriving at any inventory of teaching items into the most appropriate order for practical teaching purposes, grading is necessary. Grading can be sub-divided into two distinct operations.

(A) STAGING: It refers to the listing of teaching items and division, of course, into time segments-years, terms, weeks, days and classes of teaching course. The subject of teaching takes us into the field of language teaching methodology. Suppose a course has been divided into two years, each of two items, each item of ten weeks, each week having four classes, each class lasting forty five minutes-these are non-linguistic factors imposed upon the teacher by the practical and administrative needs of the situations in which he works.

Staging, then, is a task affected especially by two factors-first by the number of lessons that constitute the course and the intensity of the teaching measured in the classes per unit time, which in turn depends on the average length of the lessons and the frequency with which they are given, and secondly by decisions about the skills which the course sets out to teach.

(B)SEQUENCING: It is the problem of deciding the order in which the items should be taught. Sequencing is that section of the total task of grading in which the teacher decides to teach item "x" before item "y". In fact for an intelligent approach to 'sequencing', it is almost essential to have practical teaching experience with the pupils for whom a given course is intended.

The criterion for sequencing, with slight reservations are same as that of selection. PRESENTATION: This is chiefly a matter of practical classroom teaching and corresponds closely to what is meant by methodology-language teaching is methodology plus a great deal more. Methodology combined with applied linguistics is more effective for teaching languages than either methodology without linguistics or linguistics without methodology. By presentation we mean the "kernel of the teaching process", the confrontation of the pupil with the items being taught.

In practice, a distinction needs to be made between initial presentation-first line teaching and repeated presentation.

The techniques governing repeated presentation must take into account of two main purposes: reinforcement and remedial teaching. Reinforcement is the further presentation either as soon as possible after its initial presentation or deliberate revision at a later point in the course, remedial teaching is the further presentation of an item that has been forgotten or mislearned-the feeling of gaps and unlearning of bad habits.

TESTING: The forth main sub-division of the framework of teaching organization is testing. It is employed to know the teacher how far his teaching is effective. That is to say, to what extent learning is taking place among his pupils. The individual teacher needs a feedback mechanism to monitor the effectiveness of his teaching; the school as a whole needs to know how far the classes are progressing, the education system needs a way of measuring progress over the country in general. These different yet related tasks are all aspects of testing, which can most conveniently be discussed under three main headings.

(a) Formal and informal testing: A good teacher develops a set of techniques which enable him to know when to slow down his teaching, when to speed it up, when to repeat an item and so on. Formal tests are an attempt to construct an instrument for measuring attainment, or progress or ability in language skills. Clearly each of the qualities can be assessed in terms of each of the four basic language skills. A test of attainment in understanding the spoken language, for instance, can be used to test the learner's command of the language at the phonological level and to discover how far he recognizes the second contrasts of the language.

[Nearly all tests in English are, in fact, examinations: they are subjective in their setting and marking, they cover only the skills of reading and writing. They measure the pupils' knowledge about the language rather than their performance in it, and they confuse the testing of language with literary and cultural attitudes and knowledge.]

(b) Subjective and objective tests: A subjective test is one where the marks depend upon the examiner's opinion, judgment or evaluation. An objective test is one in which marks

are gained or lost, as the case may be, solely reference to the subjects' performance in such a way that all examiners would agree on the apportioning of marks. Such tests, if they are carefully linked with a teaching program, offer a simple, rapid and effective way of keeping a close check on learning and teaching.

(c) Examinations: By examination we mean 'institutionalized tests', tests which have an official or administrative function over and above their task of measuring performance.

The second feature of examination is that they are by nature inflexible. Being related to an educational system they have an obligation to remain reasonably constant and to change only when accompanied by necessary changes in school teaching method and curricula.

The third inescapable feature of examinations is that they control teaching, whatever technique and principle may be developed for evaluating and contrasting language teaching which is carried out in all but the best schools in a given area, and an improved syllabus can therefore only be effective if the examination permits it to be so.

Within the category of tests, there are further differences among the three kinds: "test of ability, test of attainment and test of progress."

Tests of ability are generally productive, that is, they attempt to measure features of performance which are known to correlate closely with effective and rapid language learning.

Tests of attainment are measurements of practical performance. Tests of progress, on the other hand, are simply tests of attainment "per-unit-time", a measure of the difference in the attainment of an individual at one moment and at a later

moment.

### SUMMARY METHODICS

procedures of methodics	levels of language and their equivalent in methodology			
limitation <u>restriction</u> selection	phonology sounds of speech	grammar sentence of Gr. patterns	lexis vocabulary	contact situation
grading <u>staging</u> sequencing				
initial teaching presentation				
remedial teaching				
formal/informal				
testing <u>objective</u> subjective				
tests-examination				