A NEW APPROACH TO LANGUAGE TEACHING

A. CHANDRASEKHAR



LINGUISTIC CIRCLE OF DELHI

The growing interest in language teaching has necessitated a new orientation to language teaching, and this should naturally be based on linguistic analysis and the comparison of the structures of languages. Further, a correct approach to the problem should take note of the aims of learners as well as the respective merits of the current methods.

A New Approach to Language Teaching traces at the outset the history of language teaching and evaluates the current methods. It then proceeds to discuss the areas in which the findings of linguistics will be of use in improving the theory and practice of language teaching. The causes of interference in the learning of a new language are analysed, and the concept of 'base language' is enunciated with respect to the transfer of linguistic patterns and possible interference. An entire chapter is devoted to a discussion of the importance of context in language learning, and another to the techniques of constructing lessons. Special attention is given to the value of intensive language courses, and the holding of 'language camps' is proposed as a technique in organizing such courses. The book ends with a brief review of teaching aids and techniques as well as the techniques of evaluating achievement.

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PREFACE

With the phenomenal increase in recent years in the number of people studying foreign languages both for cultural and practical reasons, it has become necessary to reexamine the current methods and techniques of language teaching. And it is gratifying to find that there is evidence of growing interest in language teaching problems in the light of modern needs. Indeed, quite an impressive number of publications relating to these have appeared since World War II, which, as a matter of fact, gave a great fillip to language learning.

This little book tries to examine certain important problems in the field of language teaching and to offer solutions for them. I do not claim that there is much that is new in the views expressed by me, but, as far as I know, the writings on language teaching hitherto do not emphasize the importance of **context** in the preparation of teaching materials as well as teaching practices; nor do they seem to contain the concept of **base language**. I earnestly hope that this publication will contribute to a better understanding of these aspects of language teaching problems.

I take this opportunity of recording my sense of gratitude to Mr. J. M. Ure, Education Officer, British Council, New Delhi, and to Professor Gordon H. Fairbanks of Cornell University, U.S.A., for reading through the manuscript of this book and for offering helpful criticism. I am also grateful to Mr. M. V. Narayana Rao of the M.Litt. Class, Department of Linguistics, University of Delhi, for reading the proofs of this book and for seeing it through the press.

Delhi, 1965

A. CHANDRASEKHAR

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History of Language Teaching Techniques

It is but reasonable to assume that man has been faced with the problem of learning new forms of speech ever since he emerged from his primitive isolation in cave dwellings. Before this stage in his evolution, he must have been busy acquiring the conventions which were responsible for the birth of language, and there is no doubt that this task must have exercised his faculties considerably and sharpened his intelligence and memory. We have of course no means of finding out the techniques he employed in evolving language out of inarticulate sounds and the labours that went into the task. We can only say that it is undoubtedly the most fundamental achievement in human history, an achievement which has made all other achievements in every field of human endeavour possible.

The intelligence which fashioned language could not have been at a loss to devise methods of learning a new form of speech easily and effectively. With the widening of contacts and the development of corporate activities and community life, the early nomad must often have had the need to acquire new ways of communication via speech. But, until the period when man began to record his experiences in writing we cannot ever hope to know what his techniques were for the acquisition of a new language.

The Tamils of South India have an interesting story in their literary tradition. It is said that Lord Siva once

deputed the sage Agastya to go to South India in order to stabilise the conditions there. But Agastya pleaded his inability to carry out his mission because of his ignorance of the Tamil language, whereupon the Lord taught it to him. Since Agastya is the reputed father of Tamil literature he must undoubtedly have learned the Tamil language extremely well. The story does not, however, enlighten us as to the method that Siva employed in teaching the sage.

Coming to historic times, we find the Indians giving a great deal of thought to language teaching problems. The Sanskrit language seems to have been taught everywhere in India mainly through what has been called the Grammargrind Method. The Śikṣās and Vyākaraṇās (phonetic and grammatical treatises) had to be mastered by any aspirant to scholarship in Sanskrit. The study of Sanskrit in fact started with the study of the formal grammar of the language and not with the language itself. Knowledge of the language was supposed to follow a knowledge of the grammar of the language. But, since a large body of texts was accurately mastered in the process of learning the grammar, the method did produce satisfactory results.

We get an insight into the method adopted for the study of Tamil as mother tongue from the Introductory chapter (potuppāyiram) of the 13th century Tamil grammar Nannūl. The virtues of memorising, repetition, and group activities to impress on the mind the meaning of what is studied have been stressed in this text. Obviously, these have been the normal Indian techniques of learning languages and literature from very ancient times. A careful study of the phonetics and phonology of the language being learnt has,

in fact, been an essential part of the Indian tradition of language learning as exemplified by a famous passage in the Taittirīya Upaniṣad as well as the statements in the earliest Tamil grammar Tolkāppiyam (c. 2nd century A.D.).

As in the case of the scientific analysis of language, Europeans were in ancient days far behind Indians in developing techniques for the practical study of languages also. It was only in the seventeenth century that we find Europeans seriously concerning themselves with the rationalisation of language learning methods. The first notable name in this regard seems to be that of John Amos Comenius (1592-1670) who emphasised the principle of "think, speak, act" and who wrote in his Methodus linguarum novissima, published in 1648, as follows: "Pictures are what most easily impress themselves on a child's mind, to remain. lasting and real. Children need to be given many examples, and things they can see, and not abstract rules of grammar." He perfected his method in his Orbis sensualium pictus. published in 1658, by using illustrations to fulfil the pedagogical purpose of appealing to the sense of perception.

Johann Bernard Basedow (1723-1790), a German by birth, was the next great experimenter in language teaching methods that we hear of. His approach was that languages should be taught in the natural way, making it practical in content and playful in method. He emphasised that speaking and reading should come first and that grammar should be introduced only after proficiency had been attained in these.

In spite of the efforts made by Comenius, Basedow and a host of others, however, language teaching in Europe

followed the time-honoured method of teaching paradigms, tables, declensions and conjugations, thus making grammatical knowledge an end in itself rather than a means to an end as preached by the reformers. Text-books continued to be ridden with grammatical rules and the most wearisome illustrations thereof in the form of disconnected and isolated sentences.

A fresh and more successful effort to shake off the shackles of the Grammar-grind Method was made in the last quarter of the nineteenth century by a Frenchman named Francois Gouin through his publication entitled Art d'enseigner et d'etudier les langues. Gouin relied on the principles of association of ideas and mental imagery, and laid considerable emphasis on the dramatisation of the drill material. The logical arrangement of the material was also a remarkable feature.

Soon a number of other supporters of what came to be called the Direct Method added momentum to the reform in language teaching techniques, and there came to be widespread recognition of the learning of language through the ear. The material, they insisted, should consist not of isolated words and sentences but of meaningful utterances which displayed the patterns of the language. Grammar was to be learned inductively and translation was to be used but sparingly. The importance of a knowledge of the language was also recognised by them. Wilhelm Victor of Germany, Alge of Switzerland and Walter Ripman of England were prominently associated with this reform movement. Two conferences of "Direct Methodists," one held at Vienna in 1898 and the other

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at Leipzig in 1900, contributed greatly to the strengthening of the movement.

When applied in its entirety, the Direct Method meant the following changes in language teaching techniques. The text book for the beginner started with a discussion of the phonetics of the language. The use of the mother tongue and translation were taboo. Grammar was to be acquired inductively. The material for reading consisted of short prose passages which gave an insight into the life and culture of the people whose language was being studied. Pictures and illustrations were used profusely in order to make the language teaching more meaningful and interesting.

But by a curious irony of circumstances the new method did not succeed very much. Obviously the teachers who used the method had no clear grasp of the techniques that were to be followed, and in England at least, there was a lot of opposition to the method on the ground that it did not lead to satisfactory results at the School Final and Matriculation Examinations. This led to a swing back to the old grammar-cum-translation method, though some of the features of the Direct Method were incorporated into the traditional method.

The Second World War gave a new jolt to the complacency of language teachers, especially of those who handled foreign languages. The impact of the War in this respect was felt mostly in America where it became imperative to give army men an understanding of the languages of the countries to which they were posted. A simplified adaptation of the Direct Method was tried out with the help

of competent linguists. The basic approach was intensive drill in elementary conversation with specially prepared material, using a native informant, a linguist and electronic equipment. The method which came to be known as the 'Army Method has been considered as a success, and an adaptation of it is now in use in American Universities and foreign language institutes. The development of structural linguistics in recent years and the association of the linguistic scientist with language teaching have given rise to the term Structural Method in the field of language teaching. In point of fact, however, it is not so much a new method of teaching as a method of preparing the teaching materials. So far as the techniques of teaching are concerned, the structuralists seem to follow the Direct Method. The teaching material, however, is prepared with greater insight into the overall structure of the language, the relevant points of which are discussed in grammatical notes at the end of each lesson.

There is still no universally accepted method of language teaching. As a matter of fact considerable confusion prevails in the field. Almost every new teaching manual claims to follow a new method. We have thus the Hugo's Method, the Cortina Method, the Greenfield Method, the Valgimili Method and so on. A careful examination of the manuals, however, will reveal that all of them fall into one of the three classes: the traditional Grammar-grind Method, the Direct Method and the so-called Compromise Method. There is thus a need for fresh thinking on language teaching techniques, and this little book purports to set forth some new ideas in this direction.

The Aims of language learning

Before we discuss the comparative merits of the different techniques for teaching foreign languages, we should be clear about the aims of learning them. For when there is no clear conception of the end in view there cannot be any question of satisfactory means. Let us, therefore, examine the various practical uses to which the knowledge of a foreign language is put and then proceed to decide by what means one can acquire a sufficient control of the language which will serve these needs.

The purpose of language is communication. There are two types of communication: communication with one's fellow-beings and communication with oneself. The first variety is what we call speech and the other is known as thought. We will examine the roles that these two aspects of the communicative process play in human activities in order to decide the nature and extent of language learning that will meet their different needs.

Foreign languages are generally learnt for speaking or for comprehension through reading. There are various levels of proficiency for each of these two aspects. Needless to say, the kind and quality of learning would depend upon the degree of competence required.

Speaking proficiency may be just a "working know-ledge" required by tourists or merchants. All that the tourist requires is just enough knowledge of the language

in order to get around in the country where it is spoken and to hold elementary conversation of a limited type. He would naturally require to know how to ask his way to places, to order his food in a restaurant, to ask for services, etc. This he can achieve by learning about two hundred sentences by rote with some attention to their structure so that he may be able to make new combinations of these sentences. A vocabulary of about two thousand words should be quite adequate for his purpose.

The merchant's requirements are also more or less similar, though much more restricted in scope. His emphasis should be on commercial terms and sentences pertaining to economic activities.

A thorough-going, native-like mastery of a foreign language is required only by certain classes of professional people like teachers, interpreters, diplomats and preachers. This means they should have an excellent pronunciation and intonation, perfect control over the grammatical construction and idioms of the language, and as large a vocabulary as that of a well educated native speaker. Above all they should be able to think in the language and should not have to resort to translation for any purpose while speaking.

Ability to read and write a foreign language is not a part of the mastery of its spoken form, but in the case of most categories of professional people, this would also be necessary. For example, one cannot be a teacher if one does not have these accomplishments. It is, however, important to recognise that speaking a language has nothing to do with reading and writing it.

Comprehension of a foreign language through reading is the aim of the students of science. It is almost essential for certain types of advanced scientific work to be able to read and understand the scientific writings in languages like German, French and Russian. In fact, it is always a tremendous advantage to have this ability for any level of scientific work. The more the number of languages one can handle, the better indeed.

Reading scientific literature requires only a limited knowledge of the language. For one thing, the vocabulary need not be large. Nor is it necessary to know the finer points of grammar and idiomatic expressions. The essential thing is that one should be able to recognise the structural characteristics of the language as a whole and sense the correct meaning of what is read without difficulty.

A good reading comprehension, however, requires considerably more knowledge of the grammatical structure of the language than what the student of science ordinarily requires. This is especially true of the type of understanding that is needed for reading literature. In this situation, one should be able to distinguish between the finer shades of structural differences and should have a good knowledge of the idiomatic expressions and the stylistic standards of the language. Of course, one should also have a large vocabulary of a varied type.

If one's aim is to write the language also, one should have a still better control over the native habits of speech. For, writing is a far more difficult art than speaking, and one's mistakes will show up more clearly. To become an

accepted literary artist in a foreign language is indeed very difficult; it marks the highest level of achievement in respect of the knowledge of the structure of the language. Needless to say, a good writer in a foreign language may still be a bad speaker and may not sometimes even make himself readily understood on account of his bad pronunciation and incorrect intonation.

In deciding on the techniques of teaching, we have thus to know what is actually required of the student. It is a sheer waste of time to teach extensively about the structure and the stylistics of the foreign language to one who wants just to make himself understood to the native speaker at the lowest level of communication. Similarly, a student who wants only a reading comprehension of scientific literature need not waste his time by trying to acquire the standard pronunciation or in translating literary or scientific passages. Then again, the approach in the case of a student who is out to master the language both in its spoken and written forms will be altogether different.

The dangers involved in trying to teach a foreign language without being clear about the requirements of the student are many. The student is likely to feel a sense of frustration and may even develop what may be called language-phobia. It is a common experience to hear people say that a certain language is very difficult or it is even frightfully queer. More often than not such remarks are based on their disappointing experience at learning the language the wrong way. The teachers and institutions which are directly or indirectly responsible for producing such a feeling through their classes or text-books not only

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bring discredit to themselves but also cause waste of time and money.

The teacher of a foreign language has thus a very difficult job. He cannot have just one method for all types of students. And, as we shall see in the following chapters, the customary methods themselves have serious shortcomings. The teacher's task may be easier when he can pick and choose his students, but while teaching a set course in an institution he will have to meet and solve many tough problems in order to make the course successful.

The Current Methods of Teaching Languages

As we have seen in the last chapter, the learners of foreign languages may have different aims. It is necessary to employ different methods to fulfil these aims. If we follow the same method in respect of all types of learners, we are bound to fail in our efforts to teach a new language. We will now proceed to examine the merits of the different techniques that are employed in the classroom and try to see what techniques would be appropriate for meeting what aims.

First let us take the Grammar-grind Method. It is a well-known fact that this was the system which was followed in all types of formal teaching of a language until the eighteenth century. Learning a language was completely equated with learning its grammar which was usually presented in accordance with the Latin system. The efforts of the reformist who attempted to introduce what came to be called the Direct Method appeared to be succeeding for some time but in the nineteenth century again there was a reversion to the old method. The publications of Karl Plotz. of Germany exerted considerable influence in this regard. His books contained disconnected sentences and phrases illustrative of the grammatical rules that were being discussed. And what with the Latinised grammatical rules, paradigms and translation exercises, foreign language learning was made as uninteresting and forbidding as possible.

In spite of all that has happened in the educational field since the turn of this century, it is indeed a matter of great surprise that the grammar-based technique is still holding its own in the field of foreign-language teaching. The books that present a language in this manner are perhaps being preferred by those teachers who do not have adequate control over the language to attempt a different technique.

A typical grammar-oriented text-book of a language arranges the lessons on the basis of grammatical topics. The lesson begins with notes on one or two grammatical points and gives translation exercises from the foreign language into the native language and vice versa. Somewhere in the course of the lesson some vocabulary is also given with meanings. For example, a typical German grammar of this type gives in the first lesson the personal pronouns (ich, er, sie, es, wir, Sie and sie), the present tense of the verb sein 'to be' (bin, ist, sind) and the adverb of negation nicht 'not,' and then proceeds to give a few disjointed forms as examples of negative and interrogative expressions in the German language "(ich bin nicht 'I am not,' ist er? "is he?,' sie ist nicht 'she is not,' sind wir nicht? 'are we not?', sind Sie 'are you?' sie sind nicht 'they are not')."

Next come the following exercises for translation from German into English and from English into German.

"1. bin ich nicht? 2. wir sind; 3. ist es? 4. sie sind nicht; 5. ist sie nicht? 6. Sie sind. 7. we are not; 8 is she? 9. I am not; 10. is it not? 11. they are; 12. he is not; 13. are you not? 14. I am." After this the past tense

of sein is given (singular war 'was' plural waren 'were') with the following examples: "ich war nicht 'I was not'; er war nicht 'he was not'; waren Sie? 'were you?'; waren sie nicht? 'were they not?" Then two translation exercises follow:

"Exercise I. 1. es war nicht; 2. waren wir? 3. Sie waren nicht; 4. war ich nicht? 5. sie war; 6. waren sie? 7. was he not? 8. we were; 9. was I not? 10. you were; 11. was she not? 12. they were.

"Exercise II. 1. Wer war hier? 2. Wo ist er? 3. Wir waren oben? 4. Sind sie nicht unten? 5. Er war nicht dort. 6. Ist es nicht hier? 7. Wo war es? 8. Waren sie nicht unten? 9. Sie waren nicht oben. 10. Wer war dort? 11. Who was upstairs? 12. Are you not there? 13. We were here. 14. Is it not downstairs? 15. Where was she? 16. Who is downstairs? 17. We were not upstairs. 18. Where are you? 19. We are here. 20. Were they not there?"

At the end of the lesson there is a section for conversational practice which contains the following sentences. "I. Wo war es? 2. Wer war hier? 3. Ist sie nicht oben? 4. Nein, sie ist unten. 5. Es war nicht dort. 6. Wo ist es? Wer ist hier? 8. Sie war nicht dort. 9. Wo waren sie? 10. Ich war zu Hause. 11. Sind sie heute hier. 12. Nein, sie waren gestern hier. 13. Waren Sie gestern aus? 14. Ja, ich war hier. 15. Ist er oben, oder unten? 16. War sie heute dort? 17. Nein, sie ist zu Hause. 18. Wo waren Sie heute? 19. Es ist nicht hier und nicht dort? 20. Wer war hier? 21. Wir waren nicht dort."

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The book contains an introductory note on pronunciation, wherein it is claimed that if the instructions given are borne in mind "the pronunciation will be absolutely correct." Throughout the lessons, the pronunciation of new words is indicated in what is called an 'imitated pronunciation' using the English values of letters and their combinations.

The kind of book from which the above sample is taken, represents, in fact, what has been called the Compromise Method, evolved by those who have felt the impact of the reform movements in foreign language teaching but who still believe in the supremacy of the grammar-based approach. The attempt to indicate pronunciation in however unsatisfactory a manner and to give some connected sentences in the section entitled 'Conversational Practice' are but feeble attempts to rectify a very serious shortcoming in the traditional grammar-based approach.

The powerful hold of the traditional Grammar-grind Method is clearly seen in the Preface the author writes to a recently published elementary text-book on German. ".... this book contains only the prime essentials of German grammar, and is intended for those beginning the study of German. Its chief objectives are to identify, explain, and exemplify the high points of German grammar, and also by constant repetition in abundant reading and translation exercises, to implant a basic vocabulary of 750 words." And the lessons accordingly are arranged under different grammatical heads such as the present tense of sein,

the present tense of haben, the declension of nouns, strong verbs, demonstrative adjectives, irregular nouns, etc.

An elementary course of Russian "designed chiefly for adults studying Russian with a teacher," shows a further advance on the Compromise Method of the German grammar discussed above. It contains a clear presentation of the Russian sounds from the point of view of modern phonetics illustrated with diagrams of the speech organs in action. The aim of the author is to enable the student to acquire a practical knowledge of the spoken language, and, the choice of the material, the order in which it is arranged, the number and character of the exercises are all directed towards the achievement of this aim. Each lesson deals with a definite group of language phenomena arranged in such a way as to ensure the gradual mastery of the language.

While books of the above mentioned types which base their arrangements and techniques on the grammatical categories of the language are still the normal rule in text-book writing for teaching purposes, we see also now and then a publication which attempts to follow the so-called Direct Method. A typical book of this kind contains lessons which give vocabularies and conversations. The lessons are arranged under different topics of every day life: The Family, Food and Meals, Clothing, Transportation, In the City, At the Restaurant, About Business, A visit to the Doctor, etc. The lessons contain grammatical notes dealing with the points actually met with in them. Translations of the foreign language material are given for

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the first few lessons, and then onwards the meaning of new words and expressions alone are given. A reference grammar and a two-way dictionary are also a normal feature of such a text. One may even find some line drawings by way of illustrations of some ideas expressed in the lessons, but they do not have much use except to relieve the monotony of the printed page. At the beginning of the book, there is a guide to the pronunciation of the foreign language. The emphasis of the Direct Method, thus, is on speaking the language and learning the formal grammar as a by-product of the effort to learn the spoken form.

There is indeed a great deal to commend in the Direct Method. It recognizes the fact that language is a habit and the natural way of learning it is by speaking it. It makes some necessary modifications to adjust this natural method to the adult mind. One has the satisfaction of having some practical knowledge of the foreign language as a result of the study of a book prepared according to this method.

The method, however, does not give a thorough-going grasp of the language being learnt. The material that one finds in the books which claim to follow this method often consists of disconnected utterances. The development of the material seldom has a natural sequence. What purports to be a conversation often degenerates into a kind of soliloquy, thereby leading to flagging of the student's interest and consequently making the study pretty dry and laborious. For example here are a few sentences from a Direct Method type of book: "I. Wir wohnen in einem Vorort von Hamburg, ungefähr zwanzig Minuten vom Bahnhof mit

dem Wagen. 'We live in a suburb of Hamburg about twenty minutes from the station by car.' 2. Von diesem Fenster aus können Sie den Schornstein und das Dach mit den roten Ziegeln sehen. 'From this window you can see the chimney and the roof with its red bricks.' 3. Wie hübsch sehen die weissen Mauern mit den grünen Fensterläden aus! Jetzt bemerke ich auch den Balkon. 'How pretty the white walls look with the green shutters. Now I also notice the balcony.' 4. In Deutschland haben viele Häuser Balkons. Der Balkon ist wie ein extra Zimmer. 'In Germany, many houses have balconies; the balcony is like an extra room.' 5. Das Haus scheint schr gross zu sein. 'The house seems to be very large.'

There is hardly any plan in the Direct Method books in respect to introducing the structure of the foreign language. The lessons are generally of a topical nature, and not much attention is paid to the structural difficulties of the new language.

The Direct Method in action, however, is something very different from what it looks like in a book. In fact the method is intended more as a technique of practical classroom teaching than of text-book writing. Learning a language through speaking it is the keynote of the method. A great deal of emphasis is placed on learning the language forms through action and with visual aids, thereby minimising the need for the use of another language for the understanding of meaning. Translation of any type is even considered by many votaries of the method as a hindrance to the learning of a language.

It must be admitted that the Direct Method is far superior to the Grammar-based Method. Those who learn a foreign language through the Direct Method no doubt acquire a much better command of it from the points of view of speaking and comprehending it. But very often one does not get a really good grasp of the grammar of the language, especially from the examination point of view. But, again, it must be admitted that much depends on the teacher. It may be true that when one learns from a self-instructor by this method one may not have the opportunity of getting a sufficient familiarity with the rules of grammar. But then one has to choose between a practical speaking knowledge and a theoretical understanding of the grammatical structure of a language. It is hardly necessary to state that a speaking and comprehending knowledge of the actual utterances of the language is far superior to a passive understanding of it from the grammatical angle.

An improved variety of the Direct Method is known as the Structural Method (or Approach). This method was the result of the researches conducted by the University of London's Institute of Education and the language specialists of the British Council. A UNESCO-sponsored Seminar on "The contribution of the Teaching of Modern languages towards education for living in a world Community" held in Ceylon in 1953 was responsible for giving a final shape to it. The Seminar agreed on the following principles of language teaching:—

t. The approach should be primarily oral.

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- 2. Active methods of teaching should be used as far as possible.
- 3. The greatest possible use of the foreign languages should be made in the classroom.
- 4. The difficulties of the foreign tongue in the matter of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar should be carefully graded for presentation.
- 5. The teaching of a language should be considered more as the imparting of a skill than as the provision of information about the forms of the language.

The Structural Method seeks to present the teaching material on the basis of the different points in the structure of the language being taught. In this respect the method is indeed an improvement over the Direct Method. An attempt is made to grade the structural features, and the entire course is designed to give a working command of the foreign language at the end of the whole course. Each structural essential embodies a grammatical point, and in this sense the method combines the quality of the Grammar-based Method with the reformist character of the Direct Method.

Teaching in accordance with the Structural Method places great reliance on the systematic drilling of the material. It is recognised that the correct use of language is the result of forming patterns of habit. Drilling in the graded structures is done through substituion techniques and oral work.

In its fundamental features, however, the Structural Method is a method of preparing text-book material

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rather than a technique of teaching. Both in its outlook and assumptions the technique remains the Direct Method.

Considerable work on the teaching of English as a foreign language has been done by the so-called structuralists. They maintain that we should concentrate on what is called Essential English at the beginning stage. Research has revealed that there are about 275 language patterns which form this Essential English. Each one of these patterns embodies an important grammatical point.

The writings of H. E. Palmer and F. C. French in England and those of C. C. Fries and Henry Lee Smith, Jr. in America have contributed a great deal to the development of the structural approach.

Dr. Michael West, an Englishman who was connected with English teaching in India, popularised some of his ideas of teaching a foreign language through his writings and the Readers he prepared have come to be known as Dr. West's Method. He believed that one should have a passive knowledge of a language before attempting to speak it. He says "Reading ability can actually be acquired at the initial stage in the study of a foreign language without preliminary work in speech and writing." He prepared a series of Readers containing reading matter with a controlled vocabulary. The vocabulary is made as small as possible and new words are distributed evenly in the lessons to facilitate reading with understanding. A new word is used a number of times in order to make the reader fully familiar with it. The lessons do not follow any

clearly defined grammatical plan. Further, he allows the use of the mother tongue for explaining meanings.

It will be seen from the above account that the method adopted by West is radically different from all the previous methods. In fact from the point of the psychology of learning in general and language learning in particular it is the most retrograde step imaginable. West has been responsible for making confusion worse confounded in the field of foreign language teaching. Fortunately enough his influence has not extended much outside India.

It may be observed in passing that the influence that West exerted on the teaching of English in India has been responsible for the lowering of the standard of achievement of the Indian student in learning English. He came into the scene when the Direct Method approach had started making itself felt on Indian language teachers, and by virtue of his belief that what Indians needed was mainly a passive knowledge of English, he set to work preparing a new series of text-books, which, while they were none too different in their outlook from the previous grammar-based texts, were devoid of the high standard of the latter. Obviously, it was his emphasis on controlled vocabulary which was responsible for the undeserved popularity that his method a chieved.

The contributions that modern linguistic science has made to a reorientation of the teaching and learning of foreign languages is noteworthy. Linguistics teaches us that a language is a well-integrated system and that one should approach the study of language with this fact

constantly in mind. A language, in other words, cannot be dearned piecemeal as a collection of words or unrelated utterances. An understanding of the sub-systems of phonetics, phonemics, morphemics, syntax and semantics peculiar to the system of any language is very important to all effective learning.

Each language has an individuality all its own, and therefore, it is very important to begin the study of a new language with a clean slate without carrying over the linguistic habits characteristic of one's own language or the languages that the learner has already mastered thoroughly. If we allow ourselves to be influenced by the structure of the mother tongue or some other language while learning a foreign language we are sure to end up in failure, which may be either partial or complete, depending on the extent of the influence. Linguists insist that the fundamental order of learning is listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening gives one the power of comprehension and speaking gives the actual command of the language. Reading and writing are only the outcome of the mastery of the traditional written symbolisation of the vocal symbols.

There is no short-cut to language learning. Imitation and constant repetition constitute the secret of all successful learning of a language so as to achieve native-like control. The more one learns the characteristic utterances with the native's pronunciation and intonation the better. And no language can really be mastered without using it constantly.

Linguists have a technique called the Informant Method for learning a new language. A native speaker is used to supply samples of the language as it is actually spoken, and the linguist analyses the material thus gathered and gets at the basic structure of the language. He imitates the pronunciation of the informant as perfectly as he can and also tries to gain practice in he vocal use of the language by conversing with the informant. If the language being learnt has no writing system, the linguist also tries to establish a convention of writing in keeping with the phonemic system of the language.

The classroom adaptation of the above technique as it was successfully tried out in meeting the needs of the U.S. Army during the Second World War has the following features. The course is conducted by a linguistically trained instructor with the help of a native speaker as informant. The instructor prepares the lessons which begin with simple words and phrases which may be used in actual situations such as greetings, means of introducing oneself to strangers. asking for things and directions, etc. Successive lessons are built around topics of everyday interest such as meeting people, the weather, renting a room in a hotel, eating at a restaurant, sight-seeing, shopping and so on. The linguistic contexts also take into account the cultural situation of the people speaking the language. As far as possible the dialogue form is used for presenting the material in the text, and the new vocabulary is introduced in meaningfully related groups. Grammatical explanations are introduced as and when required in order to enable the student to understand

the structure of the material which has been studied. The text-book materials are written in a phonemic alphabet, and the traditional orthography of the language is used if at all in later sections of the book. In the actual classroom work, the informant is the one who provides the drill and the practice in listening as well in the practical use of the language, the instructor primarily guiding the study by assisting the students in understanding grammatical points and pointing out errors in pronunciation.

The method sketched above is a vast improvement in the Direct Method techniques. Not only are the utterances of the foreign language learned directly from the native speaker, but the phonetic and grammatical explanations are sought to be given in a thoroughly scientific and systematic manner. No wonder, therefore, that the method which has come to be known as the Army method in the United States has proved to be a great success.

Lately, technical aids such as the gramophone, the tape recorder and motion picture films are being used in language teaching. Properly used, they are indeed an immense help in teaching pronunciation and in providing material for listening comprehension. Motion pictures also may be used for providing an ethnolinguistic background for understanding the linguistic expressions in their cultural contexts.

CHAPTER IV

The Context Method

It is clear from the review of language teaching methods in the last chapter that there is a great deal to be desired in the techniques followed by the majority of foreign language teachers. Even the so-called Army Method which is being followed by many U.S. Universities and Governmental Organisations is by no means a completely satisfactory method. As we have already seen, it is nothing but the linguist's adaptation of the much publicised Direct Method with emphasis on drill and systematic grammatical explanations based on the material actually taught. In fact, the only really unique feature of the Army Method is using a native informant from whom the linguist-instructor can get authentic samples of the language being taught.

The problem, therefore, of making language learning easy, effective and logical still remains. In this and the subsequent chapters we shall examine this problem and try to suggest a solution. It may, however, be stated at the outset that what follows are only some suggestions for tackling this burning problem from a new angle. The author does not claim that they would work in all situations or that there may not be better ways of achieving the language teacher's objective.

One basic fact about the nature of language should always be kept in mind while approaching the problem of teaching a new language. It is this: language is the product

of context and without the appropriate context there can never be any language in its true sense. No one says anything unless he is motivated to articulate. A little reflection would show that even thinking and perception are the result of linguistic activity that goes on in our minds as a result of the existence of relevant context.

Context may be physical or mental. The physical context consists of the environment which produces all manner of physical experiences. The objects that we see around us and the persons we come into contact with, the sounds that we hear, the sensations of touch and smell, all provide us with an almost infinite variety of contexts of the physical type which awaken the act of speech. The speech of another person or our own thinking, imagination or emotions cause the mental context for language to come into play.

What is the true nature of language? Is it, in its ultimate analysis, the process of becoming conscious of something? Are language and consciousness one and the same thing or different? Such questions of a psychological nature are indeed of considerable interest for the linguistic scientist but they need not delay us in our attempt to devise the most effective way of acquiring a new language. At the practical level of using language as a vehicle of communication we need not bother ourselves much about its psychological aspects.

However, it is necessary to take into account the psychological character of language learning if we are to succeed in our efforts at learning.

The mind becomes activated only by a context, and therefore, it is imperative to provide one if learning is to become real and effective. Any attempt to teach a language without providing the appropriate contexts for the understanding of the speech signals is bound to fail. For the mind can grasp a thing only when it is alerted to become aware of it, and it is the context which stimulates the mind.

The first requirement of the materials for teaching a foreign language is thus the building up of a proper context for every form and expression in them. The words and constructions would thereby become meaningful. The more intensely meaningful they can be made the easier they can be understood and assimilated.

Two kinds of contexts are possible for language learning: (1) actual environments which call for expression (these may be simulated in the classroom with models or pictures); (2) the context provided by an utterance frame or the known words and constructions in a sentence. The first kind is concrete and is readily perceived while the second needs abstract reasoning to visualise it. Even a little child makes use of both these types of contexts to pick up the language of its home, although to begin with, of course, the concrete type of context alone would be meaningful.

The problem, then, is of providing the right type of context for language materials either in the classroom or in a text-book. Any teaching in the classroom situation or presentation of materials in written form which does not take note of the fact of context is bound to be unproductive.

All failure in language learning can, in fact, be traced to this one factor of lack of appropriate context.

We will first consider the concrete type of context. When one is learning the foreign language by visiting the area where it is spoken, it becomes easy to get around and find plenty of real situations for learning a great deal of the structure and vocabulary of the language. By hearing the language being used by the speakers around him, he would indeed get the best possible training in its natural pronunciation and intonational features. Everything is fairly easily grasped (provided, of course, one is willing to listen to the native speakers and to imitate their habits of speech), and the learning becomes meaningful and purposeful.

The question that language teachers are confronted with is how to make language learning in the classroom at least somewhat similar to the natural situation described above. The only way to do so is to simulate the situation as much as possible. The problem then really boils down to two requirements: (1) providing a concrete environment; (2) providing of opportunity to hear the foreign language spoken in a natural manner. We will here examine these two aspects in some detail.

The environment can be simulated by means of pictures and models. There are, of course, severe limitations to the use of illustrations. A great many utterances cannot be illustrated with pictures which will give a visual representation of their meaning. For example let us take the following German conversation:

"Guten Tag, Herr Smith, wie geht es Ihnen?

"Danke, es geht mir gut; und Ihnen, Frau Miller?"
Ich fühle mich sehr wohl, danke.
Wie geht es Ihrem Gatten?
Nicht so gut. Er fühlt sich so allein in Berlin.
Das ist sehr natürlich."

All that can be done with this material is to show the figures of a man and a woman greeting each other with smiling countenances. But that would make a tremendous difference in a lesson which contains these sentences; it will provide some vivid idea of the context in which these sentences are uttered. We suggest that for every single group of ideas as in the material just presented there should be a suitable illustration. That would bring to life as it were the utterances which would otherwise be totally devoid of realism and consequently will not have the power to imprint themselves on the mind of the learner.

A necessary concomitant of the technique of illustration of foreign language lessons described above is that they should contain matter which would fall into several parts of a connected type. Whether the matter be dialogue, description, or narration, it should be presented in connected sequences, each sequence being capable of being illustrated.

It is customary to illustrate the lessons in a language primer for children, and we remember how eagerly we studied the pictures when we were children and how meaningful a lesson became if it had been properly illustrated. As a matter of fact, most of the illustrations in children's books are half-hearted to say the least; they are seldom liberal or imaginative enough to make the lesson fully ailveand interesting. Here is a typical lesson from such a book:

"Amy is Grandma's pet. She has come to see her and to help with her work. Some of it is too hard for a wee girl, but she can wind wool for dear Grandma, who loves to knit.

'My wool is in a bad knot, Amy' said Grandma. 'Kitty has been at it again.' Amy does not say a word but she works hard and at last she has undone the knot-After that she knelt down, and took the wool from kitty, who was playing with it again.

"There is a knock at the door. Amy knows who it is. It is Dad to see Grandma and take Amy home to Mama. "Ta-ta Grandma," says Amy."

There is one picture to illustrate this lesson. It shows the Grandma sitting on a chair engaged in knitting, Amy is winding the wool while the kitten is trying to catch the thread. There is a fireplace with a kettle over it which is perhaps intended to show that Grandma is sitting in the kitchen. The picture thus illustrates the idea contained in the first paragraph only. A little reflection will show how useful three or four more pictures would be to create appropriate contexts for the other points in the lesson: kitty playing with the wool; Amy kneeling down to untie the knot; dad knocking at the door; and, Amy saying ta-ta to Grandma as she leaves her house. A child gets to know

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the meaning of linguistic expressions primarily from context, and pictures are intended to visualise the real situations. Translations or explanations, however good they may be, are but poor substitutes for pictures. What the child actually does is to conjure up pictures as a result of the verbal descriptions given by the teacher, even as an adult does. And we know how hazy, ineffective and possibly even altogether wrong such pictures are as conjured up by adults. The mind always imagines an unknown thing as being similar to some known thing. The child's mind is no exception to this rule. Therefore, it is but proper to have as many pictures as possible to illustrate a language lesson so that the learner may be enabled to get the right sense by understanding the context.

It is true that too many drawings and illustrations would be expensive from the commercial point of view and that the teacher may be able to give the meaning of many expressions by acting them. But the question is how many teachers are endowed with the imagination and resourcefulness to do so. The tendency of the average teacher of language is to try to finish his work by giving verbal explanations or translations. Even when illustrations are provided the chances are that the teacher may not bother to use them. So it is doubly necessary to illustrate a language lesson profusely. The learner, whether he be a child or an adult, will invariably be influenced by them as he reads the lesson and will benefit from them immensely. It is better to make a language text-book expensive and good rather than making it cheap and poor.

It will be a good idea to print illustrated lessons on large sheets of paper using one sheet for not more than two illustrations, with the concerned sentences printed at the bottom of the appropriate illustration. The pictures can be exhibited on the classroom walls when the lesson is in progress so that the teacher may ensure the maximum use of the illustrations to build up the context.

An example of the productive use of the context provided by a picture may be cited with reference to the picture given in the lesson on Amy described above. The teacher may ask the six-year-old pupil for whom the lesson is intended questions like the following: Is this grandmother or grandfather? The intelligent pupil will take a good look at the picture and say grandmother. She may not already know what grandmother means but she knows the word mother and the word father, and guesses that grandmother must have something to do with mother and not father. The teacher may say "No this is grandfather," and the pupil will at once say, "No, this is grand-mother." The teacher may say, "Well, I think this is grandfather," and the pupil will retort, "I think this is grandmother." Then the teacher may say, "I am not so sure: I think this is grandfather." The child who is by this time amused at the teacher's wrong identification will say emphatically, "I am sure this is grandmother." The teacher may then ask, "Why do you think this is grandmother and not grandfather," and the child will almost certainly tell you that she identified grandmother by means of her dress.

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The above-mentioned discussion actually took place between the author and his little daughter, and as a result of the discussion which lasted for over fifteen minutes the child had not only learned the meaning of grandmother and given ample evidence of her intelligent use of the picture, but she had also learned two new phrases, namely, I think and I am sure. The learning of these new phrases may have been temporary, but then all learning is temporary until it is made permanent by constant use. A great many matters of interest to the pupil can be found in any picture, and the resourceful teacher can create an amazing number of live contexts for new expressions and utterances.

The picture-discussion which introduced the expressions I think and I am sure reported above illustrates also a very important principle in the Context Method when pictures or objects are not used. The verbal context makes a new word or expression meaningful even to a child. When I said, "I think this is grandfather," my daughter automatically guessed at the meaning of I think although she had not come across this expression in any lesson before. But when I said, "I am sure this is grandfather," she had some difficulty in understanding the meaning of I am sure. and she asked me what it meant. But I did not translate it: instead I went on repeating the phrase with the appropriate intonation and gesture, and she at once guessed the meaning, and began to use the phrase herself in a correct manner. Verbal contexts of this type play an extremely important part in all language learning in childhood, and

in teaching a foreign language this principle should be constantly kept in mind and properly exploited.

Let us take an example from a German lesson intended for adults by way of another illustration of the vital role that verbal context plays. Suppose the learner knows the meaning of all the words in the following sentence except those which are italicised: "Wir wohnen in einem Vorort von Hamburg, ungefähr zwanzig Minuten vom Bahnhof mit dem Wagen." There should be no difficulty in guessing at the meaning of these words. In fact, this is the daily experience of one who is handling a foreign language; he keeps on learning new words, expressions and constructions from the context in which they occur.

In constructing lessons in a foreign language, great care should be taken to ensure proper verbal context. The principles of controlled vocabulary, introducing only a limited number of new items in a single lesson, is no doubt a contribution in this direction. But it is not enough if the new words and expressions are just thrown into a lesson in any way. The linguistic antecedents and consequences of each new sentence must be carefully weighed. The new material should, in fact, merge into the old familiar material in an imperceptible manner.

Proper verbal context implies that there is some kind of connection and sequence in the sentences. The new words and phrases should be the most appropriate in their places and should be so sandwiched in the sentences that their meaning is more than half clear from what comes before and after. This is a point which seems to get little or

no attention from text-book makers. It is not recognized that children have as much sense of sequence as adults and that children's books should not contain just any kind of sample of the language being taught but a sample which has logic and context.

Here are some sentences from a children's book, which do not take logic and context into account. "Do you see his boots? They had loops on them. One is lost. One boot hangs on a peg by the roof of the shed. It was in Eric's bedroom. The broom is in the shed too. It is a thick broom. To get the boot Eric has to stand up on a stool. Here is the stool too." There is a picture which illustrates the material fairly well. But no attention has been paid to context or connection between the sentences. One fails to understand why the sentence One is lost should follow They had loops on them. And then come the disconnected sentences: "It is a thick broom. To get the boot Eric has to stand up on a stool." There will be some sequence if the sentences are rearranged. And regard for context would demand an entire rewriting of the material, dropping the sentences about loops and broom. The purpose of the book is to teach the vowel sounds as stated in an introductory note addressed to the teacher. This reveals the sort of considerations that text-book makers have for producing such books without any regard for the scientific principles of language teaching.

There are three fundamental features of language learning which the Context Method takes note of. They are:
(1) language is a set of habits; (2) the meanings which linguistic forms come to have for the learner are the result of

the recurrent correspondence between acts of speech and the behavioural antecedents and consequences in which he participates; (3) the structure of language is learned by observing the recurrent partials at all levels of linguistic structure. We shall briefly examine the implications of each one of these features.

system of arbitrary vocal symbols, there is nothing logical about its phonemic and morphemic forms. Equally arbitrary is the arrangement in which these forms occur. But in spite of its intrinsically arbitrary nature, every language is a well-organised system, which is analysable into the subsystems of phonetics, phonemics, morphemics, morphophonemics, syntax and semantics. The entire system is in fact a habit. Any one learning the language either as a child or as an adult has to acquire the conventional habits which go to make up the different sub-systems of the language and adhere to them in a more or less rigid manner.

Any attempt to break away from the habits peculiar to a language will result in loss of mutual intelligibility. Every speaker of a language, therefore, tries to conform to the linguistic norms of the community in which he lives. The new aspirant to the membership of the linguistic community has perforce to acquire these habits by constant practice.

It is only through adequate interest, however, that habits are easily acquired. In language teaching, therefore, it is a tremendous advantage if one is able to create adequate interest in the acquisition of the linguistic forms.

The easiest and most effective way of arousing the interest of a learner is by creating appropriate contexts for the use of the language.

Many text-book makers seem to believe that by repeating a word or a pattern several times in the course of a lesson or a series of lessons, it would be well fixed on the mind of the learner and that he would get full control over it. But a mere mechanical repetition will fail to achieve the desired result. On the other hand, repetition in a live context will seldom fail to form a permanent habit.

2. Linguistic meaning is a matter of experience.—The connection between the sound combinations and their sense in a language is entirely arbitrary. The child learns meaning as a result of his actual experience of the situation which calls for a particular utterance and the sort of reaction he meets with for a specific act of speech. In other words, he learns language entirely in context.

The tendency of the adult is to resort to translation in learning a new language if he can ask somebody who knows his own language as well as the language being learnt. This leads to all manner of complications. Most words have more than one meaning, and some of them several. For example, such simple words of English like see and run have several meanings, and even at the most elementary level, one meets with different usages for them. A learner who has understood the meaning of see in the sense of "to perceive something through the eyes" will have to learn a new meaning for the word when he comes across usages like: Try them and you will see which is the best. Please see to it

that it is done quickly. I will see you tomorrow and so on. Similarly, for run he will have to acquire new meanings like "to function as a watch or motor, to contend for a public office, to discharge a fluid, to occur or recur in a specified quality, act or instance of running, distance run, the general or usual type, a ravelled streak in cloth (as in stockings), a pressing demand," etc. It is obvious that merely by being told that a word can have such and such different meanings one cannot really grasp them; one has to put them into context and to experience them either in a real or vicarious manner.

Another serious difficulty involved in translation is illustrated by the English words house and home. Both can be translated into an Indian language like Tamil or Hindi only with one word $(v\bar{\imath}du)$ in Tamil and ghar in Hindi). The difference in meaning to the English speaker can be brought out only by experiencing the meanings of the two in their appropriate contexts.

There should, however, be no taboo on translation in learning a foreign language. It is natural even for a child to try to understand the meanings of the words and expressions of a new language through the one he already knows. For the function of language is creating understanding, and one automatically uses it to understand the forms of a new language as he would use it to understand the physical phenomena around him. The question "What does this mean?" is, therefore, perfectly natural while one is learning a foreign language. But since the forms of two languages are seldom commensurate and since the purpose in acquiring

a new language is to make use of it, it is but proper to try and use it right from the outset of the learning process.

Both the text-book maker and the teacher can make important contributions to providing the necessary experiences with regard to the meanings of linguistic forms. The text-book of course has to depend on verbal context and pictures. The teacher can give a large number of examples of the usages he is teaching, dramatising them as far as possible. Ultimately, of course, it is the learner who has to get the feel of the meanings by using the linguistic forms in practical situations.

3. Structure of a language is learned by observing recurring partials.—Learning the structure of a language is primarily learning the regularities in the features which go to make up its design. A language is a system, and it becomes a functional instrument possessing a high degree of precision only because of the regularities in its characteristics. It is thus possible to reduce the observable relationships of the innumerable forms in a language into a few general statements. This constitutes the grammatical core of the language, consisting of statements on its phonology, morphology, morphophonemics and syntax.

But the grammar itself is to be learned not by learning the general statements or "rules" by rote. One has tomaster linguistic structure by observing the features which enable the grammarian to formulate them. In other words, every learner has to function as a grammarian for himself.

Two processes are involved in unravelling the structure of a language: looking for contrasts and taking note of recurring partials. The phonemic system is understood on the basis of the contrasts found in the network of sounds. All the sounds which do not show contrast are grouped together and called allophones of the phoneme Similarly, the smallest meaningful units of language are recognised by observing which parts of an utterance recur with the same meaning in other utterances. When these units contrast in meaning they are considered. as different morphemes. The units which do not contrast in meaning constitute a single morpheme. Morphological and syntactic constructions are the next two units which have bearing on the grammatical structure of a language and these too are recognised on the basis of their recurrence and contrasts.

Everyone of the above mentioned aspects of the structure of a language has to be properly exhibited in context, and the example has to be repeated a few times in a manner designed to impress it on the mind of the learner.

When one reads or listens to material which is prepared according to this principle, he will automatically get a grasp of the structure of the language concerned, and learning would become easy and effective.

The best way of learning a foreign language, as we have already stated, is by living among the native speakers. This way one hears the linguistic forms in their proper context, and they become thoroughly meaningful. But as this cannot be done by most students, the next best thing to do is to

use informants in a classroom situation. The American technique of using a single informant, the linguist-teacher and the informant working together is not a satisfactory one. The situation often becomes highly artificial for one to get a true sample of the language, when the informant and the linguist together face the class. Apart from the dual control of the class resulting therefrom, there may also be conflicts of views between the linguist and the informant with regard to the structure of the language and the samples to be given.

The solution seems to be to use two informant-teachers, both of them having some training in linguistics. They would prepare the lessons and also provide the class with live samples of the language by speaking between themselves in the language they are teaching. In learning a language, there is nothing which is so important as listening to the language in use between two native speakers. The interest and the potential linguistic faculties of the learner are stimulated to a high degree on hearing the language being spoken.

The technique that is being recommended here is based on the natural situation that exists when one learns a new language by living among the native speakers. One would begin by understanding short utterances consisting of two or three words and by learning the meaning of individual words and morphemes by observing the contexts in which they are used. Simultaneously one would also acquire the phonetics and the intonational patterns of the language by watching the native speakers in the act of speaking. Phonemic

and morphemic analysis would go on unconsciously as one is engaged in learning the linguistic forms. All these processes could be induced to some extent in the classroom with two linguist-informants handling the class. The first few lessons would consist of short utterances designed to give a grasp of the structure and the basic vocabulary of the language. These would be read out and dramatised by the whole class with the teachers taking an active part in the recitation. The teachers would also use the material of the utterances in different combinations, adding more material while simulating the natural situation by speaking between themselves.

The lessons at the second stage may be arranged according to topics such as conversation in a post-office, in a restaurant, and so on. These will provide good material for creating a proper linguistic atmosphere in the class. Again, much will depend on the way in which the two informant-teachers handling the class make use of the material.

The aim of a foreign language class should be to make use of the language as much as possible. The advantage in having two informant-teachers is that they will naturally have a tendency to speak in their own language which will provide the students with an opportunity to listen to the natural and spontaneous conversation in the language. Only by this means can one get a proper perspective for understanding the basic facts about the language.

In the single informant type of class, efforts are usually made for the informant and the students to speak with each other in the language that is being taught. While this training has its use, it ignores a fundamental principle of

language learning. Observation of the language is as much necessary as its use; in fact, observation has to precede use. This is how a child learns his mother tongue as well as the subsequent languages he acquires during childhood from his playmates. The use of two informant-teachers would to some extent supply this requirement in the classroom.

Then, again, there is the psychological consideration to be taken note of. When the informant and the student are conversing with each other, the student's attention is at least in part distracted by the subject of the conversation. The effort to formulate sentences in the foreign language in order to play his role in the conversation puts considerable strain on the beginning student's mind, with the result that he is not able to give sufficient attention to the linguistic characteristics of the teacher's speech. On the contrary, if he were listening to two native speakers he would be able to follow them much better.

To sum up, the Context Method of language teaching is marked by the following features:—

- (1) It takes note of the fact that language exists only in context and that the creation of appropriate contexts is an imperative need in all effective foreign language teaching.
- (2) Both physical and verbal contexts are used in a judicious manner in order to achieve the best results.
- (3) The Context Method seeks to provide an opportunity to observe the characteristic features of the foreign language in the classroom.

- (4) Plenty of new material is provided by the teachers which will be readily understood by the students as they are based on the material already learnt and are put into proper context.
- (5) Use of the foreign language in natural situations created in the classroom.

CHAPTER V

Differential Grammar

When a child learns his first language, he is engaged in tackling an extremely complicated problem without any previous experience. He has no idea of the values of speech-sounds and their combinations, no conception of the rules that languages follow in building up morphological and syntactic constructions, and no sense of meanings which linguistic forms are intended to express. He has to feel his way through the welter of sounds that he hears when the individuals around him speak, and to work out a practically useful analysis of the language that they are using. It is indeed nothing short of a marvel that he does this in the incredibly short period of three or four years and acquires a perfect control of his mother tongue by his fourth or fifth year.

The learning of all subsequent languages is an altogether different proposition. It proceeds from the basis provided by the experience acquired in learning the mother tongue. Consciously or unconsciously the structure and semantics of the mother tongue influence him at every stage of his efforts to learn a new language.

It is very important to understand the nature and extent of this influence of the mother tongue in teaching a child a new language. The carry-over from the mother tong ie in the process of acquiring a new set of speech

habits is largely an automatic process. It is the business of the teacher to decide what features may be carried over and what may not.

Observations of children learning new languages show that the carry-over is maximum in regard to phonetics and least in respect of semantics. There is some in the fields of phonemics and grammar, the latter being less susceptible to the influences of the earlier language. Practical difficulties of communication tend to correct these influences. But the phonetic habits are very tenacious even in a child and need conscious efforts to change.

In regard to older children and adults the same pattern is to be seen with one difference. There is considerable influence of the syntactic habits of the mother-tongue or the base language (see below for a discussion of this term). In general, the influence of the phonetics, phonemics and grammar of the mother-tongue (or base language) are far more pronounced, and it is particularly difficult to learn new habits of accent and intonation.

When one learns a new language, whether the learner be a child or an adult, it is not always the mother tongue which influences him; it is the language which is closest to the foreign language among the languages known to the learner. This fact does not seem to have been recognised so far by foreign language teachers. We may call this language from which there is the immediate carry-over to the new language by the term base language.

For example, when a Hindi speaker who knows English quite well sets out to learn German, it is not his Hindi background that he brings to bear on German but his knowledge of English. His English is of course most likely to have been greatly influenced by his mother tongue, Hindi. But his base language for learning German will be English and not Hindi, and the immediate carry-over features are those of his variety of Hindi-influenced English. On the other hand, if he is learning Bengali, his base language will be Hindi and not English because the former bears a closer resemblance to Bengali than the latter.

The importance of the base language in getting a grip of the target language will be clear when we consider the place that translation plays in the process of learning a new language (which we term here the target language). However much we may condemn the translation method and try to avoid it, we have to recognize the fact that a new language is understood only in terms of the one which one already knows well enough except, of course, in the case of babies who have yet to learn their first language. merits and demerits of the translation system in language learning is an altogether different issue. Psychological studies regarding the role that translation plays in language learning are sadly lacking, but it is an everyday experience of those who attempt to learn a new language and especially of those who are engaged in teaching a foreign language to little children that there is a definite and absolutely unavoidable part in the process for an intermediary language. This intermediary language constitutes the base language. and, as we have stated above, it may be the mother tongue

or some other language over which the learner has good control.

When the target language is utterly dissimilar to the language or languages already known to the learner, there is hardly any reference to the known language in understanding the new language except in regard to meaning. In such a situation we do not have to talk in terms of a base language.

The concept of the base language is very important in foreign language teaching. An analysis of the base language and the target language so as to show up their similarities and differences can be of great assistance in preparing the lessons in the new language, a fact which has already been recognised by linguistic scientists.

An important point with regard to the exact practical usefulness of such comparison of linguistic structures has, however, not received sufficient emphasis so far. In language learning, there is always automatic transfer of the features of the base language to the target language. The common features of the two languages, therefore, need no special attention. What is needed is concentration on the differences between the two structures. In other words, we should work out a differential grammar, and prepare the lessons in the target language in a manner which will give the learner sufficient practice in the new linguistic patterns.

Let us consider a few examples by way of illustration of base language and differential grammar. When a speaker of the Dravidian language Tamil, who knows Malayalam,

Hindi, Marathi and English quite well, sets out to learn Bengali, he would find that the new language is nearest to-Malayalam in its grammatical structure. Malayalam, therefore, constitutes the base language for his understanding of Bengali and not any one of the other languages, whatever may be his degree of competence in them. English is entirely out of the picture as an intervening language when one proceeds to the study of one Indian. language after having acquired a sound knowledge of another since the Indian languages have much more in common with one another than with English. Again, in the particular situation we are considering here, Hindi and Marathi with their system of grammatical gender and verbal terminations based on it, and Tamil with its characteristic three-gender system and personal termination for verbs, are automatically sensed to be farther apart from Bengali than Malayalam which has no such terminations for its verbs

The problem, then, is finding out the differences between Bengali and Malayalam so that the new linguistic patterns may be learnt and a proper correlation be made with the new and the old patterns. The similarities need no particular attention; they will be automatically understood when they are presented along with the differences in the lessons.

Let us now apply this principle to the following Bengali material:

dui pathik o bhāluk

"dui bandhute miliyā pathe bhraman karitechila. daibayoge sei samay, tathāy ek bhāluk upasthit haila. bandhudiger "madhye ek vyakti bhāluk dekhiyā, atisay bhay pāyiya, nikaṭ-avartti vṛkṣe ārohaṇ karila; kintu bandhur ki dasa ghaṭila, tāhā ek bāro bhābila nā. dvitīya vyakti ār konao upāy nā dekhiyā, ekākī bhāluker ṣange yuddha karā asādhya bhābiyā, mṛtavat bhūtale paḍiyā rahila. kāraṇ se pūrbbe suniyāchila, bhāluk māṇā mānuṣ chōy nā.

"bhāluk āsiyā, tāhār nāk, kān, mukh, cokh o būker parīkṣā karila evam tāhāke mṛt stir kariyā caliyā gela. bhāluk caliyā gele par, pratham vyakti vṛkṣa haite nāmiyā, bandhur nikaṭ giyā jigñasila, bhāi, bhāluk tomāy ki baliya gela. āmi dekhilām, se tomāy kānē kāche anēk-kṣan mukh rakhiyāchila.

"dvitīya vyakti balila, bhāluk āmay ei kathā baliyā gela, je bandhu bipader samay pheliya pālāy ār kakhano tāhay sahit ālāp karibe nā."

Malayalam translation of the above

raņţu snēhitanmār oru vāliyilkūţi pōvukayāyiruńńu. nirbhāgya vaśāl, ā samayattu aviţe oru karaţi vańńu. snēhitanmāril orāl karaţiyekkanţu bhayappeţţu aţuttulla oru marattil kayariyiruńńu; pakṣe ayāl tanre snēhitannu eńtu sambhavikkumeńńu ālociccatē illa. ranṭamattēvan vēre valiyońńum kāṇattatukonţum, orrakku karaţiye etirkkuńńatu asādhyamcńńu karutiyatukonţum, cattatupōle bhūmiyil vīnukiţańńu. kāraṇam, āyal kēţtiţunţāyiruńńu karaţi maricca manuṣyane katikkukayilleńńu.

karaţi vańńu ayāļuţe mūkku, cevi, mukham, kaṇṇu vāya eńńivayellām pariśodhiccuńōkki, eńńiţtu ayāļ mariccirik-kuńńuveńńu niścayiccu aviţeńińnu pōyi. karaţi pōyatilppinne ādyattēvan vṛksattilńińnu iranni, snēhitanre aţuttupōyi

iprakāram cōdiccu, "cannāti karaţi tannōţu entu paraññiţtupōyi? atu tanre ceviyuţe aţukkal valare nēram mukham veccukonţiruńńatāyi ñān kantuvallō.

raņṭāmattēvan paraññu, "āpattu samyattu ētoru snēhitan upēkṣiccupōkuńńuvō ayāļōṭu pinnīṭorikkalum samsārikkarutu eńńu ennōṭu paraññaiṭṭāṇu karaṭi pōyatu".

In the above material, only the forms which have been italicised in the Bengali version are grammatically different from the corresponding Malayalam forms. All the rest of the Bengali forms and constructions are so closely similar to those in Malayalam that the learner would automatically be able to construct the Bengali sentences on the Malayalam pattern. Even the constructional patterns bandhute miliya and bandhudiger madhye are not foreign to Malayalam which can say snehitanmār kūṭi and snehitanmāruṭe iṭaiyil. What is really different is the construction of the verb (āmi) dzhhilām. Malayalam does not use personal terminations for the verb in any context, whereas Bengali uses it in some.

When one is learning Bengali with Malayalam as the base language, he will thus have to pay particular attention to only a few constructional patterns. On the other hand, if the base language is Hindi, Tamil or Marathi, the new linguistic patterns that the learner will have to acquire will be of a different order and will also be more numerous.

If one is learning Hindi with Marathi as the base language one will have considerable difficulty in regard to the gender of nouns as expressed in verbal endings. Marathi has a three-gender system, masculine, feminine

and neuter. Animals and human beings are divided on the basis of sex into masculine and feminine. Lifeless things and plants may belong to any one of the three genders. Hindi has a two-gender system, with grammatical gender for lifeless things and plants. Thus we have the following patterns for the two languages:

Marathi: singular Hindi: singular mulga padla 'boy fell down' ladkā gir padā mulgi padli 'girl fell down' ladkī gir padī dagad (masc.) padla 'stone fell down patthar gir padā (masc.) pān (masc.) padle 'leaf fell down' pattā padā (masc.) gādi padli (fem.) 'cart fell down' gādī gir padī (fem.) mulge padle 'boys fell down' ladke gir pade ladkiyā gir padī muli padlya 'girls fell down' dagad padle (masc.) 'stones fell down' patthar gire pane padli (neut.) 'leaves fell down' patte gir pade

This point about gender is, thus, one of the differences between the structural patterns of Marathi and Hindi which should receive special attention.

A differential grammar should take note of all the differences and similarities between the two linguistic systems concerned, laying emphasis on the former. The facts should be presented with reference to each of the five sub-systems of language, namely, phonetics, phonemics, morphophonemics, syntax and semantics. A clear exposition of the differences with an adequate number of examples will be of immense value to the learner who has one of the two languages concerned as his base language.

It may be stated here that the term differential grammar is used for the type of comparative study under discus-

sion because its main purpose is to show up the structural differences. We may not use the term comparative grammar for this as it is used by linguists in an altogether different sense with reference to the investigations into the prehistory of a group of related languages. In recent years, some linguists have been using the term **transfer grammar**; for a study more or less similar to the one proposed here. There is also another new term **contrastive analysis**. But so far the techniques of comparison do not take note of the base language concept being developed here.

A differential grammar for students of German whose base language is English will highlight the following points with regard to the phonology and noun morphology of German.

German vowels are always 'pure' vowels, and never diphthongal like English vowels. Long vowels are much longer and short vowels shorter than in English. German diphthongs are slightly shorter than English diphthongs.

German consonants especially p, t, k, are pronounced more fortis (with relatively stronger articulation) than English consonants.

A note on the German spelling would point out its difference from English spelling and would also state that except intervocally b, d, g, at the end of a word or syllable are pronounced as p, t, k.

The definite article in German agrees in number, gender and case with the noun it qualifies, there being three definite articles which indicate the three different genders—masculine, feminine and neuter.

e.g. der Vater 'the father' die Mutter 'the mother' and das Kind 'the child.'

The noun and the pronoun in German have three genders; any noun may be turned into a neuter noun irrespective of its original gender, by adding the endings chen and lein; e.g. die Magd 'the maid, 'das Mädchen' the little maid' (girl), der Mann 'the man' das Männlein the little man' (young man).

A German noun has four cases which are indicated primarily by the form of the article for expressing syntactic relationships.

Masculine		Feminine	Neuter
Nom.		die Mutter ' the mother '	
Acc.		die Mutter 'the mother'	
Dat.		der Mutter 'to, for the mo- ther'	
Gen.		der Mutter 'of the mother'	

In the plural declension all the three genders take the same article:

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter	
Nom	die Väter	die Mütter	die Mädchen	
Acc	die Väter	die Mütter	die Mädchen	
Dat	den Vätern	den Müttern	den Mädchen	
Gen	der Väter	der Mütter	der Mädchen	

As in the case of the definite article, the indefinite article and the forms dieser 'this,' jener 'that,' jeder 'each' and kein 'no,' welcher 'which,' solcher 'such (a)' and mancher 'many a' also agree in number, gender and case with the nouns they modify.

Possessive adjectives require case endings according to the gender, number, and case of the noun that follows them.

Sie hat ihren Bleistift 'She has her pencil.'

Unser Vater ist nicht hier 'Our father is not here.'

Wir lieben unsere Mütter 'We love our mother.'

Ich habe mein Buch 'I have my book.'

The use of the article in English and German vary considerably. German uses the article in many contexts where English does not use it and vice versa. For example, Sie gehen in die Schule 'they go to school,' but Er ist Arzt' He is a physician.' This variation will have to be completely illustrated.

German nouns are classified according to the endings and forms which they take in the plural for purposes of declension. There are three declensions; i....Strong declension, 2. Weak declension, and 3. Mixed declension.

The nouns of the strong declension add different endings in the plural, often with modification of the stem vowel called umlaut. There are three subdivisions of the strong declension: (1) those nouns which do not add an ending in

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the plural; (2) those which add -e to the nominative singular to form the plural; and (3) those which add -er to the nominative singular of the noun to form the plural.

The nouns of class (1) are always masculine or neuterwith the exception of die Mutter and die Tochter.. Examples:

Singular			Plural
Nom.	der	Vater 'the father'	die Väter
Acc.	den	Vater	die Väter
Dat.	dem	Vater	den Vätern
Gen.	des	Vaters	der Väter

The nouns of class two are distinguished by the fact that their plural is formed by adding -e to the nominative singular of the noun. Examples:

Singular	Plural
Nom. der Tag 'the day'	die Tage
Acc. den Tag	die Tage
Dat. dem Tag	den Tagen
Gen. des Tags	der Tage

In most cases the stem vowel takes the umlaut. Examples:

	Singular	Plural
Nom.	der Sohn 'the son'	die Söhne
Acc.	den Sohn	die Söhne
Dat.	dem Sohn	den Söhnen
Gen.	des Sohns	der Söhne

The nouns of class (3) add -er to the nominative: singular for forming the nominative plural and the stem. vowel always undergoes the umlaut change. Examples:

Singular				Plural
Nom.	der	Mann 'the man'	die	Männer
Acc.	den	Mann	\mathbf{die}	Männer
Dat.	\mathbf{dem}	Mann	den	Männern
Gen.	\mathbf{des}	Manns	der	Männer

The Weak Declension of nouns is so called because there is no modification of the stem vowel and the plural is formed by adding (e)n to the nominative singular in all four cases. The feminine form predominates in this declension.

Nom.	die Frau 'the woman'	die Frauen
Acc.	die Frau	die Frauen
Dat.	der Frau	den Frauen
Gen.	der Frau	der Frauen

In the Mixed Declension, which is a combination of the strong and the weak declensions, the singular of nouns is strong while the plural is weak.

Nom.	das	Auge '	the eye'	die Augen
Acc.	das	Auge		die Augen
Dat.		Auge		den Augen
·Gen.	des	Auges		der Augen

While most nouns belong to the above-mentioned regular categories of declension, there are also some nouns which are irregularly declined such as der Glaube 'the belief,' der Wille' the will,' der Name 'the name' and so on.

Surnames are not usually declined in German except in the genitive case. When a proper noun is preceded by an adjective, it does not take the genitive termination -s but takes an article in the genitive instead. For example, Goethes Worke 'the works of Goethe' but die Worke des Jungen Goethe 'the works of young Goethe.'

When a noun, which is usually in apposition with a proper noun, is used independently, it takes the genitive case ending in order to denote possession: der Sohn des Doktors 'the son of the doctor.'

An adjective following a proper name as its title attribute is declined: Der Sohn Karls des Grossen 'The son of Charles the Great.'

Compound nouns are a special characteristic of the German language. The last component of the compound noun gives the basic meaning of the noun as a whole, the parts preceding it functioning as attributes.

Preparation of differential grammars for contiguous languages as well as for others which are likely to stand in the base-target relationship is of considerable practical value. In a sense, the foreign language self-taught books that one comes across in a bookshop serve more or less the purpose of differential grammars. But a proper understanding of the principles underlying the concept of base and target languages will yield a grammar with an altogether different methodology and emphasis on structural differences. It is this base-target type of grammar hat we call here differential grammar.

Lessons based on differential grammar will be more meaningful and easy to comprehend than the traditional type of lessons based on any one of the methods discussed in the previous chapter. In fact a good differential grammar would be also a most scientifically prepared text-book for the foreign language concerned.

CHAPTER VI

Techniques of Constructing Lessons

The most concrete expression of methodology in language teaching is in the nature of the lessons that are given to the student. Properly constructed lessons which take the characteristics of the base languages as points of departure will lead the learner step by step into the intricacies of the pattern of the new language. He will thereby acquire the new linguistic habits in an intelligent and effective manner with the least amount of perplexity and mix-up which are inevitable in foreign language learning.

In this chapter we will briefly discuss some of the important techniques which are to be followed in constructing lessons in a foreign language. These will be based on the following principles: (i) the concept of the base and target languages; (ii) provision of appropriate context; (iii) acquisition of patterns of structure and ranges of meaning: and (iv) adequate practice. We will first take the problem of teaching Tamil to Hindi speakers. Let us assume that the Hindi speaking student already knows Bengali and Marathi quite well. The knowledge of these two languages. however, will not in any way help him in his study of Tamil because the similarities and differences of Bengali and Marathi with Tamil are nearly the same as those of Hindi. In fact, the phonological and grammatical systems of these two languages present greater differences from those of Tamil than those of Hindi. The base language

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of our student will, therefore, be Hindi for his approach to Tamil.

The first task is to display the phonological differences. This may be done in three or four lessons at the beginning. The features of Tamil that should receive attention are the existence of the difference between long and short and o in Tamil which are absent in Hindi, the distinction between alveolar and retroflexed r and l, the peculiar Tamil sound l and the lack of voiced and aspirated sounds and sibilants as separate phonemes in Tamil.

The lesson will give examples like the following: Difference between e, \bar{e} and o, \bar{o} : at u en puttakam that is my book, at u en vantatu why did it come? apputtakattai et u take that book, apputtakattin mutal $\bar{e}tu$ the first leaf of that book,

itai oti 'break this' (thou),'
inke oti vā 'come here running,'
koṭi vīṭṭil avar irukkār 'he lives in the flag house,'
koṭi vīṭṭil avar irukkār 'he lives in the end house,'
Difference between alveolar and retroflexed r and l:
enakku koñcam kari koṭu 'give me some charcoal,'
enakku koñacam kari koṭu 'give me some curry,'
atu karappu 'that (is) a cockroach,'
atu karappu 'that (is) black,'
atan oli nanṛāka irukku 'its sound is good,'
atan oḷi nanṛāka irukku 'its lustre is good.'

avaļ kaiyil oru vaļai irukkiratu 'There is a net in her hand,' avaļ kaiyil oru vaļai irrukkiratu 'there is a bangle in her hand.'

Examples of <u>l</u>-words:

malai peykiratu 'it is raining.'

ivvūril palankal niraiya kiṭaikkum 'plenty of fruits are available in this place.' anta vīṭṭil vālai illai 'there are no banana trees in that house.' inke valukkukiratu 'it is slippery here.' kulantai kīle viluntatu 'the child fell down.' Contrast between l, l and l should be pointed out as these sounds are likely to be confused: e.g., talai 'to grow luxuriantly, as plants, etc., talai 'fastening rope,' talai 'head.'

The lack of voiced sounds as distinct phonemes in Tamil and the principle that single medial consonants are usually voiced or given the value of fricatives could be illustrated with examples such as: tayavillāta manitan 'man without feeling of kindness' (tayavillāta is pronounced either as [tajavilla:da] or as [dajavilla:da] and manitan as [m\ni\dan]); avan patil collavillai 'he did not reply' (patil is pronounced as [padil] or [badil]); aṭuppu pukaiyiratu 'smoke is issuing out of the oven' (pronounced as [aḍuppu pogaijaradu] or [pohaijaradu]); nī eṅke pōikirāy? 'where are you going?' (pronounced as [eŋge po:xira:j]); caṭṭai cariyāka irukkiratu 'the shirt fits' (pronounced as [śattaj sarija:xa or sarija: hairukkiradiu]).

In these lessons, all the Tamil phonemes are to be illustrated and not merely those which are peculiar to Tamil as compared to those of the base language. We

have indicated here only the order in which the peculiar sounds of Tamil may be taken up.

The morphological and syntactical structure of Tamil should be dealt with in a similar way by displaying the common features with Hindi as well as the differences, with particular emphasis on the latter. The differences are to be given adequate prominence through a larger number of examples than the similarities and through explanatory notes at the end of each lesson. We give below the declension of nouns by way of an example.

I.—Nominative forms:

nān pōkirēn 'I am going' (H, maī jā rahā hū) avan pōkirān 'he is going' (H. vah jārahā hai) Lakṣhmi varuvāļ 'Lakshmi will come' (H. Laksmi āegī.)

payyan puttakam patittān 'the boy read a book' (H. ladkene kitāb padī)

Rāman palam tinkirān 'Raman is eating fruit' (H. Rām phal khātā hai)

avan cińkam pārkkavillai 'he has never seen (lithe never saw) a lion' (H. usne ser nahi dekhā) nān Rāmanukku puttakam koţuttēn 'I gave Rama a book' (H. maine Rāmko pustak diyā)

Mīnakṣi avanai tampiyāka (or tampiyaippōl) ninaittuk-konṭirukkāļ 'Meenakshi regards him as a brother' (H. Mīnakṣhi use bhai māntī hai) nān avanai naṇpanāka (naṇpan enru or naṇpan) ninaittēn 'I regarded him as friend' (H. maī use mitra samjhatā thā).

nān kayarrai pāmpu enru (or simply pāmpu) ninaittēn 'I took the rope to be a snake' (H. maine rassīko samp samjhā)

payyan palam tinrān 'the boy ate the fruit' (H. ladkene phal khāyā)

appā pustakam paţittār 'father read a book' (H. pitāne kitāb paḍhī)

aṇṇā kaṭitam elutiyirukkirār 'brother has written a letter' (H. bhāine patra likhā hai) peṇ camayal ceytiruntāl 'the girl had cooked the food' (H. ladkine khāna banāyā thā)

payyan vantān 'the boy came' (H. laḍkā āyā) kutirai ōṭirru 'the horse ran' (H. ghoḍa dhauḍā) payyan pustakam koṇṭuvantān 'the boy brought the book' (H. laḍkā kitāb lāyā)

avan connān 'he said' (H. vah bolā)
nān rinaittēn 'I thought' (H. maine samjhā)
kuļantai payantukoņṭān 'the child was frightened' (H. bacca darā).

Both Tamil and Hindi use the nominative form of the noun when it is the subject of an intransitive verb in the present or past or future tense. But, whereas Tamil also uses the nominative form in connection with the transitive, Hindi uses the instrumental form. With regard to the inanimate object of a verb both the languages use the nominative form (cf. Hindi $R\bar{a}m$ phal khāta hai and Tamil $R\bar{a}m$ palam tinkirān). There is also agreement between the laguages in using the nominative for referring to the animate object of

a verb when it has a general sense and does not refer to a specific object, as, for example, Hindi usne ser nahi dekhā 'he has not seen a l'on,' and Tamil avan cinkam pārttatillai, whereas in both the languages the animate object with a case ending (accusative in Tamil and accusative-dative in Hindi) refers to a specific being as in Tamil avan cinkattai pārttatillai 'he has not seen the lion,' and Hindi usne ser ko nahi dekhā. When there are two objects to a verb, a direct and an indirect one, Hindi always puts the direct object in the nominative, irrespective of the fact whether it is animate or inanimate, whereas Tamil very often puts the animate direct object in the accusative. For example, Tamil ammā enakku rantu paļam kotuppāl 'mother will give me two fruits,' Hindi ma mujhe do phal degi but Tamil katavul avanukku ör ān kulantayai kotukkattum, 'may God give him a male child,' Hindi bhagvān use ek ladkā de. Hindi constructions of the type mai use mitra samajhata thā 'I took him to be a friend,' with a predicative roun has always the nominative corresponding to the Tamil construction nan avanai na pan enru ninaitten with the predicative noun followed by an adverbial participle.

It is specially noteworthy that corresponding to the Hindi constructions $ladk\bar{a}ne$ phal $kh\bar{a}y\bar{a}$ 'the boy ate the fruit' and $ladk\bar{a}$ $\bar{a}y\bar{a}$ 'the boy came,' one with the subject of the transitive verb taking - ne in the past (participle) form (with a few exceptions) and the other the subject of the intransitive verb in the past without - ne, Tamil uses only the same form of the subject 'payyan palam tingān and payyan vantān.

II.—Accusative forms:

- payyanai kūppiṭu 'call the boy' (H. laḍke kobulāo).
- nān avanai pārkkirēn 'I see him' (H. maī usko dekhtā (hū).
- Rāmar Sītaiyai tēţikkoṇţiruntār 'Rama was searching fer Sīta' (H. Ram sītako khojtā thā). appā payyanai pārttār 'father saw the boy' (H. pitāne laḍkeko dekhā)
- aṇṇā taṅkaiyai kūppiṭṭān 'the brother called the sister' (H. bhāine bahin ko bulāya).
- puttakankaļai aļukkākkāte 'do not make the books dirty' (H. kitābõko gandā mat karo).
- mējaiyai eṭu 'take the table' (H. mejko uṭhāo).
 nārkāli koṇṭuva 'bring a chair' (H. kursī lāo).
 nārkāliyai taḷḷi vai 'move the chair away' (H. kursīko hatāo).
- payyan kal erikirān 'the boy is throwing stones' (H. ladkā patthar phenktā hai).
- nān payyanai kēṭṭēn 'I asked the boy' (H. maine laḍkese pūcchā).
- rantu puttakankal vānku 'buy two books' (H. do kitabē kharīdo).
- Kamala ammāviṭam connāļ 'Kamala told mother' (H. Kamalāne māse kahā).
- vīţṭai (or vīṭu) cuttamāka vaittukkoļ 'keep the house clean' (H. ghar [or gharko] sāf rakho).

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vēlaikkāran enniţam paṇam kēţkirān the servant is asking me money (H. naukar mujhse paise māṅgta hai).

In expressing accusative relationship, Tamil and Hindi are more or less alike. Hindi, however, tends to dispense with the accusative termination in connection with neuter nouns more frequently than Tamil. It is also noteworthy that Hindi uses the same termination for expressing the accusative and the dative relationships (see below). The main difference between Tamil and Hindi is the Hindi use of the -ne....-se construction with reference to verbs meaning 'to tell, say, ask, ask for, beg, demand, claim, request,' whereas Tamil uses the usual -ai construction or uses the -am construction.

III.—Instrumental forms:

kattiyināl palattai narukku 'cut the fruit with knife (H. cākū se phal kāto).

nān pēnāvināl eļutukirēn 'I am writing with the pen '(H. maí pen se likhtā hū).

inta vēlaiyai vēlaikkāranaikkoņţu ceyyaccol 'ask the servant to do this work' (H. yah kām naukarse karāo).

veyilināl ilaikaļ unantu-p-pōyvittana 'the leaves dried due to sun's heat (H. dhūpse patte sūkh gaye). itu marattināl paṇṇina mējai 'this table is made of wood' (lit. made with wood) (H. yeh mēj lakdise banā hai).

avan kaiyāl aţittān 'he beat with his hand' (H. usne hāthse mārā).

anta-k-kulantaikalkūţa vilaiyāţāte 'don't play with those children' (H. un baccoke sāth mat khelo).

The Tamil instrumental suffixes -ai, in-āl, and konṭu correspond to the Hindi suffix -se. But while the Hindi suffix denotes also the ablative case and is used as a sort of adverbial particle as well, the Tamil suffixes have no other function.

V.—Ablative forms:

vīţţiliruntu varukirān 'he is coming from the house'
(H. Vah gharse ā rahā hai).

marattiliruntu ilai viluntatu 'the leaf fell from the tree' (H. pēdse pattā girā).

duşţarkaliliruntu vilaki nil 'keep away from the wicked' (H. duşţõse baco)

avar paţţaṇattiliruntu pōyviţţār 'he went away from the city (H. vah sahar se calā gayā).

grāmattiliruntu talli irrukku nadi 'the river is at some distance from the village' (H. gāvse dūr hai nadī).

nērriliruntu avanukku uṭampu sariyillai ' he is not well since yesterday' (H. vah kal se bīmār hai).

While the termination iliruntu expresses only the ablative sense in Tamil, the -se termination of Hindi signifies a variety of relationships: (a) the subject of a verb in the passive and impersonal voices (Rāmse patra nahi likhā jātā 'Ram is unable to write a letter') (b) the indirect object of the verbs meaning 'to tell, say, ask, ask for, beg, demand, claim, request' (Rāmne bhāise kahā ki 'Ramı told brother

that.....') (c) means, instrument of agency, (tārse samācār do 'send news by telegram'); etc., in addition to the ablative relationship.

VI.—Dative forms:

Rāmanukku pacittatu 'Ram felt hungry' (H. Rāmko bhūk lagī).

appāvukku kopam vantatu 'father felt angry '(H. pitāko krodh āyā).

payyanukku aţi kiţ ittatu 'the boy got beating' (H. ladkako daṇd milā).

kulantaikalukku vilaiyāṭa vēṇṭum 'the children want to play' (H. bacconko khelnā cāhie).

aṇṇā Rāmanukku kaṭitam clutinān 'brother wrote a letter to Rām' (H. bhaine Ramko patra likhā).

peṇṇukku veṭkam vańtatu 'the girl felt ashamed' (H. ladkiko. lajjā āyī).

Laļitāvukku pensil vēņtum, 'Laļitā wants a pencil,' (H. Lalitāko rensel cahiye).

vāttiyārukku rompa vēlai irukku 'the teacher has much work' (H. māsterji-ko bahut kām hai).

kilavanukku kāyam paṭṭatu 'the old man received injury' (H. buḍḍāko chōṭ āyī).

nāļaikku varēn 'I shall come tomorrow' (H. maī kal āvunga).

unakku enna nērnitatu 'what has happened to you' (H. āpko kyā hō gayā).

The Tamil termination -kku (-ukku) has no other function than indicating the dative relation, whereas the Hindi

the accusative relationship. In indicating time, Tamil seldom uses the dative case as against the practice in Hindi. E.g. nān tinkaļ kiļamai pōvēn 'I shall go on Monday,' (H, māi somvārko jāvunga); avan mattiyānam varukirān 'he comes at noon' (H. vah dopahārko ātā hai); avan aintām tēti kilampi-p-pōnān 'he went away on the fifth,' (H. vah pānc tarikhko calā gayā). Rāman rāttiri vēlai ceykirān (colloquially sometimes rāttiyile) 'he works at night' (H. Rām rātko kām kartā hai).

termination -ko is used for indicating both the dative and

VII.—Genetive forms:

Nārāyaṇanuṭaiya tampi 'Narayana's brother' (H. Narayanka bhāi).

Nārāyananutaiya tankai 'Narayana's sister' (H. Nārāyanki bahin).

Nārāyaṇanuṭaiya tampikaļ 'Narayanan's brothers' (H. Nārāyanke bhāī (or bhayiyã). ūnkalutaiya kirupaiyināl kāriyam natantatu

the work was done through your kindness.

(H. āpki krpāse kām kar cukā hai)

peņkaļin kalvikkāka avar mikavum uļaittār 'he worked hard for the education of girls' (H.

ladkiyonki siksā-ke liye usne bahut kām kiyā). un peyar enna? 'what is your name' (H. āpkā nām kya hai)?

pūkkaļin alakai pār 'look at the beauty of the flowers (H. phūlonka saundarya dekho).

There are many situations where Hindi uses the genitive suffix -ki but Tamil does not use the suffix. For

example, ancu vayatu payyan 'a boy of five years' (H. $p\bar{a}\bar{n}c$ $s\bar{a}lk\bar{a}$ $ladk\bar{a}$); oru mayil dūram 'a distance of one mile' (H. ek $m\bar{\imath}l$ ki $d\bar{\imath}u$ i); rotti-t-tuntu 'piece of bread' (H. $rot\bar{\imath}k\bar{a}$ $tukd\bar{a}$). Also, it is noteworthy that while the Hindi suffix shows gender and number differentiation, there is no such change for the Tamil suffix.

VIII.-Locative Forms:

en vītu paṭṭaṇattil irukku 'my house is in the town' (H. mera ghar sehar me hai).

ammā vīṭṭil illai 'mother is not in the house 'mā ghar me nahi hai).

avan paļļikkūṭattil paṭikkirān 'he is studying in school' (H. vah vidyālayme paḍhtā hai).

kuļattil nīnca-k-kūṭātu 'it is not permitted to swim in the tank '(H. talābme tairna manā hai). ipputtakattai nān mūnru nāļil paṭittuviṭṭēn 'I read the book in three days' (H. yah pustak manne tīn din me paḍhī).

vīțu oru varuțattil kațți muțintatu 'the house was constructed in one year' (H. makān ek sāl mē taiyār huā).

inta-k-kulantaikalukkul rompa nalla payyan Kopalan 'Gopalan is the best among these boys' (H. in ladkome Gopal sabse accha hai)

pustakam mejaimēl irukku 'the book is on the table' (H. kitāb mejpar hai).

anta kunrinmēl oru kiņar irukku 'there is a well on that hill' (H. us pahārpar ek kūā hai).

As in the case of other case suffixes, the Tamil-il and -mēl are generally used only as locative endings. Hindi-me and -par, however, have other idiomatic functions. For example, H. pensil tīn āneme āti hai: Ta. oru pensilukku vilaī mūnru aṇā 'a pencil costs three annas; H. vah kitāb do rupayeeme mili: Ta. inta pustakam iraṇṭu rūpayukku kiṭaittatu: 'this book was available for two rupees,' H. vahā jānepar maīne dekha kī vah so rahā hai: Ta. aṅkeponapōtu nān parttēn avar tūṅkikkontirukkār 'on reaching there I saw that he was sleeping.'

In presenting the above examples, our aim is only to indicate the points that are to be brought out in illustrating the structures of Tamil vis-á-vis the structure of Hindi. The lessons that should go into the teaching manual should themselves be differently cast, taking into account the requirements of the Context Method and the other principles we have enunciated. We shall give one sample lesson below taking English as the base language.

The sound systems of English and Tamil show a great number of differences which should naturally be displayed in the initial lessons. The first lesson may deal with vowel length in Tamil and it may be prepared as follows:—

- 1. atu en vīțu 'that is my house.'
- 2. atu oru cinna malai mēl irukku 'that is on a small hill.'
- arukil oru cinna nadi irukku 'there is a small' river nearby.'

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- 4. mālai nēram janankaļ anke povārkal 'people gothere in the evening.'
- 5. nadiyil niraiya kal irukku 'there are many stones in the river.'
- 6. kāl vaikka kaṣṭam '(it is) difficult to step (on the stones.)'
- 7. ēn? 'why?'
- 8. kāl carukkum 'the feet will slip;'
- 9. pal utaintuvitum 'teeth will break.'
- 10. karaiyil oru kōyil irukku 'there is a temple on the bank.'
- 11. kōyilil periya koţi maram irruku 'there is a big flagstaff in the temple.'
- 12. anta köyil irukkum iţem ūrin köţi 'the place where the temple is situated is the end of the village.'
- 13. kōyilil oru māṭu irukku 'there is a cow in the temple.'
- 14. atu niraiya pāl kotukkam 'that gives pelnty of milk.'
- 15. māṭṭai avilttu viṭu 'let off the cow.'

The lessons should be short, consisting of about twenty sentences. It is neither necessary nor desirable to introduce grammatical points in absolutely separate stages. The main consideration is that the sentences should be only of such length that the points that are being made do not get bogged in verbiage.

About twenty lessons will exhibit the various aspects of Tamil morphological structure and four or five will be devoted to the syntactical structure of the language. The book will be rounded off with a few selections from standard prose writing.

Vocabulary and grammatical explanations should be given at the end of each lesson and not at the beginning. This is in conformity with the natural way of learning a language. One learns word meanings and structures in context and not in isolation. A word or expression has generally more than one meaning, and it would be appropriate to point out the relevant meaning in a particular context rather than give it out of context. In real-life situation, one hears a new expression and then gathers its meaning either from the context or by asking the speaker or some one else. When explanations are given at the end of the lesson, it will have the same effect more or less. The technique of printing new vocabulary material in bold type will be useful in this connection. The meaning of all illustrative sentences should, however, be given against each sentence.

The lessons illustrating the morphological structure of the language should not be divided into grammatical categories such as Indefinite Article, Object, Pronoun, Possessive Adjective, etc., but should deal with topics concerning everyday life such as a visit to the bazaar, a dinner in the hotel, a social call, a train trip, etc. Each lesson, should, however, be used especially to illustrate two or three major grammatical points.

TECHNIQUES OF CONSTRUCTING LESSONS

Repetition of words and phrases two or three times in the same lesson would serve to fix these in the memory of the learner. The repetitions should be in close proximity in order to be fully effective as a technique to practise the forms. In subsequent lessons also the words and phrases as well as grammatical features should be repeated in a manner that would easily recall their earlier occurrences.

It would be highly desirable to use such utterances in the lessons as can be illustrated with line drawings. It is not necessary that everything in a lesson should be illustrated; but if the material would lend itself to illustration, comprehension would be easier, as the mind would automatically visualise the objects and actions.

CHAPTER VII

Teaching Aids and Techniques

Since the business of learning languages is as old as the human race itself, we may expect that the technique of language teaching must long ago have become perfect. In a sense this is so; we find that a normal child learns his or her mother tongue in a natural, easy and well ordered manner, following the same pattern all over the world. But in another sense, in respect of the adult learner acquiring a new language, there is still much to be desired as in the case of most other cultural activities of human beings.

The main difference between the adult learner and the child is that the former approaches his task with certain inhibitions which the latter does not have. The inhibitions prevent the adult learner from making certain fundamental observations about the language being learned and from effecting certain basic adjustments of his speech organs. The child observes the speakers around him with a remarkable keenness both from the visual and the auditory points of view. He observes the articulatory movements and imitates them with considerable exactitude even from the outset. And he listens with a great sense of discrimination which enables him to recognise the nice differences among the speech sounds as well as the pitch, stress, tone and other suprasegmental features of the language he is learning.

A rational and scientific approach to language teaching, therefore, should take into account the inhibitions of the adult learner and provide measures to counter them. This is a fact which has been widely recognised by language teachers in recent decades, especially by those who have become acquainted with the findings of modern linguistics. But the question is what measures are needed and how effective they could be made.

A popular misconception needs to be corrected at this point. It is not only adults who have difficulty in adjusting their habits of speech to the requirements of a new language but even small children who have already acquired their mother tongues quite well. When once the vocal organs become habituated to certain movements and the ears have been habituated to discriminating a particular set of sounds, there are definite obstacles to acquiring a new set of articulatory movements and to hearing new phonetic and phonemic distinctions. Children, it is true, can make adjustments more easily than grown-up persons, but adjustments have all the same to be made, and more often than not, these involve a good deal of effort.

An effective programme of foreign language teaching should, therefore, be so designed as to present the phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics of the language in a manner that the characteristic features of these will not be eclipsed by those of the mother tongue or the base language. The nature of the oral-aural techniques of the teacher as well as the type of instrumental help that is

obtainable will determine the effectiveness of the teaching.

Recognition of the phonemes of the new language and their phonetic characteristics should receive the first attention of the teacher. This is to be done by speaking short utterances and words in appropriate linguistic contexts. By constant repetition of these, the ear becomes attuned to the phonetic and phonemic differences between the base and the target languages. The criterion for judging that the learner has grasped the contrasts in the sound system of the new language is of course his ability to produce them.

Teaching the characteristic intonation and stress of the utterances of the foreign language should also get adequate attention in the initial stages. It is these features which give the distinctive personality to a language, and careful observation would show that a child learning his mother tongue and the person learning a foreign language from native speakers in native surroundings acquire the intonational and stress systems of the language at the very outset.

All language teaching should thus start with practice in listening and comprehending. By being constantly exposed to the sounds and forms of the language one gets the pattern of the language unconsciously fixed on one's mind. A new linguistic habit is formed, and any new material that is learned easily and naturally fits into the pattern that has been already acquired.

Listening, speaking, reading and writing is the order in which a new language has to be learned. This is the

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natural order, and applies equally to mother tonguelearning and to foreign language learning. The first twoprocesses, as indicated above, are essential in forming the neuro-muscular habits without which one will not have any real control over the structure of the language at any level.

Since nothing in a language is learned in isolation, the acquisition of the total pattern of the language proceeds simultaneously with the mastering of its sounds. One very serious mistake which most foreign language teachers seem to make is the assumption that the structure of the language has to be learned in well defined parts. Thus we see in text books an attempt to divide up the language intoisolated categories such as the noun, the adjective, the adverb and so on, which vitiate the entire teaching programme by making the learner lose sight of the language as a whole. From the beginning, it is extremely important that the language is viewed and handled as a practical instrument of communication in the varied situations of life. It follows from what has been said above that listening to the foreign language that is being learned, that is, comprehending the language, and speaking it constitute the first step in effective learning. The classroom techniques should. therefore, include the provision of adequate opportunities to hear the language and to get the feel of it from the auditory and articulatory points of view.

Oral help provided by teachersand the aid of instruments are the two sources for listening practice in the

classroom. Of these, we have already given some consideration to the first. We may here discuss this further and also mention the use of instruments.

The teacher should read out the lessons in short sequences with the pronunciation, intonation and speed which are characteristic of the language, and the students should try to imitate him. The meaning of what is read is made clear through explanations (including translation) and through the provision of appropriate context. After this first exercise, the teacher should again read the lesson two or three times during which the students would be able to observe the teacher's pronunciation, etc., much more effectively. The intonational pattern would thereby be much better impressed on their minds.

This process should be repeated for several days, thus enabling the students to speak about hundred sentences in the language with the appropriate pronunciation, intonation and speed of articulation. The great advantage in going over each lesson in the manner described above consists in the fact that the teacher can observe the mode of production of the sounds of the foreign language by the student and give the necessary instructions for correct articulation at each step, while the student will get ample opportunities for listening to and observing the method of its normal pronunciation. Language learning should be entirely of the oral type in the initial stages.

Where two informant-teachers are in charge of a class, they should each read the lesson separately, thus providing

two typical samples of the native or native-like pronunciation. Since it may not be possible to say whether the speech habits of one informant conforms to the norm of the language, the use of a second informant would be very helpful in providing the necessary assurance. Further, the two teachers could dramatise the conversational material in the lessons, and also provide samples of real conversation by speaking to each other.

At the very outset the teacher should pay as much attention to the teaching of the suprasegmental features of the language as to its segmental phonemes and their phonetic characteristics. For, the fact that language learning really begins with the acquisition of the proper intonational and stress patterns in the child's approach is of tremendous significance to the grown-ups as well. These features play almost the same role in language learning as the rāgas or tunes play in music learning. When one establishes control over the appropriate mould, the learning of the material of the language becomes quite easy and natural.

Tape recorder, phonograph records and movie films may profitably be used by the beginner. With regard to the first two, some way of simultaneously illustrating the spoken utterances would be extremely useful. A large rotating drum with illustrations or an automatically moving film strip may serve the purpose. As movie films are costly and cannot be prepared for the lessons in a book, their use is rather severely limited.

The use of mechanical aids in teaching imposes certain limitations to the size and composition of the language

class. While the oral techniques of the teacher can serve a large number of students (the maximum seems to be around twenty) simultaneously, the use of a tape recorder or phonograph can be made effective only when the number is much smaller. For one thing, the group will have to sit around the machine in order to get the maximum benefit, and for this purpose six may be considered as the upper limit.

Where a well-equipped language laboratory is possible, each student may have the exclusive use of a tape recorder, the operation of which is centrally controlled by the teacher. This set-up provides the student with the privacy necessary for practice of the sounds and the utterances of the foreign language, and gives him ample opportunity to proceed at his own pace. The tape contains a master record to which he listens and a second track on which he records his practice utterances in imitation of the utterances in the master track. The student's own utterances can be erased, thus enabling him to repeat his performance until he is able to get satisfactory results.

Naturally enough, the use of individual tape recorders is possible only by learners who are mature enough to operate them and to derive the full benefit out of them. Also, this set-up entails considerable organisation and expenditure which may not be within the reach of every institution.

The use of the phonograph, however, is much less expensive and does not present the sort of complications that a language laboratory with arrangements for individual students involves. Further, it is possible to use a phonograph

record for the benefit of a larger group of students when the aim is merely to provide a sample of correct articulation. Hence the phonograph represents a more practical instrument for language teaching and should find a place in all language classes.

Even with the aid of the tape recorder and the phonograph, the problem of creating appropriate context for the utterance sample remains. The materials that are being presented in the form of lessons have to be developed in the manner described in Chapter IV. The simultaneous use of a film strip or a revolving device with illustrations will make the learning more easy and effective.

The most effective teaching aid will of course be the sound film. But the cost of preparing films which will embody a whole course in foreign language teaching would be so much that it may not be practicable to have them except as a partial aid. Films are available for some of the major languages of Europe which illustrate speech sounds and more usually the culture of the people speaking the languages. Needless to say, their usefulness is very limited. A series of films designed to teach a foreign language is still an undertaking for the future.

CHAPTER VIII

Language Camps

Everyone who wants to learn a new language would want to learn it in the shortest possible time. His aim would chiefly be to comprehend the language and to express himself in it. Any detailed knowledge of its phonology and grammar as well as its literature is usually only a secondary consideration. In fact, such knowledge is really of use only to those who are planning to teach the language or to write it. Naturally, the purpose of most people would be much more limited than that.

The question then arises as to how we can arrange to teach a language in the shortest possible time, leading to a reasonable command of it both at the levels of comprehension and expression. In the light of what we have said in the previous chapters on methodology and teaching techniques, it should be clear that an intensive programme of teaching in as natural an evironment as possible would alone yield the maximum results. Also, the presentation of the language should pay adequate attention to its distinguishing features vis - a - vis the base language of the learner.

There is a great deal of interest today in mechanising language teaching in order to quicken the learning process and to create a proper atmosphere. The setting up of a language laboratory with tape recorders and other instruments is now considered as the normal procedure for making use of mechanical devices. Since this is a comparatively

new development and is being mostly used for the limited purpose of practising the lessons already learned from a teacher in the class room, it is too early to say to what extent the language laboratory will serve the requirements of the various aspects of language learning.

One thing, however, seems to be clear. The language laboratory will always have its limitations, whatever may be the advancements in the techniques used in it. The most important of these limitations is the lack of personal contact with the speakers of the language. A language is not merely learned through the mastery of its characteristic utterances. No doubt these constitute the physical form of the language. But a language is much more than a collection of meaningful sounds. It is the means of communication between two personalities rather than two minds as well as the expression of the culture of its speakers. In order to really master it, one has to "live" it.

There is a great deal of difference between the effectiveness of learning directly from the native speaker in a natural situation and learning from the second hand voice that one hears on a machine in a laboratory. Even when a native speaker is the teacher, the classroom situation with a textbook as the guide makes the language sound too artificial. It is, therefore, necessary to develop a new technique of language teaching which would ensire the learning of the language without losing the advantages offered by mechanical devices.

One solution to the problem posed above seems to be the holding of what may be called language camps. A small number of students who have the same base language

and three or four teachers with their families would constitute such a camp.

The advantage of having several teachers and their families is that the students will get opportunities to hear the language spoken in a natural manner and under formal as well as informal circumstances. The presence of women and children would give the students the sort of opportunities to "observe" the language in a manner which the classroom or any other type of formal teaching situation can never give.

The duration of a language camp may be anywhere between a fortnight to three months. It should preferably be held in a rural area, far away form the normal scene of work of the teachers and the students in order to derive the maximum benefit from it. We shall here sketch briefly the operation of a fifteen-day camp.

The first three days are spent in learning about a hundred basic sentences thoroughly and using them in various ways. The sentences should be such that many of the grammatical rules of the language are revealed by them. They should be short and straightforward (that is, without involved constructions), and should concern the practical needs of daily life.

The students are given thorough drill in the phonetics of the language while making them master the sentences. They are made to understand the phonetic differences between their base language and the language that is being learned and to recognise its phonemes.

No formal lessons in phonetics or grammar are, however, given in the initial stage. All that is done is to make the

students thoroughly at home in the mechanics of the new language through the Context Method and through practical experience.

The students will live with the teachers when this kind of training is being given. This gives them the opportunity of listening to the speech of native speakers right from the start. The teachers and their families should speak among themselves in a clear and deliberate manner, as far as possible using the material that is being taught to the students. By doing so, the students will get ample opportunities of testing their power of understanding.

A fundamental rule of the camp will be that no one will speak in any language other than the language that is being learnt. This will, no doubt, create difficulties for the students in the initial stages, but such difficulties should be welcomed rather than avoided. For, a language is properly learnt only when it is put to use, and the earlier the beginning is made the better. The students are also likely to experience psychological and emotional difficulties at the outset. But, as they go on expressing themselves in the new language, they would get rid of their embarrassments and would begin to get a "feel" for the language. No language, as a matter of fact, can be learned to any extent unless one gets the "feel" for it, whatever this may mean in physiological or psychological terms.

After the first three days, the camp will move to some place in a rural area where the work will be carried on in a quiet atmosphere without any kind of disturbance or distraction. For the next seven days the students are not taught anything in a formal manner. They are left to learn things

for themselves by observation and by trial and error in speaking the language. The teachers will, however, have a definite plan for teaching the students in an informal way. They will use the frames of the utterances that the students have already learnt for presenting new material to them. This will be done in the course of the daily activities of the camp.

It should be possible to increase the students' vocabulary as well as their knowledge of sentence types steadily by this method at least 15 to 20 per cent a day. No doubt, this would involve a tremendous amount of labour on the part of both the teachers and the students, but since the work is done in an informal manner, it should not cause any considerable strain.

The technique of adding to the basic knowledge acquired in the first three days will depend on the nature of the language concerned. The basic vocabulary and the familiar sentence types of the language should naturally receive due emphasis in developing these techniques.

Ample opportunities will be given to the students to use every bit of the material that has been learnt. At the end of each day the progress of the students will be assessed in an informal test in the form of conversations between the students and the teachers. The material of the test, of course will have to be carefully prepared by the teachers, but every care will be taken to make sure that the students do not feel that they are taking a test. The interest of the student is aroused at every step and he is made to feel an urge to express himself.

By the end of seven days of strenuous work in this manner it should be possible to build up a vocabulary of twelve hundred to fifteen hundred words and to get a reasonable mastery of the main structural types of the language. The daily informal test mentioned above would take care that the material that is learnt is retained and assimilated properly.

If the language has a script of its own, it is learnt during this period of intensive oral lessons. The primary emphasis will, of course, be on speaking the language and understanding it and not on reading. The question of writing does not arise at all during the camp period.

The next three days are spent in holding classes for giving a systematic knowledge of the grammar of the language. This period is also utilised by the teachers for reading out passages from the literature of the language and to give an appreciation of the literary values of some of its masterpieces. The students are also encouraged to read some simple passages.

The last two days of the camp are spent in a formal programme of evaluation. Equal attention is given to comprehension and to expression in the course of the tests. Naturally, the evaluation is made primarily through the oral-aural method. The camp is then disbanded.

We have sketched above only the broad principles involved in organising a language camp without giving any details of the programme to be followed from day to day. The actual working out of the programme will naturally depend on the nature of the language being learned and the base language of the students.

Throughout the period of teaching the teachers should take care to relate the material that is being taught to the cultural background of the students. This will make the learning process simpler and more meaningful.

All expressions and idioms which do not fit in with this background should be carefully avoided. For example, if Indian students are learning French, expressions like à la carte, le menu table d'hôte, hors-d'oeuvre may be avoided and the Indian practices with regard to meals expressed in French.

CHAPTER IX

Evaluating Achievement

Every type of systematic teaching involves periodic measurement of achievement of students. In language teaching, this measuring has a more practical significance than in the case of most other subjects. This is more especially so when the teacher's aim is teaching the language and not about the language. The teacher cannot take a rea step forward if his pupils have not learned well enough what he has already taught them.

Evaluating achievement, as a matter of fact, should form an integral part of the teaching programme. The method of teaching, in other words, should include techniques of finding out what the pupil has learned and how well. For, that method of language teaching is likely to be most successful which contains what may be called built-in devices of evaluation of the student's progress.

Periodic examinations have, of course, their own value and should be resorted to by the teacher. But there is a vast difference between the nature and objective of formal examination and the built-in devices of evaluation. While the former is mainly terminal in character, the latter is the medium through which the teacher can and must understand the effectiveness of his teaching method and the needs of the learner.

In this chapter we will consider only some of the more useful techniques of evaluation. We will not be concerned

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with the kinds of terminal examinations which may be conducted for the purposes of awarding diplomas and certificates, as these have nothing to do with teaching practices.

It will be useful here to recapitulate the nature of foreign language teaching as distinguished from the teaching of mother tongue. In foreign language teaching we have to give the student a good grounding in the structure and vocabulary of the language both from the points of view of communication and of understanding the speech of native speakers. This involves the teaching of a large number of utterances and their structure by the drill method if the learning is to be quick and effective. The learning of grammatical rules is to be subordinated to the learning of the language itself for purposes of comprehension and communication. In mother tongue teaching the emphasis throughout is on reading, writing, grammar and composition.

The tests that are used for measuring the achievement of students should naturally be such that they reveal whether the purposes are being fulfilled. The tests for foreign language learning will, therefore, be different from those employed for measuring the nature and character of mother tongue learning. We will here concern ourselves only with the testing of the former.

We may divide the testing of achievement in foreign languages into three types: aural, oral and written. All the three types of tests have to be employed throughout the course, but the second and third types should get more emphasis as the course advances.

Aural — The chief aim of the aural test is to find out whether the student has understood the phonemic distinctions

of the foreign language. The test should consist of sets of utterances which contain minimal pairs; for example, Tamil pani irukkiratu 'there is cold,' pani irukkiratu 'there is work;' koñcam kari koṭu 'give some charcoal,' koñcam kari koṭu 'give some curry.' While all the phonemes of the language should be included in the tests, the peculiar ones should receive special attention. When the student's base language is Hindi and the target language is Tamil, these phonemes will be r, l, l and the lengthened forms of e and o. The student will also need considerable testing with regard to his understanding of the lack of phonemic difference in Tamil between voiced and voiceless plosives, aspirated and non-aspirated consonants and the sounds c and s.

Recognition of forms when they are uttered with the normal speed of utterance is another aim of the aural test. The slurring of sounds and syllables as well as the sandhi rules should also be taken care of when the normal speed of utterance is adopted. The normal pitch level and base of articulation should be adopted while giving the tests so that the student will have no difficulty later on in following the characteristic native speech.

A good method of testing aural competence will be to have the student attend film shows in the language and note down his difficulties in understanding the dialogues in them. This, of course, can be used only in the case of advanced students.

Oral tests —The oral test has a two-fold aim: to find out the level of understanding of the structure of the language concerned and to induce the habit of speaking in the

language. This type of test should also begin at the very commencement of the course and should go on till its very end.

The oral test is even more important than the aural one. It gives the student an opportunity to evaluate himself by comparing his articulations and utterances with those of the teacher and acquire a 'feel' for the language. Unless this 'feel' is developed, it is not possible to gain a mastery of the language at any level.

At the end of every lesson the student should be made to read the lesson. The teacher should carefully correct the pronunciation of the student and make him read the same material over and over again until he is able to pronounce every word and sentence in a satisfactory manner.

Questions should be framed in such a way that the student will have to use the material he has learned in various combinations. The teacher should give the necessary help in the first instance to answer the questions if the pupil is not able to do so by himself. But afterwards the same questions should be repeated at intervals and the teacher should satisfy himself that the student is able to answer them independently.

All the different aspects of the structure of a language should receive equal attention in the oral test. That is to say, there should be tests designed to test pronunciation, grammar, syntax, lexical meaning etc.

In testing the knowledge of grammar, two methods are commonly followed. One is the giving of sentences for completion. For example: Tamil averkal e^{ik} (use the verb $p\bar{o}$ in the present tense). The answer-

would be pōkirārkaļ. The other is the translation-composition techniques which would necessitate the use of the grammatical points being tested. Both these methods are useful and should find adequate place in the test.

Knowledge of syntax may be tested by means of oral composition, conversation or translation. Each of these methods should be followed in the course of the test in accordance with the special needs presented by the points being tested.

Understanding of lexical meaning may be tested by asking questions which will call for the intended usages. Translation and composition, again, are very useful here also. Participation in dramatics, speech-making and recitations may also constitute other effective method of oral tests. The amount of control over the suprasegmental features of the language such as the pitch, stress and intonation will be revealed by means of these and the other means mentioned above.

Written tests —While the aural and oral tests seek to measure the control the student has over the language as a vehicle of communication in practical situations obtaining in the speech community, the written test has a somewhat different purpose. One gets to know the extent of one's intellectual control of the language through the written tests.

Composition, translation, dictation, objective tests such as filling in blanks, right or wrong marking etc., precis writing, writing the substance of poems, using phrases in sentences, are some of the main types of written tests. Each one of these fulfils a special purpose and has to be used judiciously at the appropriate time.

Translation, dictation and objective tests should start at the very commencement of the course. Translation should be both ways, that is from the base language or mother tongue into the target language and vice versa. However, in the initial stages, the exercises should be limited to translation from the language that is being learned into the mother tongue or base language.

Dictation serves to find out the accuracy of aural comprehension and the knowledge of the conventional spelling system of the language concerned. It gives a lot of confidence to the learner and sharpens his power of understanding the language. This type of test, however, need not be continued after the initial stages.

The various kinds of objective tests are also for the initial stages only. With a limited knowledge of the language, the learner is not ready for composition and the other forms of written test which call for creative thinking in the language being learned. What he can legitimately be expected to perform is to fill in the blanks in familiar utterance frames using the words which he has learned. Even this is in fact some kind of creative work when sentences other than those occurring in the text-book are being used. When sentences from the book are used, it tests merely the mechanical powers of memory and the new linguistic patterns which have been acquired.

Recognising forms as right or wrong is a very useful exercise in fixing the patterns of the language on the learner's mind. For producing the best results this exercise should be based completely on the material in the text-book to begin with, but later on, it can be used for testing the

degree of command of the language that has been acquired through extra reading, conversation and other sources.

Composition work should be taken up immediately after the initial stage. It is through written composition that the learner will be able to organize his thoughts and to apply his knowledge of the language in a careful and well thought-out manner. The teacher's correction of the composition work should be carefully explained to the student so that he will be able to recognize his mistakes and grasp the correct forms and expressions through personal experience.

To begin with, composition work should be based on the lessons that have been learned. This would naturally necessitate only the use of the words and constructions in the text book. The more closely the student follows the text book the better at this stage. Later on, new topics should be assigned and the student should be encouraged to use his own expressions and constructions even in writing on topics from the text-book.

Writing the substance of poems, both from the text-books and elsewhere, is an excellent exercise for stimulating original thinking in the language that is being learned. This type of work may be taken up after the art of composition has been acquired fairly well. Too early a start of this exercise is more likely to discourage the student than to help him to gain confidence. Therefore, the teacher should make sure that the pupil has been prepared for this task well enough before he assigns the work.

In more than one sense the exercise of writing the substance of poems is extremely useful as a technique of both

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teaching the foreign language and testing the student's knowledge of it. While explaining the meaning of a poem the teacher gets far more opportunities of expressing himself in the foreign language than he would have when he is teaching prose material. Also, writing the sense of a poem requires quite good powers of expression on the part of the student. Hence this exercise should become a necessary part of the teaching and testing programme for advanced students.

Another advantage that poetry offers is the differences in construction. A better understanding of the syntax and the characteristic expressions of the prose style could be expected when they are confronted with the differences that poetry shows. Such differences will stimulate the thinking of the student and enable him to gain a firmer grasp of the prose style characteristic of the language.

The precis writing exercise requires a high degree of proficiency in the language and should therefore be reserved to the end of the course. It is easily the best test for measuring the level of understanding of the foreign language both in a passive and in an active way. For, the condensing of a passage in a competent manner means first understanding its meaning very well and then expressing the thoughts of the original in the same language in an abbreviated form. This entails deciding what is essential to the central meaning of the original and what is not. Also, a knowledge of the characteristic idioms, expressions and constructions of the language are presupposed. Precis writing should, therefore, find a place in the teaching and testing programme in the advanced stages of foreign language teaching.

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