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SOME METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Abstract: This article presents an analysis that shows that teaching English as a foreign and as a second language currently has a wide range of methods that range from translation grammar to the communicative approach that we teachers share today in different latitudes.
Keywords: methods, grammatical method, education, communicative method.

INTRODUCTION

The search for the correct method of some kind of universality with which to teach English has historically concerned not only educators, but also, in a very specific way, linguists and psychologists and other specialists. Thanks to his efforts, the teaching of English has a long tradition that allows it today to have a wide mosaic of methods dating back to the 16th century, starting with the translation grammar method and ending with the communicative approach that we share.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The struggle of linguists, psychologists, educators and teachers over these years of methodological searches has led to the conclusion that this “method” does not exist and, perhaps, never will. Therefore, it is worth asking, why then approach methods? The answer lies in the rich roots of the profession. Entering this world through a diachronic study of the phenomenon is the goal we pursue in this article.

Once upon a time, language learning was all about memorization and repetition, a boring and uninteresting process for students. However, the 20th century saw an explosion of new methodologies focusing on the most creative and exciting approaches. By learning about these methods, English teachers can choose the most effective method for their students.

This range of language teaching methods, also known as the traditional method, was first described by Valentin Meidinger (1756-1822), who is considered the originator of the method and whose work was related to the teaching of the French language. On the other hand, Johann Christian Fick (1763-1821) wrote the first course of its kind for teaching English. The text was published in the magazine Enlargen in southern Germany, modeled after Valentin Meidinger, as the title of the work suggests: Praktische englische Sprachlehre für Deutsche beiderlei Geschlechts, nach der in Meidingers francösische Grammatik befolgten Methode (A practical course in English for all Germans, following Meidinger's method of French grammar) [1].

The direct method, developed by Maximilian Berlitz and Françoise Gouin in the 19th century, represented the first deviation and improvement of the grammar translation method. This approach encourages direct connections between meanings or objects in the learner's native language and English without translation; teachers and students use English exclusively in the classroom, and new material is demonstrated through actions or pictures [2].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The origin of the term still remains a mystery. A logical explanation seems to be that this term arose in the same way as the modern communicative approach, i.e. as a term that generally denotes all methods of language teaching.

The main aspects of this method were:

• priority of oral speech, especially that which is spoken every day;
• use of a foreign language as a means of instruction;

• emphasis on achieving correct pronunciation, hence the importance of phonetics;
• complete abolition of the native language and translation in the lesson.

Like the translation method, the direct method was very useful in the circumstances in which it had to be put into practice. However, like his predecessor, he went to extremes, which subsequently attracted criticism. For example, the fact of a complete refusal to use the native language is a mistake from which, until recently, generations of foreign language teachers suffered, since all attention, to the detriment of writing, was focused on the oral part of the language [3].

Despite this, the direct method has been one of the methods that has most influenced modern trends in language teaching, and the primacy of the spoken language at the expense of the written language is still a strong trend in many educational centers.

However, this period was more than just an era in which the teaching method was born. This was an era of fruitful academic activity, which served as the basis for future work in the field of linguistics as applied to the teaching of foreign languages.

CONCLUSION

The emergence of each new method of teaching a foreign language means that the teaching community has found and is trying to master another untapped area of opportunities for the development of foreign language communicative competence. The priority of grammar, analysis of foreign language text, development of oral speech, intensive or conscious study of language, development of problem-based teaching methods - all these are significant milestones in the history of the development of foreign language teaching methods. Each method has objective value under certain circumstances. It is advisable to use direct methods in small groups where the teacher is a native speaker.

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