

Method of English Teaching

New Method → (a) Dr. West's New Method

(b) Bilingual Method.

Dr. West's New Method → This method is named after the name of the inventor of this method - Dr. M.P. West. It is also known as 'Dr. West's method' or 'New Method'. Dr. West was the principal of the Training College in Dacca and had been the Director of Education in Bengal before partition.

Aims of Teaching English

1. English promotes internationalism and brotherhood.
2. It is a medium of communication among people of different parts of the world.
3. No Indian language is rich in the field of science.
4. English broadens mental faculties.

Emphasis on Developing Reading Ability

The main aim of teaching English according to Dr. West is development of reading ability. He emphasised on this ability because: -

- (1) Indian children have less opportunities to speak English.
- (2) Reading is a 'passive' activity which means a receptive command of a language, whereas speaking and writing are 'active' activities which means the productive command of a language. The passive work is like the foundation of active work. Therefore emphasis should be given to reading.

- (3) By reading, pupils can have an idea of the structure of English language.
- (4) They can also develop a taste for English literature.
- (5) Reading will facilitate speaking and writing.
- (6) To acquire reading ability is easier than acquiring speaking ability.

Types of Reading Ability → Reading can be divided into two parts -

- (a) Oral Reading
(b) Silent Reading

Dr. West considered that much stress should be laid on silent reading, so extra time should be given for this. It should not be introduced directly. Oral reading should always precede silent reading because -

- Oral reading is preparatory to silent reading.
- It does not need preliminary work in speech and writing.
- It involves inner speech.
- It helps in connecting pronunciation.
- It vitalizes silent reading.

Reading Books → According to Dr. West, ^{that} reading ability can be developed by reading books in solitude with ease, interest and pleasure. He designed new types of books called 'readers' and 'rapid readers'. They are also called 'New Method Reader' and 'New Method Rapid Readers'. Special features are -

- (1) New words and phrases are equally distributed over the pages.
- (2) The vocabulary is non-technical.
- (3) The content of these readers is such that it facilitates reading during later stages.
- (4) After introducing a new word, it is repeated again and again in order to make the new ~~word~~^{word} familiar.
- (5) The matter is explained with the help of pictures.
- (6) Mother-tongue is frequently used.
- (7) Grammatical rules are not explained as the assimilation of language is not the objective.
- (8) Long stories should be included for developing reading habits.

Vocabulary → Dr. West has differentiated reading vocabulary from speaking vocabulary.

The speaking vocabulary has -

- Form words - The structure or words we talk with.
- Content words - The ~~names~~ nouns or the words we talk about.

According to West, knowledge of 1,158 form and content words can suffice for the purpose of speaking. This is called 'vocabulary control' because the size is limited. Dr. West has described how this speech vocabulary should be presented to pupils and drilled into them.

In this method, the main emphasis is on reading vocabulary which contains -

- (1) Words used by writers of English
- (2) Foreign words.

Comprehension Test → In this method, the comprehension test is taken by the teacher by asking questions. The test should be non-linguistic in nature.

Advantages of this method →

- (1) This method helps in developing one aspect, i.e. reading.
- (2) This method ~~initiates~~ initiates pupils for self-activity because oral reading and silent reading both lead to self activity.
- (3) Through reading develops comprehension.
- (4) Reading makes the learning of speaking and writing easy therefore students find learning English easy.
- (5) This method does not lay stress on phonetics.
- (6) Pupils do not feel the overload of grammatical rules.
- (7) Comprehensive reading can develop in students a taste for English literature.
- (8) It enhances vocabulary of students.
- (9) It is ~~economical~~ economical in both time and money matter.
- (10) Reading ~~habit~~ English books can develop a reading habit in students.

Disadvantages of the method

- (1) This method totally ignores the other three aspects of language learning which are understanding, speaking and writing.
- (2) Besides, it is impossible to separate reading from understanding, speaking and writing. A good reader is one, who can understand the language and speak and write the language.
- (3) Without acquiring speech ability, pupils cannot have good reading.
- (4) Only reading is not interesting, rather it is boring for a learner.
- (5) Reading does help in learning: ~~as~~ pronunciation, idioms, phrases, composition and poetry, but only reading long and short stories is not sufficient.
- (6) In practical life, reading alone is not sufficient.
- (7) This method ~~ing~~ ignores these sub-conscious efforts of the learner to learn a language - ~~as~~ hearing, intonation, articulation, comprehension and assimilations.
- (8) The vocabulary is taught to students without connecting the meaning of word with experience. This type of learning is not effective, because it does not help in retention.