1 A brief history of language teaching

Pages A-C

1- What have changes in language teaching methods reflected?
Changes in language teaching methods have reflected
(1) recognition of changes in the kind of proficiency learners need, such as a move
toward oral proficiency rather than reading comprehension as the goal of language study
(2) changes in theories of the nature of language and of language learning.

2- Why was Latin the world’s most widely studied foreign language 500 years ago?
Latin was the world’s most widely studied foreign language 500 years ago because it was
the dominant language of education, commerce, religion, and government in the Western
world.

3- What was the model of foreign language study from the seventeenth to the
nineteenth centuries?
The study of classical Latin and an analysis of its grammar and rhetoric became the
model for foreign language study from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries.

4- What were the consequences of the decline of Latin as a language of spoken and
written communication in the sixteenth century?
(1) The study of classical Latin and an analysis of its grammar and rhetoric became the
model for foreign language study from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries.

(2) The decline of Latin also brought with it a new justification for teaching Latin. Latin
was said to develop intellectual abilities, and the study of Latin grammar became an end
in itself.

5- How was Latin taught in British “grammar school” from the sixteenth to the
eighteenth centuries?
Children entering “grammar school” in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth
centuries in England were initially given a rigorous introduction to Latin grammar, which
was taught through (a) rote learning of grammar rules, (b) study of declensions and
conjugations, (c) translation, and (d) practice in writing sample sentences, (e) sometimes
with the use of parallel bilingual texts and dialogue
6- Name four reforms who attempted to promote alternative approach to education?
(1) Roger Ascham and (2) Montaigne in the sixteenth century and (3) Comenius and (4) John Locke in the seventeenth century.

7- Why were specific proposals for curriculum reform unsuccessful in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries?
They were unsuccessful because Latin (and, to a lesser extent, Greek) had for so long been regarded as the classical and therefore most ideal form of language, it was not surprising that ideas about the role of language study in the curriculum reflected the long-established status of Latin.

8- How were modern languages taught in European schools in the eighteenth century?
They were taught using the same basic procedures that were used for teaching Latin.

9- What did textbooks of modern languages consist of in the eighteenth century?
Textbooks consisted of (1) statements of abstract grammar rules, (2) lists of vocabulary, and (3) sentences for translation. (4) Speaking the foreign language was not the goal, and (5) oral practice was limited to students reading aloud the sentences they had translated. (6) These sentences were constructed to illustrate the grammatical system of the language and consequently bore no relation to the language of real communication.

10- What did a typical textbook in the mid-nineteenth century consist of?
A typical textbook in the mid-nineteenth century consisted of (1) chapters or lessons organized around grammar points. (a) Each grammar point was listed, (b) rules on its use were explained, and (c) it was illustrated by sample sentences. (2) Textbook compilers were mainly determined to codify the foreign language into frozen rules of morphology and syntax to be explained and eventually memorized. (3) Oral work was reduced to an absolute minimum, (4) and a handful of written exercises, constructed at random, came as a sort of appendix to the rules.

11- Describe the textbooks of Seidenstücker and Plötz.
Seidenstücker reduced the material to disconnected sentences to illustrate specific rules. He divided his text carefully into two parts, (1) one giving the rules and necessary paradigms, (2) the other giving French sentences for translation into German and German
sentences for translation into French. (3) The immediate aim was for the student to apply the given rules by means of appropriate exercises. In Plotz's textbooks, the textbooks were divided into the two parts described above; the sole form of instruction was mechanical translation.

The Grammar-Translation Method (Pages C-1)

12- Name four leading exponents of the Grammar-Translation Method. (1) Johann Seidenstiicker, (2) Karl Plotz, (3) H. S. Ollendorf, and (4) Johann Meidinger

13- What are the goals of foreign language study in the Grammar-Translation Method? The goals of foreign language study in the Grammar-Translation Method are (1) to learn a language in order to read its literature and/or (2) in order to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that result from foreign language study.

14- How does the Grammar-Translation Method approach the study of a foreign language? Grammar Translation approaches the study of a foreign language (1) first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, (2) followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language.

15- How does the Grammar-Translation Method view language learning? The Grammar-Translation Method views language learning as consisting of little more than memorizing rules and facts in order to understand and manipulate the morphology and syntax of the foreign language.

16- How are words taught in the Grammar-Translation Method? In the Grammar-Translation Method, words are taught through (1) bilingual word lists, (2) dictionary study, and (3) memorization.

17- Describe a typical Grammar-Translation text.
In a typical Grammar-Translation text, (1) the grammar rules are presented and illustrated, (2) a list of vocabulary items is presented with their translation equivalents, and (3) translation exercises are prescribed.

18- What is the basic unit of teaching and language practice in the Grammar-Translation Method? Why?
The sentence is the basic unit of teaching and language practice. Earlier approaches to foreign language study used grammar as an aid to the study of texts in a foreign language. But this was thought to be too difficult for students in secondary schools, and the focus on the sentence was an attempt to make language learning easier.

Language teaching innovations in the nineteenth century (Pages 1-3)

19- Discuss the factors that contributed to the rejection of the Grammar-Translation Method in the mid-nineteenth century.
(1) Increased opportunities for communication among Europeans created a demand for oral proficiency in foreign languages. Initially this created a market for conversation books and phrase books intended for private study.
(2) Language teaching specialists also turned their attention to the way modern languages were being taught in secondary schools. Increasingly, the public education system was seen to be failing in its responsibilities.

20- What were the major contributions of the Frenchman C. Marcel (1793-1896) to the reform of the teaching of modern languages in the mid-nineteenth century?
(1) He referred to child language learning as a model for language teaching.
(2) He emphasized the importance of meaning in learning.
(3) He proposed that reading be taught before other skills.
(4) He tried to locate language teaching within a broader educational framework.

21- What were the major contributions of the Englishman T. Prendergast (1806-1886) to the reform of the teaching of modern languages in the mid-nineteenth century?
(1) He was one of the first to record the observation that children use contextual and situational cues to interpret utterances and that they use memorized phrases and “routines” in speaking.
(2) He proposed the first “structural syllabus,” advocating that learners be taught the most basic structural patterns occurring in the language. In this way he was anticipating an issue that was to be taken up in the 1920s and 1930s,

22- What were the major contributions of the Frenchman F. Gouin (1831-1896) to the reform of the teaching of modern languages in the mid-nineteenth century?
(1) Gouin developed an approach to teaching a foreign language based on his observations of children's use of language.
(2) He believed that language learning was facilitated through using language to accomplish events consisting of a sequence of related actions.
(3) His method used situations and themes as ways of organizing and presenting oral language - the famous Gouin “series,” which includes sequences of sentences related to such activities as chopping wood and opening the door.
(4) He established schools to teach according to his method.
(5) Gouin's emphasis on the need to present new teaching items in a context that makes their meaning clear,
(6) and the use of gestures and actions to convey the meanings of utterances, are practices that later became part of such approaches and methods as Situational Language Teaching and Total Physical Response.

23- What were the main characteristics of modern language teaching profession in the mid-nineteenth century?
(1) Educators recognized the need for speaking proficiency rather than reading comprehension, grammar, or literary appreciation as the goal for foreign language programs.
(2) There was an interest in how children learn languages, which prompted attempts to develop teaching principles from observation of child language learning.

24- Why were the reform attempts made in the mid-nineteenth century unsuccessful?
The reform attempts made in the mid-nineteenth century were unsuccessful because (1) the ideas and methods of reformers were developed outside the context of established circles of education. (2) They lacked the means for wider dissemination, acceptance, and implementation. (3) They were writing at a time when there was not sufficient organizational structure in the language teaching profession (i.e., in the form of
professional associations, journals, and conferences) to enable new ideas to develop into an educational movement.

25- Define the Reform Movement in language teaching that arose toward the end of the nineteenth century.
It is the efforts of teachers and linguists who began to write about the need for new approaches to language teaching, and through their pamphlets, books, speeches, and articles, the foundation for more widespread pedagogical reforms was laid.

The Reform Movement (Pages 3-5)

26- Why were the reformist ideas proposed in the late nineteenth century more accepted than those proposed in the early and mid-nineteenth century?
They were more accepted because practical-minded linguists such as Henry Sweet in England, Wilhelm Vietor in Germany, and Paul Passy in France began to provide the intellectual leadership needed to give reformist ideas greater credibility and acceptance.

27- How did the International Phonetic Association seek to improve the teaching of modern languages in the late nineteenth century?
It advocated the following:
1. the study of the spoken language
2. phonetic training in order to establish good pronunciation habits
3. the use of conversation texts and dialogues to introduce conversational phrases and idioms
4. an inductive approach to the teaching of grammar
5. teaching new meanings through establishing associations within the target language rather than by establishing associations with the native language

28- What were the principles suggested by Henry Sweet (1845-1912) for the development of modern language teaching?
(1) He argued that sound methodological principles should be based on a scientific analysis of language and a study of psychology.
(2) He set forth principles for the development of teaching method which included the following: (a) careful selection of what is to be taught, (b) imposing limits on what is to be taught, (c) arranging what is to be taught in terms of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and (d) grading materials from simple to complex.
29- What were the major contributions of Viëtor (1850-1918) to reform the teaching of modern languages?
(1) He used linguistic theory to justify his views on language teaching.
(2) He argued that training in phonetics would enable teachers to pronounce the language accurately.
(3) He believed that speech patterns, rather than grammar, were the fundamental elements of language.

30- What were the major beliefs shared by the late nineteenth-century reformers about the principles on which a new approach to teaching foreign languages should be based?
The late nineteenth-century reformers shared the following beliefs:
1. the spoken language is primary and that this should be reflected in an oral-based methodology
2. the findings of phonetics should be applied to teaching and to teacher training
3. learners should hear the language first, before seeing it in written form
4. words should be presented in sentences, and sentences should be practiced in meaningful contexts and not be taught as isolated, disconnected elements
5. the rules of grammar should be taught only after the students have practiced the grammar points in context - that is, grammar should be taught inductively
6. translation should be avoided, although the native language could be used in order to explain new words or to check comprehension

31- Define applied linguistics.
Applied linguistics is a branch of language study concerned with the scientific study of second and foreign language teaching and learning.

32- What was the interest of the late nineteenth-century reformers?
It was in developing principles for language teaching out of naturalistic principles of language learning, such as are seen in first language acquisition.

The Direct Method (Pages 5-8)

33- Describe Sauveur’s (1826-1907) approach to teaching a foreign language.
(1) He tried to apply natural principles to language classes.
(2) He used intensive oral interaction in the target language.
(3) He employed questions as a way of presenting and eliciting language.

34- Why was Sauveur’s method called the Natural Method?
It was called so because it depended on naturalistic principles of language learning.

35- What was the main argument of believers in the Natural Method in the late nineteenth century?
They argued that a foreign language could be taught without translation or the use of the learner's native language if meaning was conveyed directly through demonstration and action.

36- Describe the approach of the German scholar F. Franke (1884) to foreign language teaching.
(1) Franke wrote on the psychological principles of direct association between forms and meanings in the target language.
(2) He provided a theoretical justification for a monolingual approach to teaching.
(3) He believed that a language could best be taught by using it actively in the classroom.
(4) Rather than using analytical procedures that focus on explanation of grammar rules in classroom teaching, teachers must encourage direct and spontaneous use of the foreign language in the classroom.
(5) Learners would then be able to induce rules of grammar.
(6) The teacher replaced the textbook in the early stages of learning.
(7) Speaking began with systematic attention to pronunciation.
(8) Known words could be used to teach new vocabulary, using mime, demonstration, and pictures.

37- State the main guidelines for teaching oral language in Berlitz schools.
The following are guidelines for teaching oral language in contemporary Berlitz schools:
Never translate: demonstrate
Never explain: act
Never make a speech: ask questions
Never imitate mistakes: correct
Never speak with single words: use sentences
Never speak too much: make students speak much
Never use the book: use your lesson plan
Never jump around: follow your plan
Never go too fast: keep the pace of the student
Never speak too slowly: speak normally
Never speak too quickly: speak naturally
Never speak too loudly: speak naturally
Never be impatient: take it easy

38- Why was the Direct Method successful in private language schools, such as those of the Berlitz chain?
The Direct Method was quite successful in private language schools, such as those of the Berlitz chain, (1) where paying clients had high motivation and (2) the use of native-speaking teachers was the norm.

39- State the main drawbacks of the Direct Method.
(1) It was difficult to implement in public secondary school education.
(2) It overemphasized and distorted the similarities between naturalistic first language learning and classroom foreign language learning and
(3) failed to consider the practical realities of the classroom.
(4) In addition, it lacked a rigorous basis in applied linguistic theory.
(5) It required teachers who were native speakers or who had nativelike fluency in the foreign language.
(6) It was largely dependent on the teacher's skill, rather than on a textbook,
(7) and not all teachers were proficient enough in the foreign language to adhere to the principles of the method.
(8) Critics pointed out that strict adherence to Direct Method principles was often counterproductive, since teachers were required to go to great lengths to avoid using the native language, when sometimes a simple, brief explanation in the student's native language would have been a more efficient route to comprehension.

40- How was the Direct Method modified in noncommercial schools in Europe?
The Direct Method in noncommercial European schools was gradually modified into versions that combined (1) some Direct Method techniques with (2) more controlled grammar-based activities.

41- Why did foreign language specialists in the United States attempt to implement the Direct Method?
The European popularity of the Direct Method in the early part of the twentieth century caused foreign language specialists in the United States to attempt to have it implemented in American schools and colleges.

42- What were the main conclusions of Coleman Report published in 1929?
Coleman Report concluded that
(1) no single method could guarantee successful results.
(2) The goal of trying to teach conversation skills was considered impractical in view of (a) the restricted time available for foreign language teaching in schools, (b) the limited skills of teachers, and (c) the perceived irrelevance of conversation skills in a foreign language for the average American college student.
(3) It argued that a more reasonable goal for a foreign language course would be a reading knowledge of a foreign language, achieved through the gradual introduction of words and grammatical structures in simple reading texts.

43- Why did Coleman Report of the 1929 believe that teaching conversation skills was impractical?
Teach conversation skills was considered impractical in view of (a) the restricted time available for foreign language teaching in schools, (b) the limited skills of teachers, and (c) the perceived irrelevance of conversation skills in a foreign language for the average American college student.

44- What was the main result of the recommendations of Coleman Report?
The main result was that reading became the goal of most foreign language programs in the United States. The emphasis on reading continued to characterize foreign language teaching in the United States until World War II.

45- What were the objections of Henry Sweet to the Direct Method?
Sweet recognized that (1) it offered innovations at the level of teaching procedures but lacked a thorough methodological basis. (2) Its main focus was on the exclusive use of the target language in the classroom, but it failed to address many issues that Sweet thought more basic.

46- What were the limitations of the Direct Method according to Henry Sweet?
Sweet recognized that (1) it offered innovations at the level of teaching procedures but lacked a thorough methodological basis. (2) Its main focus was on the exclusive use of the target language in the classroom, but it failed to address many issues that Sweet thought more basic.
The Methods Era (Pages 8-10)

47- What are the assumptions common to most teaching methods of the twentieth century?
Common to most of them are the following assumptions:
- An approach or method refers to a theoretically consistent set of teaching procedures that define best practice in language teaching.
- Particular approaches and methods, if followed precisely, will lead to more effective levels of language learning than alternative ways of teaching.
- The quality of language teaching will improve if teachers use the best available approaches and methods.

48- Name five language teaching methods that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s.
Audiolingual Method, the Situational Method, the Communicative Approach, the Silent Way, the Natural Approach, and Total Physical Response.

49- Name six language teaching methods that emerged in the 1990s.
Content-Based Instruction, Task-Based Language Teaching, Competency-Based Instruction, Cooperative Learning, Whole Language Approach, and Multiple Intelligences.

Approaches and methods in teacher preparation programs (page 10)
50- Why has the study of past and present teaching methods continued to form a significant component of teacher preparation programs?
The reasons for this are the following:
- The study of approaches and methods provides teachers with a view of how the field of language teaching has evolved.
- Approaches and methods can be studied not as prescriptions for how to teach but as a source of well-used practices which teachers can adapt or implement based on their own needs.
- Experience in using different teaching approaches and methods can provide teachers with basic teaching skills that they can later add to or supplement as they develop teaching experience.