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قسم اللغة الانكليزية

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**Audio-Ligual Method**

## **Introduction**

The Audio-Lingual Method, like the Direct Method we have just examined, is also an oral-based approach. However, it is very different, in that rather than emphasizing vocabulary acquisition through exposure to its use in situations, the Audio-Lingual Method drills students in the use of grammatical sentence patterns. Also, unlike the Direct Method, it has a strong theoretical base in linguistics and psychology. Charles Fries (1945) of the University of Michigan led the way in applying principles from structural linguistics in developing the method, and for this reason, it has sometimes been referred to as the 'Michigan Method.' Later in its development, principles from behavioural psychology (Skinner 1957) were incorporated. It was thought that the way to acquire the sentence patterns of the target language was through conditioning helping learners to respond correctly to stimuli through shaping and reinforcement, so that the learners could overcome the habits of their native language and form the new habits required to be target language speakers.

## **Audio-Lingual Method**

The Audio-Lingual Method is a teaching approach in which language is taught through intensive drilling and repetition of language patterns. The method emphasizes the importance of developing good habits of pronunciation and grammar through the use of dialogues, drills, and pattern practices. This approach became popular in the mid-20th century and was particularly used to teach foreign languages, especially in the United States. It is based on the behaviorist theory of language learning, which posits that language acquisition is a process of habit formation, and that through repeated practice, learners can internalize the structure of the language and develop automatic responses.

The method is called "audio-lingual" because it places a strong emphasis on the use of oral and aural skills. Learners listen to and imitate model sentences and then practice producing them in controlled drills. The use of the target language is maximized in the classroom, and the teacher serves as a model of correct language usage. The Audio-Lingual Method has been criticized for over-emphasizing rote learning and for not providing enough opportunities for communicative practice.

## **Principles of Audio-Lingual Method**

1. Language forms do not occur by themselves; they occur most naturally within a context.
2. The native language and the target language have separate linguistic systems. They should be kept apart so that the students' native language interferes as little as possible with the students' attempts to acquire the target language.
3. One of the language teacher's major roles is that of a model of the target language. Teachers should provide students with an accurate model. By listening to how it is supposed to sound, students should be able to mimic the model.
4. Language learning is a process of habit formation. The more often something is repeated, the stronger the habit and the greater the learning.
5. It is important to prevent learners from making errors. Errors lead to the formation of bad habits. When errors do occur, they should immediately be corrected by the teacher.
6. The purpose of language learning is to learn how to use the language to communicate.
7. Particular parts of speech occupy particular 'slots' in sentences. In order to create new sentences, students must learn which part of speech occupies which slot.
8. Positive reinforcement helps the students to develop correct habits.
9. Students should learn to respond to both verbal and nonverbal stimuli.
10. Each language has a finite number of patterns. Pattern practice helps students to form habits which enable the students to use the patterns.
11. Students should 'overlearn,' i.e. learn to answer automatically without stopping to think.
12. The teacher should be like an orchestra leader—conducting, guiding, and controlling the students' behavior in the target language.
13. The major objective of language teaching should be for students to acquire the structural patterns; students will learn vocabulary afterward.
14. The learning of another language should be the same as the acquisition of the native language. We do not need to memorize rules in order to use our native language. The rules necessary to use the target language will be figured out or induced from examples.
15. The major challenge of language teaching is getting students to overcome the habits of their native language. A comparison between the native and target language will tell the teacher in which areas her students will probably experience difficulty.
16. Speech is more basic to language than the written form. The 'natural order' (the order children follow when learning their native language) of skill acquisition is: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

17. Language cannot be separated from culture. Culture is not only literature and the arts, but also the everyday behavior of the people who use the target language. One of the teacher's responsibilities is to present information about that culture.

### **The Goals of Teachers Who Use the Audio-Lingual Method**

The teachers want their students to be able to use the target language communicatively. In order to do this, they believe students need to overlearn the target language, to learn to use it automatically without stopping to think. Their students achieve this by forming new habits in the target language and overcoming the old habits of their native language.

### **The Role of the Teacher and Learner**

Since the Audio-Lingual Method is teacher-dominated, the teacher is the one who controls the direction and pace of learning and monitors and corrects the learners' performance. Moreover, the teacher keeps the students' attention using drills and tasks. The teacher chooses an important situation to practice his/her role. Also, the teacher shows to students how words relate to meaning in the target language, and gets individual students to talk. In the case of students' role, since the teacher is a model for them, they have to imitate their teachers and follow the directions that the teacher gives them and have to answer as rapidly as possible. They are not allowed to use their native language since it is not good to master the foreign language.

### **Characteristics of the Audio-Lingual Method**

This method has been characterized by many things such as, the development of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Also, in this method the vocabulary is presented by dialogues that are learned through imitation and repetition, and grammatical rules are used by examples but it is not explicitly. Moreover, the target language is presented orally then teachers use the written presentation. When reading and writing are introduced learners have to report orally what they have read or written, and the difficulty of the readings and writings depends on the level of the students.

Vocabulary is kept to a minimum while the students are mastering the sound system and grammatical patterns. The natural order of skills presentation is adhered to: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The oral/aural skills receive most of the

attention. What students write they have first been introduced to orally. Pronunciation is taught from the beginning, often by students working in language laboratories on discriminating between members of minimal pairs.

### **Techniques of Audio-Lingual Method**

In order to help the learners to understand, it's very important to follow specific techniques that seem appropriate for learners. Those techniques are as follows:

#### **- Dialogue Memorization**

Dialogues or short conversations between two people are often used to begin a new lesson. Students memorize the dialogue through mimicry; students usually take the role of one person in the dialogue, and the teacher the other. After the students have learned the first person's lines, they switch roles and memorize the other person's part. Another way of practicing the two roles is for half of the class to take one role and the other half to take the other. After the dialogue has been memorized, pairs of individual students might perform the dialogue for the rest of the class. In the Audio-Lingual Method, certain sentence patterns and grammar points are included within the dialogue. These patterns and points are later practiced in drills based on the lines of the dialogue.

#### **-Backward Build-up (Expansion) Drill**

This drill is used when a long line of a dialogue is giving students trouble. The teacher breaks down the line into several parts. The students repeat a part of the sentence, usually the last phrase of the line. Then, following the teacher's cue, the students expand what they are repeating part by part until they are able to repeat the entire line. The teacher begins with the part at the end of the sentence (and works backward from there) to keep the intonation of the line as natural as possible. This also directs more student attention to the end of the sentence, where new information typically occurs.

#### **-Repetition Drill**

Students are asked to repeat the teacher's model as accurately and as quickly as possible. This drill is often used to teach the lines of the dialogue.

#### **-Chain Drill**

A chain drill gets its name from the chain of conversation that forms around the room as students, one by one, ask and answer questions of each other. The teacher begins the chain by greeting a particular student, or asking him a question. That student responds, then turns to the student sitting next to him. The first student greets or asks a question of the second student and the chain continues. A chain drill allows some controlled communication, even though it is limited. A chain drill also gives the teacher an opportunity to check each student's speech.

### -Single-slot Substitution Drill

The teacher says a line, usually from the dialogue. Next, the teacher says a word or a phrase (called the cue). The students repeat the line the teacher has given them, substituting the cue into the line in its proper place. The major purpose of this drill is to give the students practice in finding and filling in the slots of a sentence.

### -Multiple-slot Substitution Drill

This drill is similar to the single-slot substitution drill. The difference is that the teacher gives cue phrases, one at a time, that fit into different slots in the dialogue line. The students must recognize what part of speech each cue is, or at least, where it fits into the sentence, and make any other changes, such as subject–verb agreement. They then say the line, fitting the cue phrase into the line where it belongs.

### -Transformation Drill

The teacher gives students a certain kind of sentence pattern, an affirmative sentence for example. Students are asked to transform this sentence into a negative sentence. Other examples of transformations to ask of students are: changing a statement into a question, an active sentence into a passive one, or direct speech into reported speech.

### -Question-and-answer Drill

This drill gives students practice with answering questions. The students should answer the teacher's questions very quickly. Although we did not see it in our lesson here, it is also possible for the teacher to cue the students to ask questions as well. This gives students practice with the question pattern.

### -Use of Minimal Pairs

The teacher works with pairs of words which differ in only one sound; for example, 'ship/sheep.' Students are first asked to perceive the difference between the two words and later to be able to say the two words. The teacher selects the sounds to work on after she has done a contrastive analysis, a comparison between the students' native language and the language they are studying.

### -Complete the Dialogue

Selected words are erased from a dialogue students have learned. Students complete the dialogue by filling the blanks with the missing words.

### -Grammar Game

Games like the Supermarket Alphabet Game described in this chapter are used in the Audio-Lingual Method. The games are designed to get students to practice a grammar point within a context. Students are able to express themselves, although in a limited way. Notice there is also a lot of repetition in this game.