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***Second Language Teaching through Audio Lingual Method and Conventional Approach at Upper Primary Level of Birbhum District : An Experimental Study*****Amal Kumar Chakrabarty**

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**Abstract**

Teaching second language in the ESL classroom situation is a rigorous and important assignment for the ESL teacher. The ESL teacher makes hectic effort to generate the four basic language skills among the learners who form mixed group in the class. Now which method is strategically significant in terms of classroom application is a persistent and pertinent question to the ELT experts. Some practitioners of Audio-lingual method think that language is basically a means of habit formation through repetition. Again some teachers stick to the stereotyped conventional approach based on the principles of Grammar Translation method. The present study is an attempt to explore experimentally the comparative effectiveness of the Audio-lingual method of teaching and teaching with conventional approach in the second language classroom situation.

**Key Words:** Audio-lingual Method, conventional approach, Secondary Learners**1. Introduction**

Second language teaching is a complex network of activities. In the conventional ESL classroom situation the target language teacher has to make hectic effort to accelerate the process of second language acquisition by the mere application of the verbal skills with the help of text books. The second language teacher aims to develop productive skills (speaking and writing) and receptive skills (listening and reading) among the learners by means of giving extensive verbal exposure of the second language in the traditional method. But the skill development may be made more effective if second language learning situation is manipulated with relevant application of methodological procedures based on some second language teaching approach and tenets. Audio lingual method is based on the theories of Structural approach, whereas conventional approach aims to adopt a more teacher centric view to make ESL teaching situation more traditional.

**2. Rationale of the Study**

English language teaching through the frequent application of mother tongue as a point of reference is possibly the manageable technique in the domain of second language teaching. Conventional teaching is generally attempted inside the classroom situation in a trite manner, whereby, the

teacher consistently builds a pattern of connected discourse following the principles of grammar translation method. But he seems to be least concerned to know how much the learners get benefitted in terms of second language skill development. Keeping this problematic view in mind in mind the investigator undertakes an experimental project to know----

- 1) Which between Audio lingual Method and conventional approach is more effective in generating second language skills among the rural learners
- 2) Whether the application of specific methodological application enhances the requisite degree of learning behaviour in terms of second language acquisition among the low achievers and the high achievers belonging to the upper primary level under W.B.B.S.E.in the district of Birbhum.
- 3) Whether the Audio lingual Method is more effective in concept attainment than conventional approach of teaching English texts.
- 4) Whether second language leaning with the conventional approach in classroom situation enhances the performances of the low achievers belonging to the rural background in comparison to the Audio lingual Method of teaching the same category of learners.
- 5) Whether the high achievers in the rural background school may expose more proficiency when they are taught through Audio lingual Method than their being taught through the conventional approach.
- 6) Whether there is difference in the competence levels of the second language rural learners when they are taught respectively through Audio lingual Method and conventional approach.

### 3. Review of Related literature

Harold Palmer (1922), the prominent British applied linguist who laid the foundation for the Structural Approach in the 1970s summarized the principles of Audio lingual method of language teaching methodology at that time as follows:

- Initial preparation- orienting the students
- Habit forming- establishing the correct habits
- Accuracy- avoiding inaccurate language
- Gradation- each stage prepares the students for the text
- Proportion- each aspect of the language given emphasis
- Concreteness- Movement from the concrete to the abstract
- Interest- arousing the students' interest at all times
- Order of progression- hearing before speaking and both before writing

According to Rivers (1964), language learning is perceived in the following way:

- Learning a language is basically a process of mechanical habit formation.
- Good habits are formed by giving correct responses rather than by making mistakes.
- Language skills are learned more effectively if the items to be learnt are presented in a spoken form before they are seen in a written form.
- An analogy provides a better foundation for language learning than analysis.

Lado (1957) proposed that structures that are similar to those in the native language should be taught first. Those elements that are similar to the learners' native language will be simple for him and those elements and that are different will be difficult. This assumption underlay the approach known as contrastive analysis. To systematize the content and vocabulary elements with regard to syllabus design, the structuralists formulated the procedures known as 'selection and gradation'. Mackey (1965) says that the field of selection in language teaching deals with the choice of appropriate units for teaching purposes and with the development of techniques and procedures by which the language can be

reduced to that which is most useful to the learner. Gupta (1996) compares trained and untrained English language teachers and reports that untrained teachers have difficulties in comprehension and have a poor knowledge of synonyms. The findings highlight the needs for viewing teacher competence as one of the main strategies in language teaching. Deivasundaram (1995) discusses the advantages of using the principles of transformational generative grammar of communicative approach for teaching mother mother-tongue. Khalique (1995) compares the use of direct, structural and translation methods of teaching and reports that most of them use translation method for language teaching whereas Bose (1993) also emphasises the need for a functional communicative approach rather than a structural one for English language teaching. The use of pre-unit activities is also advocated to familiarise learners about the concepts to be learnt at the higher primary levels of education. The study of Ganguly and Ganguly (1996) makes a significant finding. They report to the use of strategies like explaining rules of languages, questioning, paraphrasing, and lessons in their text books, dictating model, answers and pattern drills for teaching English. This finding is significant in the Indian context because it brings to the fore the need for using different strategies for first and second language. Anggraeni (2007) concluded that Audio-lingual Method is helpful to promote the skill of speaking among the first year student of Junior High School. Dwi Amelia (2012) also concluded that audio lingual Method is effective in fostering the skill of Speaking among the English learners.

#### **4. Statement of the Problem**

The problem under the present study is entitled as:

***Second Language Teaching through Audio Lingual Method and Conventional Approach at Upper Primary Level of Birbhum District: An Experimental Study***

#### **5. Terms Definitions**

##### **5.1 Audio-lingual Method**

In 1939, Charles Fries, director of Michigan Universities specialised in structural linguistics applied the principles of structural linguistics to language teaching. For Fries, grammar or structures was the starting point. Audio lingualism is a linguistic or structure-based approach to language teaching. The starting point is a linguistic syllabus, which contains the key items of phonology, morphology and syntax. These may have been derived in part from a contrastive analysis of the differences between the native language and the target language. The language was taught by systematic attention to pronunciation and by intensive oral drilling of its basic structures. Hockett (1959) says that it is these basic patterns that constitute the learners' task. They require drill, drill, and more drill and enough vocabulary to make such drills possible.

**5.2 Conventional Approach:** The conventional method of teaching implies the strategy of teaching that employs grammar and translation as prime vehicle for teaching any sort of second language texts. Here, mother tongue is used as a point of reference to translate the meaning of the literary texts or vice versa. The learners are encouraged to memorise the grammar rules of the target language and their proficiency is judged in their capability of translating a first language passage into English or vice-versa.

#### **6. Hypotheses**

In order to test the relative effectiveness of second language teaching with communicative approach and the audio lingual method some null hypotheses are formulated. The null hypotheses state that

there exists no significant difference between the achievements levels of two groups of pupils upon whom the two types of instructional strategies have applied experimentally in exclusive manner. The following null hypotheses are formulated:

- I. There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on pre-test.
- II. There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of the high achievers of the experimental group and the control group on pre-test.
- III. There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of the low achievers of the experimental group and control group on pre-test.
- IV. There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on post-test.
- V. There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of the high achievers of the experimental and control group on post-tests.
- VI. There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of the low achievers of the experimental and control group on post-test.

## **7. Design of the Study**

Keeping in mind the objectives of the present research the researcher has devised the necessary design which comprises the following components:

- ❖ Method of Study
- ❖ Population of Study
- ❖ Sample of the Study
- ❖ Sources of collection of data
- ❖ Procedure for investigation and data collection
- ❖ Data treatment

### **7.1 Method of Study**

The present study is an experimental one. It aims at comparing the effectiveness of the second language teaching with conventional approach and Audio lingual Method at upper primary level classroom situation under West Bengal Board of Secondary Education. For the proper implementation of experimental design a school from the rural backdrop has been selected. Class VII has been chosen for the purpose of experimentation of the teaching methods.

### **7.2 Population of the Study**

The one school has been deliberately selected for the specified purpose of investigation. The school from the rural background is B.K.G. High School situated under the jurisdiction of Suri Block-I of Birbhum District. Thus the pupils of the school constitute the population of the present study.

### **7.3 Sample of the Study**

The 7<sup>th</sup> class of the rural school has been fixed up for experimentation. Two sections of the 7<sup>th</sup> class of each school comprising 30 students have been taken up for present study. Thus taken together total 60 students constitute the sample of the present study.

### **7.4 Sources of Collection of Data**

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In order to achieve the objective of the present study the following **tools** were employed for collection of data:

- i. Pre-test of the 7<sup>th</sup> class students of the rural school
- ii. The post-tests of the same students of the school

The following scores will constitute the **data** for the present experiment

- The scores of the pre-test of the 7<sup>th</sup> class students under urban schools
- The scores of the post-test of the 7<sup>th</sup> class students of the rural school

### 7.5 Investigation Procedure and Data Collection

As mentioned earlier, two sections of the 7<sup>th</sup> class of a rural school are definite backdrop for the present experimental research. A pre-test of the 7<sup>th</sup> class students of the rural school is taken. On the basis of the scores of the pre-test of the pupils of the said class of the school the pupils are equalized and they are divided into Experimental and Control group by using **pair random sampling technique**. Pupils of the Experimental and Control groups were also divided into high achievers and low achievers on the basis of the scores obtained in the pre-test. It is to be mentioned at the outset that the number of pupils under each group is 30. The **Randomized Groups, Pre-test Post-test Design** is adopted as the experimental design. In this design:

- One group will receive Experimental treatment (X)
- One group will receive Control treatment (C)
- The Experimental Group will receive a Pre-test (O<sub>1</sub>)
- The Control Group will receive a Pre-test (O<sub>2</sub>)
- All the groups will receive Post-tests (O<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub>)

### 7.6 Experimentation

After careful observation of the teaching learning situation of the Birbhum district, one rural school is selected as the experimental backdrop. The rural school, namely, B.K.G. High School, belongs to Suri-I block. One English teacher, belonging to the school is selected to teach the Experimental group and the Control group. The teacher was provided with necessary orientation regarding the following points on the use of Audio lingual Method:

- There is a consistent focus throughout on learning English in order to develop oral and structural skills.
- Students are engaged in practical tasks that relate to the selection and gradation of structures of English.
- There is an appropriate balance between accuracy-focused and structure-focused activities.
- Assessment procedures reflect and support a structural and skill-based orientation to teaching and learning.
- Students develop an awareness of the learning process and their own styles, strategies and weakness.

The following prose texts of the Learning English book for class VII is selected to teach the students. 1) **The Book of Nature**, 2) **The Riddle** 3) **The Beauty and the Beast** 4) **Uncle Podger Hangs A Pictures**. The Experimental group was taught with the techniques and strategies based on the tenets of Audio lingual Method to help them gather concepts on the above mentioned texts. To develop the language skills

individually the teacher consistently and rigorously followed the principles of the Audio lingual Method and encouraged the techniques of drill and repetition to develop the structural competence among the learners. The teacher triggered the interaction process so that the pupils can share and exchange their views in a mutual manner and develop the basic skills with the minimum help but active supervision of the teacher. Here the teacher took the initiatives to become instrumental to creating the conditions for habit formation by bringing their awareness to basic structures of morphemes and syntax. The teacher were tolerant enough not to over criticize the errors committed by the learners but helping them find out their areas of linguistic deviations and at last providing them necessary clarifications so that concepts formations become possible among the learners.

The Control Group, on the other hand, is taught with rigorous application of the teacher-centric method. He takes the upper hand to manipulate the second language learning situations in an absolute manner and always taking initiatives to rectify the learners' mistakes in a corrective manner. Basically he followed the traditional strategy of teaching by translating the texts into Bengali and followed *the principles of grammar translation method*. While teaching the target language texts he explained the rules of English grammar in a deductive manner encouraging the learners to memorize the rules with the assumption in mind that they will be able to use the rules for the purpose of constructing English structures. He also assumed that the learners will be able to use the rules to form their speech habits. The pupils are taught in a passive manner.

### **7.7 Test Construction**

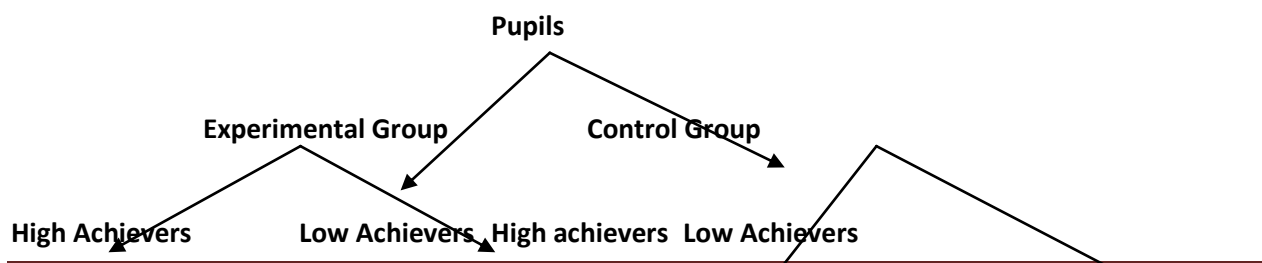
After the experimentation of teaching comprising two weeks duration is over, a teacher-made post-test is taken to compare the effectiveness of the experimental method. The investigator constructed both the pre-test and post-test after a thorough review of the techniques of the principles of test construction on relevant sections of selected prose units. In addition, the consent of the class teacher and teaching experts were also weighed in the construction of the tests. Each test comprises 50 multiple choice type items based on the selected prose units of 7<sup>th</sup> class. While constructing the texts the dimensions of the language and structures are taken into consideration.

#### **7.7.1 Reliability of the Test**

Spearman-Brown Prophecy formula is used to determine the reliability of the pre-test and post-test. Here the reliability is estimated by comparing the halves of the pre-test and post-tests. In this way the reliability co-efficient is found to be 0.78.

#### **7.7.2 Analysis of Data**

Raw scores obtained from pre-tests and post-test were presented in a tabular form for the purpose of interpretation. For the manipulation of data the means, standard deviations, and differences of means were calculated for each group. Significances of difference between the mean scores of both the experimental and control groups on the variables of pre-test scores, school record scores and post-tests scores was tested at 0.05 level by applying *t-tests*. The Randomized Groups, Pre-test Post-test Design is employed for the treatment of the data. The symbolic representation of the group division is as follows:



**H<sub>0</sub>1:** There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on pre-test.

**Table-1:** Significance of difference between the mean scores of experimental and control groups on pre-test

Group	N	M	SD	SE <sub>D</sub>	T-value
Experimental	30	60.35	15.24	3.93	0.31
Control	30	59.17	15.62		

df =58

**Table 1** indicates that the difference of mean scores of the Experimental and Control Group is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted so that both the groups could be treated as equal on the variable of pre-test.

**H<sub>0</sub>2:** There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of the high achievers of the experimental group and the control group on pre-test.

**Table 2:** Significance of difference between the mean scores of the high achievers of the experimental and control groups on pre-test

Group	N	M	SD	SE <sub>D</sub>	T-value
Experimental	15	74.95	4.32	1.69	0.52
Control	15	73.55	4.88		

df = 28

Table 2 reflects that the obtained *t-value* is 0.52 which is less than the statistical table value i.e. 2.05 at 0.05 level. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted so that we can safely state that there exists no significant difference between the mean scores of the high achievers experimental and the control group on pre-test. Thus both the groups could be treated as equal.

**H<sub>0</sub>3:** There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of the low achievers of the experimental group and control group on pre-test.

**Table 3:** Significance of difference between the mean scores of the low achievers of the experimental and control groups on pre-test

Group	N	M	SD	SE <sub>D</sub>	T-value
Experimental	15	46.98	6.24	2.24	0.66
Control	15	45.49	6.12		

df =28

**Table 3** reflects that the obtained *t-value* is 0.66 which is less than the statistical table value i.e. 2.05 at 0.05 level. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted so that we can safely state that there exists no significant difference between the mean scores of the low achievers of the experimental and the control group on pre-test. Thus the low achievers of both the groups could be treated as equal.

**H<sub>0</sub>4:** There exists no significant difference between the experimental group and the control group on post-test.

**Table-4:** Significance of difference between the mean scores of experimental and control groups on post-test

Group	N	M	SD	SE <sub>D</sub>	T-value
Experimental	30	75.16	9.38	2.61	8.98
Control	30	52.84	10.22		

df = 58

The table 4 exhibits that the obtained *t-value* is 8.98 which is greater than the statistical table value which is 2.76 at 0.01 level. So we can assert that that there exists significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and the control group on post-test. So the null hypothesis is rejected and we can say that the students of the experimental group have performed better since they were taught by the Audio lingual Method.

**H<sub>0</sub>5:** There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of the high achievers of the experimental and control group on post-test.

**Table-5:** Significance of difference between the mean scores of the high achievers of the experimental and control groups on post-test

Group	N	M	SD	SE <sub>D</sub>	T-value
Experimental	15	83.89	5.33	2.49	9.24
Control	15	58.97	8.28		

df = 28

The table 5 exhibits that the obtained *t-value* is 9.24 which is greater than the statistical table value which is 2.76 at 0.01 level. So we can assert that that there exists significant difference between the mean scores of the high achievers of the experimental and the control group on post-test. So the null hypothesis is rejected and we can say that the high achieving students of the experimental group of the rural backdrop have performed better since they were taught by the Audio lingual Method.

**H<sub>0</sub>6:** There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of the low achievers of the experimental and control group on post-test.

**Table 6:** Significance of difference between the mean scores of the low achievers of the experimental and control groups on post-test

Group	N	M	SD	SE <sub>D</sub>	T-value
Experimental	15	68.47	5.17	2.33	9.44
Control	15	46.47	7.40		

df = 28

The table 6 exhibits that the obtained *t-value* is 9.44 which is greater than the statistical table value which is 2.76 at 0.01 level. So we can assert that that there exists significant difference between the mean scores of the Low Achievers of the experimental and the control group on post-test. So the null



hypothesis is rejected and we can say that the low achieving students of the experimental group of the rural backdrop has performed better since they were taught by the Audio lingual Method.

### **7.8 Results & Discussion**

After systematic analysis of data 6 hypotheses were experimentally verified and necessary results were drawn. The **H<sub>01</sub>**, **H<sub>02</sub>** and **H<sub>03</sub>** exhibit that there exists no significant difference between the experimental group and the control group on pre-test. This implies that experimentation could be safely administered on the groups since they belonged to almost same capability level. The hypothesis test of **H<sub>04</sub>** states that there exists significant difference between the experimental and the control group on post test. So the application of the Audio lingual method brought about significant skill development among the experimental group than the control group who were taught by the conventional method. The testing of **H<sub>05</sub>** states there is significant difference between the level of the high achievers of the experimental and control group on post test. So the high achievers of the experimental group performed better since they were taught with the Audio lingual method. From the testing of **H<sub>06</sub>** it is evident that the low achievers of the experimental group also performed better than the low achievers of the control group. So from the experimental treatment we can gather the general notion that the application of the Audio lingual Method in case of the English language teaching at the upper primary level might yield better result than the application of the conventional method on students belonging to rural educational backdrop.

### **7.9 Abbreviations**

ESL: English as a Second Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

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