

# AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TWO METHODS IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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The purpose of the study was to compare the effectiveness of the Pure Audio-lingual and the Modified Audio-lingual methods of teaching English to first year college students, through analysis of the results of experimental teaching. Answers to the following questions were sought:

1. Which method will result in better learning as measured by written tests?
2. By which method would subjects with high mental ability learn better? Those with low mental ability?
3. By which method would subjects with high socioeconomic status learn better? Those with low socio-economic status?
4. By which method would older subjects learn better? By which would the younger subjects?

The experimental classes were two groups of freshmen college students enrolled in English I at Philippine Normal

College, Negros Occidental Branch, Cadiz City. They were equated on the basis of intelligence, background in English, socioeconomic status and age. The criterion of effectiveness was outcomes in terms of teacher-made achievement tests.

The methods used were: Method I which was the Pure Audio-lingual method and Method II which was the Modified Audio-lingual method. The Pure Audio-lingual method (Method I) is an approach to language that emphasizes the acquisition of listening comprehension and speaking, and relies to a large extent on imitation and repetition of limited samples of the language; it subscribes to the habit-formation theory of language acquisition and therefore uses a large portion of class time in practice and drill.

The Modified Audio-lingual method differed from the Pure Audio-lingual method in three aspects: (1) relaxation of

some of the restrictions of the Pure Audio-lingual method (contrastive analysis of native and target language was done in the classroom in violation of the Pure Audio-lingual method's restriction in the use of the native language in the classroom); (2) more active use of the students mental power through conscious reference to the native language during drills and (3) use of communication practice in place of pattern practice.

The differences between the respective means of the achievements of the two groups were tested for significance at the .05 percent level.

The study revealed that Method II, the Modified Audio-lingual method is more effective than Method I, the Pure Audio-lingual method in teaching English grammar to first year college students as shown in both immediate and delayed recall.

Among subjects with high mental ability, findings show that Method II is more effective than Method I in

teaching English.

Among subjects with low mental ability, neither method was superior to the other.

Socio-economic status plays a significant role in language learning. Data indicate that even if method is not able to help students attain better scores, if they are given more learning facilities, the subjects who are taught by an inferior method will ultimately be able to catch up with those who use the superior method.

Although the results showed that the younger subjects obtained higher scores than the older subjects did, further investigations revealed that the reason for the older group not benefiting from the Modified-Audio-lingual method as much as the younger group did, was that the older group had lower mental ability than the younger group.

Four recommendations and three suggestions for further research were advanced by the study.