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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Through the years, many languages have developed, changed, and disappeared. The teaching and learning of languages has been going on for centuries. Whenever there was contact by people of different languages, someone had to learn a foreign language. Today, it is estimated that there are between 3000 and 4000 languages in existence. With the increased contact of people in various parts of the world, it is evident that the learning and teaching of language is extremely important.

Traditionally, the study of a foreign language in higher education has been considered important to equip the student with a research tool. In many cases, however, it has been found that competency of the student in language was limited to the interpretation of a few lines of a foreign text, with little ability to understand or speak the language. In the lower grades, Latin and Spanish have been taught in the United States; English is compulsory after the seventh grade in Japan; and English is also being taught in the U. S. S. R. The difficulties encountered in foreign language learning and the weakness in its teaching have been of prime concern to many educators.

This observation is not new. The four following quotations are only a small sample of the comments in the same vein:

This dissatisfaction is strikingly shown by the way in which all new "methods" are run after -- especially the more sensational ones, and such as have the good fortune to be taken up by the editor of some popular periodical. But none of these methods retain their popularity long -- the interest in them soon dies out. There is a constant succession of them

They have all failed to keep a permanent hold on the public mind because they have all failed to perform what they promised; after promising impossibilities they have all turned out to be on the whole no better than older methods.¹

If the science of language study exists and is generally recognized in the same way that other sciences are recognized, then the majority of trained teachers will be found to be working on the same lines, differing only in minor details. But the most superficial inquiry tends to show that the methods of teaching adopted in any one country are almost as numerous as the teachers themselves; that each conscientious teacher has his own particular views on the subject and is prepared to maintain them against all comers; that the divergencies of views are not on questions of detail, but are based on totally different conceptions of the whole problem

If the study of language is a sciences, countless isolated facts covering the whole field of inquiry must have been collected, sifted, and correlated; valid conclusions must have been drawn in such a manner that the principles of the science have stood forth, each clear, unequivocal, and unassailable

If we follow out this train of reasoning and reflect seriously on the varied aspects suggested by the above questions, we must inevitably come to the conclusion that the study of language has not yet emerged from the empirical stage, that we are still groping our way in a labyrinth of factors the extent and nature of which we are only just dimly beginning to realize²

Where so much uncertainty prevails and so many variables are involved it is the part of wisdom merely to offer these pages as a report of an undertaking and as a warning to those who believe that it is relatively easy to establish by experimental means the pros and cons with respect to teaching procedure. And, finally, it is not out of place to draw the conclusion that, until modern language teachers are ready to take part whole-heartedly in experimental enterprises, we may expect only inconclusive and bewildering outcomes to such as are launched.³

¹Sweet, Henry, The Practical Study of Languages, New York, Hold & Company, 1900, p. 3.

²Palmer, Harold E., The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages: a review of the factors and problems connected with the learning and teaching of modern languages, with an analysis of the various methods which may be adopted in order to attain satisfactory results, Yonkers-on-Hudson, World Book Company, 1917, pp. 19-21.

³Coleman, Algernon, et. al., Experiments and Studies in Modern Language Teaching, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1934, p. 188.

On the other hand, actual results obtained at the various centers of instruction could not be measured by any means now at our command. No objective tests to determine the degree of final achievement at the various schools in language competence and areal knowledge were administered, so far as we have been able to learn. The wealth of material regarding results of these courses published in the educational and public press, based on the opinion of instructors, students, and observers, or on mere hearsay, is so confused and so often contradictory that it offers no safe basis for categorical statements respecting success in achievement of goals set by the Army and Navy.⁴

These four quotations, in themselves, seem to indicate that some progress has been made; but even the most recent indicates that for various reasons, too little is known about the most efficient methods of language teaching and language learning.

The aims and objectives in foreign language teaching, namely to acquire the ability to read and speak the language for the understanding of thoughts and ideas of the others, and for communication of our own thoughts and ideas to others, have been recognized as fundamental. However, the difficulties and problems in achieving these objectives are still unsolved. The various methods, techniques, teaching aids, and their effectiveness are a matter of great discussion but no single method has evolved which is considered "the best."

An examination of the literature, in fact, has revealed that in the United States, the direct method employed by the "Coleman Report," the "Cleveland Plan," and "Army Specialized Training Program" (ASTP)

⁴Matthew, Robert John, Language and Area Studies in the Armed Services, Their Future Significance. Washington, American Council on Education, 1947, p. vii.

have been the center of focus. Since the techniques of the ASTP have been effectively used by the Army during World War II, modification, adaptation, and application of these methods to civilian instruction are in the experimental stage.

Statement of the Problem

The chief purpose of this study was to find the most effective methods of foreign language teaching, and it was hoped to find solutions for the following questions:

1. What are the basic methods and techniques in teaching a foreign language?
2. What experimentation has been conducted for the adaptation and modification of the direct method for civilian use?
3. What kinds of teaching aids and supplementary material were employed in using the direct method?

By doing this, it was hoped that some basic principles might be derived for the improvement of foreign language instruction in Japan.

Procedure

The procedure employed in searching for better methods in foreign language teaching was to review the literature.

Limitations

Due to the limitation of time and the vast amount of literature available on the methods and techniques of the modern language teaching, this study was limited to the area of experimentation in the teaching of foreign languages.

CHAPTER II

PIONEERS OF THE "NEW METHOD" OR THE "DIRECT METHOD"
IN MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

A review of the literature of the past ten years on foreign language teaching revealed that many authorities began to believe that the oral or direct approach was a better method. McClan wrote in his articles in the French Review in February, 1945, that "we have finally made the discovery that a student's ability to read a foreign language not only does not suffer, but actually improves if he learns to read while at the same time learning to speak, write, and understand."⁵ This observation was not new. It was made years ago by the pioneers in the oral method or direct method. Some of the outstanding pioneers were Algernon Coleman (the "Coleman Report"); Emile B. de Sauze (the "Cleveland Plan"); and the contributors to the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP). These reports are treated in the following section.

The Coleman Report

As far back as 1929, Algernon Coleman emphasized the practical command of a foreign language, in modern language teaching. In the Coleman Report, the emphasis was put upon a "reading-knowledge objective." In order to obtain this objective, use of the oral approach was recommended. This summary was given in his statement:

⁵McClan, William H., "Twenty Fifth Anniversary of the Cleveland Plan," French Review, XVIII (February 4, 1945), p. 197.

Despite a certain amount of experimentation that has been done, there is little concrete and wholly trustworthy evidence to what extent a given classroom method is, in itself, productive of superior or of inferior results. At the same time, the distinct trend of secondary school teachers away from translation as a means and as an end, and toward some form of direct approach to the thought contained in a foreign text, is marked, and has apparently been beneficial in arousing more interest in students and in causing teachers themselves to learn the foreign language more effectively.⁶

The Cleveland Plan

Emile B. de Sauze, the author of the "Cleveland Plan" for teaching foreign languages was also one of the pioneers in modern language teaching. The method of teaching recommended in the Cleveland Plan was the "multiple approach technique." From the beginning all objectives namely, reading, speaking, writing, and understanding, were integrated, so that at all stages the student had the ability to read, speak, write, and understand. According to de Sauze, the oral approach was most effective for foreign language teaching. The recommendations for using the oral method were stated in the quotation:

Of all the various devices of technique that we use in our teaching, the most efficient, the most stimulating, indeed the most essential to success is the oral and aural use of the language. Interest is maintained always at its highest pitch through speaking. It is without question the most natural way of satisfying the innate desire of the student of a language to

⁶Coleman, Algernon, The Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages in The United States: A Report Prepared for the Modern Foreign Language Study. New York, Macmillan and Company, 1929, p. 276.

use that language; with younger students it caters to their "Love of doing," their desire to manipulate and put to use every material, every new acquisition All of us have an atavistic aptitude for receiving linguistic facts more vividly, more satisfyingly through the ear.⁷

Although the oral approach of the Cleveland Plan seemed not to have applicability to all stages of foreign language learning, with the higher level of students, he added that it was necessary to fuse the direct method with the functional principles of sentence structure, for memorization of a number of ready-made phrases in a foreign language was not to know that language. He stated that: "all intelligent adults are rarely successful in mastering a foreign language without learning in a functional way certain fundamental principles that govern the structure of that language and that enable him to generalize, to multiply his experience a thousand times."⁸ Thus, the Cleveland Plan did put emphasis upon the oral approach, however, it was built upon a firm foundation of grammar.

Keeping the early lesson material concrete and within the range of the student's experience had the further advantage of stimulating his interest. This problem of student interest was one to which de Sauze gave a great deal of consideration. De Sauze stated that: "the vital problem in any classroom is how to stimulate and retain the interest of the pupils The art of teaching . . . is only the art of interesting, of arousing curiosity, and curiosity is active only

⁷De Sauze, Emile B., The Cleveland Plan for the Teaching of Modern Languages. Philadelphia, The John C. Winston Company, 1929, p. 17.

⁸De Sauze, Ibid., (citing "Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Cleveland Plan", by William H. McClan in French Review, XVIII, p. 197).

in happy minds. Interest is the oil of the machinery of education; without it the wheels may go around, but there is friction, heat, and prompt stopping."⁹

In order to stimulate and maintain students' interest, de Sauze proposed the following methods: (1) selection of material, (2) challenge, (3) oral-aural approach, and (4) *concours dramatique*.

It is widely recognized that the selection of material is a prime factor in the foreign language teaching. When a student learns a new language, he really is transferring his acquired experience from his mother tongue to the new language. He is learning a second mode of expressing the same experience. De Sauze believed that if the elements in the new language were introduced along with the same fundamental sequence as when he learned his mother tongue, this transfer would be more easily and successfully effected. He stated that: "the topics introduced for reading or speaking must be a close counterpart of his experience; they should at first center around his daily activities, home, school, sports, restaurants, amusement, etc.; later, when he already has mastered this expression of his elemental interests, his curiosity may be aroused into reading and speaking about the foreign nation."¹⁰

The principle of challenge was also suggested for stimulating student interest. "In attempting to find the most efficient, the most impressive way of introducing new elements of language, of crossing the bridge from the known to the unknown, we discovered the tremendous value of the principle of challenge."¹¹ This principle of challenge seems to

⁹De Sauze, *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁰De Sauze, *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹¹De Sauze, *Ibid.*, p. 14.

be most effectively applied in teaching grammar and vocabulary.

In grammar, for example, de Sauze advocated the "inductive process" as a teaching device, for the inductive process gives an explanation for the psychological reaction of any challenge. A summary of the inductive process was given in de Sauze's statement:

This psychological reaction explains the superiority of the inductive process as a teaching device. Instead of presenting the student with a rule on a platter, we set up a few carefully chosen illustrations of that rule and we lead him to discover through skillful guidance the relationship of the new element to others previously mastered and to formulate his observations into a law governing those cases. The inductive process has the following advantages: it causes concentration, it sustains interest, it gives to the neurones the stimulation that comes from the satisfaction of having accomplished by one's own efforts a worth-while and difficult task, it assists the memory which retains more easily and more permanently an element that has been carefully observed and stayed with.¹²

In vocabulary a similar procedure was followed. Either the new words were guessed from the context or they were explained in terms of words which were already familiar. De Sauze stated that there were three ways of guiding students into the unknown world of vocabulary, namely: (1) translation into the mother tongue, (2) visualization by pointing to the object, and (3) explanation by paraphrasing. The third method was recommended by him. This summary was explained in his statement:

There are three ways of dealing with the genesis of unknown words: they may either be translated into the mother tongue, or be pointed to, or explained by paraphrasing. The first method . . . is the easiest and therefore still in general use in spite of the fact that it is most inefficient. Translation causes no challenge, it gives the fact too freely, and creates but a fleeting impression on the brain cells. The second method is better, as it brings in

¹²De Sauze, Ibid., p. 14.

visualization. The third one, which consists in explaining new words with the help of elements previously taught, is far superior to all others, as it is based on challenge and uses the inductive process.¹³

The repetition of old vocabulary in this "paraphrasing" technique has the double advantage of fixing the old vocabulary in the student's memory and of breaking down the old compartment system of lessons.

Needless to say, the oral-aural approach did stimulate the student interest in foreign language learning, for, speaking a foreign language instead of the mother tongue creates pride in students' mind. Furthermore, the ability to speak gives the student a great sense of achievement. When he can converse with a native or understand a film or radio broadcast in a foreign language, he can experience a sense of power which the ability to read alone can never give him.

In order to advance a step further in oral power in foreign language, the Cleveland Plan employed the "concourse dramatique," and appearances on a radio program. Naturally, this motivated the student's interest in foreign language learning. The advantages in using the "concourse dramatique" were described in his statement:

The form of oral practice we use is not a hit-or-miss series of questions without an object except possibly the increase of a stock of ready-made sentences. It is a "purposeful" exercise aiming at the mastery through oral use of fundamental principles of grammar and a connected topic. It may take the form not only of questions but also of dramatization, by taking advantage of the dramatic instinct which is so strong in the junior and even in the senior high school student.¹⁴

¹³De Sauze, Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁴De Sauze, Ibid., p. 17.

Thus, as far back as the 1920's, de Sauze advocated a proper use of the oral approach as the shortest road to a mere reading knowledge of a foreign language, as given in his following summary of eight years of experimentation:

We are convinced after eight years of experimentation that it is possible to eliminate English entirely as a medium of instruction from the foreign language classroom; that it saves considerable time to use the foreign language exclusively; that it creates a wholesome atmosphere in the classroom; that it stimulates both teacher and students to make the necessary efforts to express themselves in the foreign language; that experience has shown that it is almost impossible to limit oneself to a minimum of English; all administrators agree that the tendency is to increase the amount, five minutes today, ten tomorrow, ending with only ten minutes of the foreign language in a comparatively short time.¹⁵

The Army Specialized Training Program

Other pioneers in the direct method were the contributors to the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP). This was an intensive as well as extensive program involving some 15,000 army men assigned to college training in languages for periods of six to nine months. As war-time requirements necessitated, emphasis was put upon the spoken and colloquial form of the language. This intensive method was effective. Thereafter, countless experiments in its application and modification have been conducted.

The ASTP was established in 1941 in the state of California and was then known as the Military Intelligence Service Language School.

¹⁵De Sauze, Ibid., p. 18.

At the present time, the school conducts training in 28 languages.¹⁶

The objective of the ASTP was to give to the student a command of the colloquial, spoken form of the language. This command included the ability to speak the language fluently, accurately, and with an acceptable approximation of the native pronunciation. It also implied that the student will have a practically perfect auditory comprehension of the language as spoken by natives. This summary of the aims of the ASTP were given in the statement by Hempel and Mueller:

1. To teach the student to understand the target language and to speak it with both fluency and reasonable accuracy. His pronunciation should approximate that of a native speaker.
2. To teach the student to read and write the foreign language without limiting maximum training in the oral-aural skills.¹⁷

The method used for the above purposes was an intensive, direct method -- six hours a day, five days a week for six to nine months. The number of the class members was limited to eight or less and they were required to devote an average of three hours to after-class practice.

The course was divided into three separate but mutually integrated phases, each of which served particular and definite objectives, namely, (1) pronunciation phase, (2) structural phase, and (3) application phase.

The pronunciation phase was designed to give the student intensive oral drill in the sound system, the stress and intonation patterns, and

¹⁶Hempel, Val; and Mueller, Klaus A., "Introduction to the U. S. Army Language School," Modern Language Journal, XLIII (February, 1959), p. 62.

¹⁷Hempel and Mueller, Ibid., pp. 62-65.

the most frequent structural elements of the language learned. To master the phonology of the language and begin to develop firm habits of native pronunciation at a normal rate of speech were emphasized. This phase continued for about four weeks.

The structural phase was aimed to teach the student to manipulate the morphology of the language freely and enable him to use it in everyday situations and during specific military activities. The structural phase occupied about three fourths of the course work at the Army Language School.

The application phase put emphasis on deepening and expanding the speech habits already developed during the preceeding two phases and broadening and accelerating the acquisition of vocabulary.

The demonstrations on the structure of the language were so planned that all the essential structural characteristics of the language were presented during each phase of the course and in the order of difficulty.

Teaching aids such as audio-visual aids and excursions or field trips were applied. All students were issued record-players and tape-recorders.

The usability as well as applicability of the ASTP language courses have been a center of discussion, and modification and application of the ASTP methods for the civilian schools have been experimented with by many people at different times. However, the statements of the results of the experimentation with the new method have been both pros and cons.

The Modern Language Association of America made an extensive study of applications of the ASTP methods to civilian teaching in 1944. The Survey Group of the Commission observed the agreement among the administrators, course directors, and instructors that certain principles and elements of the ASTP curriculum could be effectively introduced into post-war language teaching for civilians at the college level. The applicability of the ASTP for civilians was suggested in the statement:

They (the administrators, course directors, and instructors) reaffirmed their belief that the understanding and appreciation of foreign cultures is a primary aim of language study in a liberal education. Their experience with the achievements of the ASTP language curriculum had convinced them, however, that the acquisition of all-round language proficiency, including the ability to read, involves a command of the spoken form of the language as an initial objective.¹⁸

In recognition of this all-round language proficiency, the Commission of the Modern Language Association recommended the oral or direct method used by the ASTP, extensive use of supplementary aids, small classes, the use of native speakers, and other extra-curricular activities for foreign language teaching. Their itemized recommendations were as follows:

1. A large number of contact hours per week, of which a lesser number would be devoted to grammar work, and a greater number to conversational drill work.
2. Very small classes (ten students or less -- in the ASTP eight or less) for drill work, sectioned according to the ability and progress of the individual students.

¹⁸The Modern Language Association of America, A Survey of Language Classes in the Army Specialized Training Program, Report of a Special Committee, Prepared for the Commission on Trends in Education. New York, Modern Language Association of America, 1944, p. 28. Parentheses added.

3. Some outside preparation by the student for grammar classes, though less than in non-intensive courses; little or no outside preparation for drill sessions.
4. The use of native, or completely bilingual, speakers for drill work.
5. The use of supplementary aids, including mechanical apparatus such as motion pictures, phonograph records, recording machines, magnetic-tape recorders, radio, and telephone.
6. The provision of a living background for the study of the language, through extra-curricular activities, such as language houses, language tables, and language clubs within the institution, as well as social contacts with foreign-language groups in the community.¹⁹

For implementation of such a curriculum of foreign language teaching, certain types of teaching materials should be prepared, including new text materials, adequate word-lists, and the mechanical devices. In the 1940's, these teaching materials were not available. But our pioneers in modern foreign language teaching noted the effectiveness of the direct method of the ASTP and were eager to adopt the intensive plan of language instruction.

The direct method of the ASTP, however, was not appraised and adopted by all the experimenters. Ten years later, in 1954 and 1957, Santosuosso conducted the experiment, attempting to measure to what extent certain aspects of the ASTP were introduced into the curricula of the foreign language instruction in colleges, and to determine what the problems were in application of the ASTP methods to the foreign language curricula in the civilian colleges.

¹⁹The Modern Language Association of America, Ibid., pp. 28-29.

Apparently, Santosuosso did not approve of using the direct method in the college and insisted that the aim of the language program at the college level should be the acquisition of a reading knowledge. In concluding his report, he stated that "many thought . . . that it (the direct method) contributed a great deal" to the foreign language teaching. However, "it seems that in time, if the growth (of the use of the direct method) . . . continues, the printed symbol will have less implication for the professional language teacher than it now has, both at the college level of instruction and ultimately at the high school level, in the basic language courses."²⁰

As far back as the 1920's, pioneers in foreign language teaching were well aware that the direct method was superior to the conventional approach. This direct method was recommended by Coleman, de Sauze, and the contributors to the ASTP. After the suggestion of the direct method as a possible better approach in foreign language teaching, a number of experiments were conducted. These experiments are presented in chapter 3.

²⁰Santosuosso, John J., "ASTP Characteristics in 55 Colleges, 1941-51: Methodological Practices Pertinent to the Development of Language Skills," Modern Language Journal, XXXVIII (December, 1954), p. 411. Parenthesis added.

CHAPTER III

EXPERIMENTATION CONDUCTED FOR ADAPTING AND MODIFYING
THE "DIRECT METHOD" OR "ORAL METHOD"

Countless experiments in using the direct method or oral approach in teaching foreign languages have been conducted following the suggestion of the direct methods as a possible better approach. Some were extensive as well as intensive in their scope, and others were on a small scale. A review of the literature of the past 12 years revealed that most of the experiments have been administered on the aural-oral method. However, there were a few on the following items: (1) the teaching aids such as audio-visual aids or other supplementary materials; (2) the single-objective method; (3) the method for the less gifted; (4) high-school-college articulation; and (5) the translation method.

Some of the results of the experimentation on aural-oral methods were neither negative nor inconclusive, however, most of the experimenters appeared to believe that the aural-oral approach was better than the conventional method in foreign language teaching.

In this chapter, five outstanding experiments used in the adaptation and modification of the direct method made in the past 12 years will be discussed individually in detail. Some other experiments reported in the literature were treated in one section in chronological order. The experiments reviewed are arranged in the following sequence:

1. Experimental comparison made between classes using a conventional approach and experimental classes stressing aural-oral skills conducted by F. B. Agard and H. B. Dunkel in 1948.

2. A report by Emilie Margaret White in 1950 on two experiments conducted in the Washington public schools in which foreign languages were taught from a functional rather than a formal point of view.
3. A report by D. Lee Hamilton and Ernest F. Haden in 1950 on three years of experimentation at the University of Texas, using various ways of presenting the first year of the foreign languages emphasizing the auditory-oral aspects.
4. A report by Eldon McMullen on an experiment on the intensive method with oral approach tried at the State Teachers' College at Eau Clair, Wisconsin in 1955.
5. A report by Duane A. Adams on an experiment with materials and techniques in teaching English as a second language conducted at the Institute of Latin American Studies at Mississippi Southern College in 1957.
6. Other experimentation.

Experimental Comparison Between a Conventional Approach
and an Aural-Oral Method by Agard and Dunkel

An experiment conducted by Agard and Dunkel was quite extensive and involved several colleges and a few high schools. Their plan of the investigation was to make experimental comparisons between two groups of classes: (1) classes using a conventional approach not stressing aural-oral objectives, and (2) experimental classes stressing aural-oral skills.

The underlying objectives of the experimental courses were to give the students the ability to speak, to understand, and to read foreign languages. However, the aural-oral skills were to be attained first and then reading proficiency. In order to implement these objectives, they advocated aural-oral proficiency as the best gateway to reading ability, and students were highly motivated to study a

language via the aural-oral approach. These hypotheses were also advocated by Coleman, de Sauze, and the contributors of the ASTP.

The Assumptions behind the experimental courses were as follows:

1. The basic assumption on which the programs rested was that a second language, like a first (i. e., native) language, is most naturally acquired in its spoken form and that a solid and lasting ability to read a language best results from previous acquisition of that speech which its written form symbolized. Thus the ear and tongue are to be trained first, and the eye only later.
2. In the world of today, struggling as it is toward a single peaceful society, a nation must avoid linguistic isolation by training more of its citizens to use the languages of other nations, and so equipping them to take an intelligent part in international affairs.
3. Most American students are more highly motivated to elect foreign language study and to persevere in it, if the reward of their choice and their effort is to be proficiency in using the language in its spoken form, than if their only accomplishment is to be reading ability.²¹

As far as the design of the investigation was concerned, Agard and Dunkel were keenly aware of the requirements for an ideal experimental condition. However, apparently no attempt was made to set up a rigorous experimental design with adequate matching of students in the experimental and control groups. They stated that: "an investigation should develop certain hypotheses which can then be tested in controlled situations until they merit the name of demonstrated conclusions However, existing circumstances did not permit this procedure."²²

²¹Agard, Frederick B.; and Dunkel, Harold B., An Investigation of Second-Language Teaching. Boston, Ginn & Company, c1948, pp. 280-281.

²²Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., p. 280.

Consequently, in analyzing their results, they had to give weight to those comparisons which happened to approach conditions of experimentation. And yet, for these comparisons, they failed to make all the measurements which would enable them to know more positively to what extent ideal experimental conditions had been attained. As a result, their experiment were either negative or inconclusive. They stated that:

The experimental course evaluated by the investigation generally failed to produce near-native oral-aural or reading proficiency in the American student of a second language in one or two years. In other words, within the total instructional time available for these experiments, the newer procedures and techniques have not proved themselves impressively in training students of average aptitude and motivation. Perhaps the goal was unrealistically high, but it was what sought by many experimenters; and only a near-native ability will justify some of the advantages claimed for the skills.²³

Thus, their hypotheses were not proved by the results, however, valuable findings were suggested by the test data and the observation of the experiments regarding (1) the reading skills, (2) oral production, and (3) aural comprehension. These will be discussed in detail next.

Reading comprehension. The conventional groups not stressing aural-oral objectives concentrated almost exclusively on reading comprehension. Consequently, the results of the tests showed that the conventional groups tended to be better than the experimental groups. Furthermore, the aural skills of the conventional groups were also better than average.

²³Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., pp. 293-294.

The possible reasons for poorer achievement in reading proficiency by the experimental students seemed to be due to less emphasis on reading skill and the quality of the students as well as the inefficiency in instruction. The reason given was "variations probably produced to some extent by the quality of student and similar factors."²⁴ However, later in their report, they added:

Undoubtedly the two chief reasons for this outcome were, in many programs so much time was devoted to the initial oral-aural objective that much less reading was done than in conventional courses. As some programs were organized, the responsibility for teaching reading developed upon drill instructors who were unequipped to deal with the very different problems of developing reading ability. These instructors had little knowledge of what particular constructions constitute hazards for the English-speaking student, or what vocabulary items should be emphasized as worthy of inclusion within his active or passive range of control.²⁵

The generalization drawn from the above findings was that aural skill did correlate with the reading skill, however, the aural skill did not always assure reading comprehension. They stated that "the usual relation give little assurance that aural skill necessarily accompanies reading skill or vice versa. He who teaches reading will not produce students who necessarily understand the language when spoken; he who teaches aural comprehension will not find his students automatically developing into competent readers."²⁶

On the grammar sections of the cooperative tests, however, the experimental students generally tended to be as successful as conventional groups, even though they failed in reading proficiency.

²⁴Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., p. 157.

²⁵Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., p. 290.

²⁶Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., p. 159.

This might be due to the reduction of the structural pattern given with oral-aural materials. "Their grammatical proficiency," they stated, "seems attributable to the early and continuous study of structure in connection with their oral-aural materials, under course directors who were in substantially all cases experienced teachers of linguistic analysis."²⁷

Oral production. Concerning the pronunciation, oral productions were immediately imitated by most students of the experimental groups almost perfectly. The result of the tests given showed that in oral production, the student in the experimental groups was better than the student in the conventional groups. They stated that the majority of the students in the experimental groups were "observed to have a continuing production superior to that of conventional students who were taught to speak by rules of 'how the letters are pronounced,' and who have never heard a native speaker." They "generally never succeeded in matching the pronunciation of those who were taught from the beginning to imitate native models."²⁸

This would seem to indicate that correct or near-native pronunciation can not be acquired by studying the theory of the linguistic structure.

Aural comprehension. The aural comprehension of the experimental students was superior to that of the conventional students. This

²⁷Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., p. 291.

²⁸Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., pp. 287-288.

apparently was because the conventional students had not been taught aural comprehension as the experimental students were. They stated that "by and large, experimental students failed to understand the phonographically recorded utterances of an unfamiliar native speaker, delivering unfamiliar though easy material,"²⁹ however, they understood significantly better than did conventional students.

As a possible reason for the failure of experimental students for higher attainment in aural comprehension, the limitations of comprehension experience was given:

Experimental students failed of higher attainment in part because the limits of their comprehension experience (particularly in terms of known vocabulary) were those of their textual materials and were much narrower than those within which the tests were designed to measure aural competence.³⁰

At the end of their report, Agard and Dunkel concluded that in order to implement their assumptions, it was necessary to improve the procedure and technique within the organizational framework of planned experiments. To improve such matters, they pointed out a number of needs, such as (1) the need for more precise definitions, (2) the need to re-examine the language requirement, (3) the need for greater modesty of claims, (4) the need for better articulation of the skills, (5) the need for better tests, (6) the need for improved use of audio-visual aids and extra-curricular activities, and (7) the need for more precisely planned experiments.

²⁹Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., p. 289.

³⁰Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., p. 289.

Agard and Dunkel stated that aural comprehension and oral production were not defined clearly. Unless these abilities were developed, measurements of these skills could not be obtained. When they were clarified, they stated that the tests could "be constructed which will accurately measure the skills precisely as they have been defined and thus demonstrate the student's achievements unequivocally."³¹

The need for better articulation in shifting from oral-aural work to reading should be considered. Agard and Dunkel searched for materials which would effect the transfer with a minimum break in continuity. They introduced reading materials after the first week or two in some cases; others in the third academic quarter. However, their data showed failure. As a possible reason, they stated that "lack of success chiefly on the grounds that the change in emphasis was not made in the proper way, at the proper time, or with the proper preparation."³² Thus, the problem of articulation from the aural-oral work to reading remains a major problem to be solved.

Another concern for articulation was the gap between aural-oral materials and reading materials. Existing materials, vocabularies, and nearly everything else connected with speaking and listening "differ drastically from those used in connection with reading; and it is this difference, of course, which produces the problem."³³

³¹Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., p. 295.

³²Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., p. 297.

³³Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., pp. 298-299.

In order to make the articulation smooth, it is necessary to narrow the gap between the two materials by attempting to bridge it from both sides. Their suggestion was that "new reading texts embodying fictional and non-fictional material could utilize subjects, styles, and vocabularies much closer to those usable in oral-aural work than they now do. Materials giving cultural information about a linguistic area, for example, might well be prepared in this fashion."³⁴

Regarding the need for better tests, they stated that without some sort of objective standard and clarification of language skills, namely aural and oral, and reading, the development of adequate tests could not be achieved.

Another need mentioned by Agard and Dunkel was the use of improved audio-visual aids and more extra-curricular activities. It has been shown that better utilization of audio-visual aids and extra-curricular activities were valuable resources for foreign language learning. However, at the present time, neither of them seemed to be making their full contribution.

According to the experimenters, the great difficulty with audio-visual aids was that they had not been adequately integrated with the course work. "Improved equipment, greater variety and better quality of materials, and greater experience on the part of teachers in using devices" were recommended.³⁵

³⁴Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., p. 298.

³⁵Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., p. 300.

As they admitted, the experimental design of Agard and Dunkel was not precisely planned, nor adequately controlled. Consequently, the results of the experiment were either negative or inconclusive. However, the method appeared to suggest significantly superior results. They stated that "obviously our hypotheses . . . are not proved by the data."³⁶ However, "there is evidence per contra so far as the experiments observed are concerned . . . oral-aural competence automatically creates reading ability and consequently the latter need not be specifically taught."³⁷

Experiment Conducted in Washington, D. C.
Public Schools

According to the report by White, two experiments were conducted and the stress was put on a functional rather than a formal method. One of the experiments was conducted with the attempt to inaugurate a program of foreign language teaching at the elementary school level. The program was started in the fall of 1945 with the second and fifth grades. Twenty minutes of the class period for four days a week at the last period of the class were provided.

This experiment was not as extensive nor intensive as the investigation conducted by Agard and Dunkel. Moreover, neither a detailed syllabus nor the norms of achievement were given in the report.

³⁶Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., p. 280.

³⁷Agard and Dunkel, Ibid., p. 292.

However, as a possible indication of the results of their method, the students were able to present a play in the second language at the end of the school year. White stated that "there was neither a course of study nor a syllabus, neither realia nor norms of achievement, but as the year progressed, everyone realized that here was something truly exciting." The children of the two grades prepared and produced jointly a play based on the story of Jeanne d'Arc.³⁸

The above fact -- the production of a play -- may not prove that the direct method -- which they used -- is the only or the best approach. However, it was surprising to note that they were able to put on such a performance in that period of time.

The second experiment conducted in Washington, D. C. public schools was to give a one-semester pre-induction course to boys who faced immediate and possible service overseas. Their objective was to provide for the boys a practical application of the second language to every-day life situations. They stated their objective as follows: "the only aim . . . was to fit these boys to take care of themselves aurally and orally in the most common fundamental life situations in which they might find themselves by teaching them basic sentences for asking directions, securing food, shelter, and clothing in emergency, etc."³⁹

Accordingly, the methods and techniques were directive -- how to

³⁸White, Emile Margaret, "Some Experimentation in Modern Foreign Languages," Modern Language Journal, XXXIV (April, 1950), p. 256.

³⁹White, Ibid., p. 258.

understand ideas in foreign form and to express in the foreign language the ideas that have to do with their every-day life situations, rather than a reading or grammatical approach. Consequently, these immediate and every-day settings promoted their interest enough to learn the language, and the students learned basic grammatical concepts, even though their approach was conversational. The successes in using the direct method in Washington, D. C. public high schools were given in the statement:

They learned all these things (the definite and indefinite articles to the conjugation of the present tense, and so on) and learn thoroughly, because they have constant drills, oral and written, that drive home correct usage, but they acquire some of the grammatical concepts at quite unorthodox times and much of the grammar they learn first merely as vocabulary, because it is needed at some particular time to express an idea.⁴⁰

The emphasis upon the expression of ideas in every-day situations apparently provided meanings for students and promoted the desire to express themselves in return.

The results of the experiments conducted in the Washington, D. C. public schools seemed to indicate that both the serious student of language and the one whose interest was in some other field were benefited more by the direct method than a formal and traditional approach. The experimenters firmly insisted that the reading skill could be attained by the aural-oral method with a meaningful approach. White stated that:

⁴⁰White, Ibid., p. 259, parentheses added.

The reading objective is more securely reached if students start their study of language with the aural-oral approach, and if they spend their first year talking (as well as listening, reading, and writing) about things that have meaning for vocabulary and idiom and at the same time, through imitative conversation and many varied oral and written drills, building up a practical knowledge of the necessary grammar concepts which have meaning for them because they are learned as needed for use and not at a chronological time or in a traditional order of presentation.⁴¹

Comparative Experiment at the University of Texas

During the three years of experiment conducted by Hamilton and Haden at the University of Texas in 1950, various ways of presenting the first year of French and Spanish were used. Their methods of experimentation were based on the following conditions:

1. Comparison of the two programs, namely conventional and oral-auditory approaches.
2. The comparison made systematic use of standardized tests.
3. The experimentation was conducted within the ordinary administrative and teaching framework.
4. The experimentation included all students taking the courses involved.⁴²

The three years of their investigation were divided into three phases of experimentation, and each phase was designed to indicate answers to specific questions. Their basic questions were as follows:

⁴¹White, Ibid., p. 259.

⁴²Hamilton, D. Lee; and Haden, Ernest F., "The Three Years of Experimentation at the University of Texas," Modern Language Journal, XXXIV (February, 1950), p. 85.

1. If two programs place considerably different emphasis on written and oral aspects of the language, will the results show differences roughly proportionate to those between the manners of presentation?
2. How does a "Systematic," "thorough" presentation of elementary grammar through a traditional grammar text compare in results with a course which allows only the smallest place for grammar, which presents even that minimum inductively, through the immediate confrontation of the student with pages of the language, which are repeated orally to the point of near memorization?
3. What significant differences will appear by contrasting a program which places much emphasis on oral drill and has an exhaustive grammatical introduction with a program which goes from a quick survey of a brief grammar text to a relatively large amount of rapid reading?⁴³

In order to derive possible answer to the first question, Hamilton and Haden conducted a comparative experiment between group A -- a conventional course emphasizing the written aspects and group B -- a course putting more stress on oral-auditory aspects. The test administered at the end of the year showed that group B was higher in auditory than group A by 38 per cent, or a margin of 67; group A showed superiority in cooperative by 13 per cent over group B, or a margin of 26; and in the combined score, group B was superior to group A by 10 per cent, or a margin of 41.⁴⁴ As a whole, the differences between the two groups were slight. Their conclusions after the first year of experiments were that "while increased emphasis on oral-auditory aspects of the language is reflected in the results, the difference in results may be considerably less than is often assumed;

⁴³Hamilton and Haden, Ibid., pp. 86-95.

⁴⁴Hamilton and Haden, Ibid., p. 88.

and listening sessions are a worthwhile adjunct to language teaching."⁴⁵

To answer the second question, they designed a comparative experiment between class D -- in which there was systematic, thorough presentation of elementary grammar and class E -- in which grammar had least importance and oral aspects was emphasized.

The test results were neither negative nor inconclusive. However, they concluded that grammar did not have to be taught systematically. The conclusion of the experiment conducted by Hamilton and Haden was stated as:

We are far from concluding that it does not matter what a teacher does in a language class. We do conclude that very little indeed is known demonstrably about some aspects of language teaching. We conclude further that these results, at least, hardly justify the belief that grammar must be taught systematically, i. e., by the system implicit in almost all grammar text books.⁴⁶

The third experiment was designed to make comparisons between group G -- a group which placed much emphasis on oral drill and grammatical introduction and group H -- a group which put emphasis on brief grammar and rapid reading.

The scores of groups G and H on the auditory comprehension test during the second semester of training showed very slight differences. This may have been due to inadequacy in constructing the tests. Hamilton and Haden stated that "the main lack, of course, was of objective

⁴⁵Hamilton and Haden, Ibid., p. 89.

⁴⁶Hamilton and Haden, Ibid., p. 93.

tests of oral production, of the ability to speak the language."⁴⁷

From the three years of experimentation by Hamilton and Haden, it appeared that the differences in results were much less than those in methods. This might be due to the lack of adequate methods in formulating the test questions and an inadequate control of the variables in experimental methods. Also it might be because the students who have ability to speak may also have the ability to understand the spoken language and to read the written language.

An Experiment on the Intensive Method

An experiment on the intensive method using the oral approach at the State Teachers' College at Eau Clair, Wisconsin was reported by McMullen in 1955.⁴⁸ McMullen stated that in our air age, modern language should be taught with more stress on oral work than on written exercises. Accordingly, he conducted an experiment on the intensive method with oral stress. The grammatical explanation was not neglected but was very brief.

At the end of the first semester, cooperative tests were given to all students of beginning French. The experimental class did as well as the control group in vocabulary, however, in comprehension they fell below the average. Of course, it should be remembered that

⁴⁷Hamilton and Haden, Ibid., p. 96.

⁴⁸McMullen, Eldon, "An Intensive Method: An Experiment," Modern Language Journal, XXXIX (October, 1955), pp. 293-294.

the spoken language, or the ability to express oneself in idiomatic language cannot be measured precisely.

According to the report, however, the students in the experimental class appeared to have the ability to converse than the students in the conventional classes. Moreover, their retention was higher than the conventional students.

In conclusion, McMullen stated that the oral approach was easier on the nerves, was quicker, was more practical, and in the long run was the best method to learn to write the language. Thus, the experiment conducted at the State Teachers' College at Eau Claire, Wisconsin, seemed to indicate that the intensive, oral method was "the best method."

An Experiment with Materials and Techniques

An experiment with materials and techniques in teaching English as a second language was reported by Adams in 1957.⁴⁹ The report by Adams was based on the result of ten years of study and experiments with intensive English courses using the aural-oral method for the students from abroad at the Institute of Latin American Studies at Mississippi Southern College. In order to facilitate foreign students with a better command of English, they conducted "a five hour a day," so-called intensive course. The course was divided into five phases, namely,

⁴⁹Adams, Duane A., "Materials and Techniques in Teaching English as a Second Language," Modern Language Journal, XLI (December, 1957), pp. 377-388.

(1) semantics, (2) syntax, (3) phonemics, (4) therapy, and (5) orientation. These are briefly explained in the following:

Semantics. Semantics was designed to introduce new words with idioms in context which do not depend principally on the grammatical situation for meaning. The principle point of concentration was meaning and content.

Syntax. The phase of syntax should precede semantics from the grammatical point of view. That is, where meaning was tied up in grammar these grammar points should be clarified before the student took them up in semantics. Drill on important English patterns was emphasized in this phase.

Therapy. In therapy, students were trained to distinguish between the more critical sounds in English, and personal attention was given to individual problems. Development of aural perception and oral skill was the focal point.

Phonemics. Phonemics was designed to establish habits in English by repetition in quantity by the student. Pattern practice was the central point of this phase.

Orientation. The purposes of orientation were to take care of immediate and local orientation needs of the students. That is, how to ask for a date, what to wear to the reception, what we would see on the excursion, how to study, etc.

After an intensive experiment, they came to the conclusion that (1) the student's pronunciation habits should be established before he was exposed to the visual symbols; (2) use of phonetic symbols should be applied only when these clearly aid his pronunciation; (3) abstract

drills and tongue twisters were used as a preparation for practical application; and (4) use of tape recorder and a laboratory hour were effective in establishing pronunciation habits as well as aural perception.⁵⁰

The test data were not given in the report, however, they stated that a more complete report of the experiment would be published in the near future. According to the report, "a complete aural-oral method" appeared to be very effective in foreign language teaching. Adams's recommendation was expressed in his statement:

The aural system is not only basic to the courses but also has been responsible for the birth of many of the ideas suggested in this paper. The aural system, the more one becomes aware of its implications and possibilities, opens new and refreshing pathways to language learning, as a new plastic or color discovery opens new pathways to art. This is not to say that an all aural technique in language teaching is anything really new, but rather that in spite of its being professed in many quarters, it has rarely received wholehearted practice.⁵¹

Other Experiments on the Direct Method

The followings are some of the experiments conducted in various part of the world and at various times.

An experiment was conducted in an advanced German composition and conversation course using the direct method by Boeninger in 1949.

⁵⁰Adams, Ibid., pp. 380-382.

⁵¹Adams, Ibid., p. 383.

Assignments in re-writing selections into his own German developed the students' language facility and fluency. These composition exercises began with an analysis of style, grammar, and vocabulary, then the creation of a simple style in re-writing. Oral work sprang from conversation about the selection.⁵²

"They Learn so Easy" was a report of an experiment in teaching French and Spanish to fifth and sixth graders at the University School of Kent State University by Machan in 1949. In this experiment, the oral approach was used and the pupils showed a considerable amount of proficiency in those two languages.⁵³

An experiment with conversational Spanish in the San Diego Elementary Schools was reported by MacRae in 1950. An oral approach was used at various grade levels.⁵⁴

An experimental comparison between the direct method and a more formal approach was conducted by Millington in 1950 in England. According to Millington, the direct method appeared to be better for the children than a more formal approach. However, in adult language teaching, the value of a pure, direct method was very dubious. He

⁵²Boeninger, H. R., "A New Approach to Advanced German Composition and Conversation," Modern Language Journal, XXXIII (February, 1949), pp. 100-105.

⁵³Machan, Helen M.; and Messimore, Hazel M., "They Learn so Easy," Ohio Schools, XXVII (No. 6) (September, 1949), p. 269 et seq.

⁵⁴MacRae, M. W., "Spanish in the San Diego Elementary Schools," Hispania, XXXIII (May, 1950), pp. 156-157.

stated that "the junior class was approached with a method in which the proportions of direct to formal teaching were in the ratio of two to one; in the senior class those proportions were reversed."⁵⁵

An experiment was conducted by Beck in teaching French by the oral cultural approach method at the University of Georgia in 1951. Their objectives were to attain an active knowledge in the sense of understanding the spoken language and to reproduce it satisfactorily. The results of the experiment seemed to indicate that this method was effective.⁵⁶

Another experiment on the conversational approach to language learning was conducted by Tyre in 1952. According to the reporter, "attitude, time and methodology" were the three important and closely interwoven factors in language mastery. Tyre appeared to believe that the conversational method or direct method was a normal approach, and this method maintained the students' interest better.⁵⁷

An experiment in using the direct method in teaching Spanish to a very small group was conducted by Abbott in 1955. It appeared that the direct or oral approach was effective.⁵⁸

⁵⁵Millington, Gordon, "Pioneering French," Journal of Education, LXXXII (June, 1950), pp. 326 et seq.

⁵⁶Beck, T. T., "An Experiment in Teaching French by the Oral-Cultural Approach Method," Modern Language Journal, XXXV (December, 1951), pp. 595-601.

⁵⁷Tyre, C. A., "The Conversational Approach to Language Learning, An Evaluation and an Answer to our Critics," Modern Language Journal, XXXVI (February, 1952), pp. 59-64.

⁵⁸Abbott, O. L., "An Experiment in Oral Spanish," Modern Language Journal, XXXIX (November, 1955), pp. 332-341.

"Some Shortcuts in Elementary Spanish Conversation" were studied by Feild with seventh and eighth grade pupils without the use of textbooks in 1955. In this experiment, the oral approach appeared to be a useful procedure in the teaching of Spanish on the pre-high school level.⁵⁹

An experiment in the teaching of Russian in the elementary schools in Jefferson County, Missouri was reported by Calandra and McClain in 1959. The procedures used by the reporters were aural-oral methods. Apparently, their experiment was successful. They stated that it was entirely practical to start the teaching of language at an early age, and the aural-oral approach seemed to be superior.⁶⁰

An experiment in listening comprehension using the aural-oral approach was reported by Siciliano in 1959. This experiment tried to make a comparison between the slow and fast learners. Siciliano concluded his experiment as follows: "no matter what the previous method or aim pursued by the good student, it seems that his aural-oral skills are geared to his intelligence. In short, if the good student is handled wisely and patiently in his first encounter with the spoken language, he should make astounding progress."⁶¹

⁵⁹Feild, William B., "Some Shortcuts in Elementary Spanish Conversation," Modern Language Journal, XXXIX (November, 1955), pp. 343-344.

⁶⁰Calandra, Alexander; and McClain, Charles J., "Experiment in the Teaching of Russian in the Elementary School," Modern Language Journal, XLIII (April, 1959), pp. 183-184.

⁶¹Siciliano, Ernest A., "An Experiment in Listening Comprehension," Modern Language Journal, XLIII (May, 1959), pp. 266-267.

Experiments using the direct approach or aural-oral method in teaching foreign languages have been conducted in intensive scope as well as on a small scale. Some of the outstanding experiments on the aural-oral method in the past 12 years were (1) experimental comparison conducted by Agard and Dunkel, (2) two experiments on the oral approach reported by White, (3) an experiment conducted at the University of Texas emphasizing the oral-auditory aspects in the first year of the foreign languages, (4) an experiment on the intensive method with oral approach tried at the State Teachers' College at Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and (5) an experiment with materials and techniques emphasizing the oral aspect in teaching English as a second language for students from abroad. Some of the results of the experiments on aural-oral method were neither negative nor inconclusive. However, the experiments appeared to suggest that the oral-aural approach was superior in foreign language teaching to the conventional method. A few experiments have also been conducted on the use of teaching aids and supplementary material. These were discussed in chapter 4.

CHAPTER IV

EXPERIMENTS IN TEACHING AIDS

The confirmation of the usefulness of audio-visual aids in foreign language teaching appears to have been well established, and a wide variety of the teaching aids including audio-visual aids as well as supplementary materials are available on the market at the present time. Consequently, experiments conducted on teaching aids were less numerous than those on the methods of the foreign language teaching.

However, the utilization of these materials, at the present time, has not been used to the fullest extent. This fact might be due, in part at least, to the expense involved. Huebener substantiated that: "although there is a plethora of audio-visual aids on the market, the average teacher does not make much use of them."⁶²

There are a wide variety of teaching aids, ranking from the simplest classroom objects to highly intricate orthophonic systems. They may be categorized as follows:

1. Illustrations such as pictures, charts, drawings, clippings from magazines, diorama, puppets, models, specimens, and film strips for visual aids.
2. Radio, telephone, television, phonograph, recording machine, and movies for audio-visual aids.
3. Books, magazines, and newspapers for supplementary reading material.
4. Excursions to foreign language restaurants, cinemas, and church services; and dramatization and singing in the

⁶²Huebener, Theodore, "Audio-visual Aids in the High Schools," Modern Language Journal, XLIII (October, 1959), pp. 266-267.

foreign language for extra-curricular activities.

Thus, a wide variety of teaching aids are available at the present time, however, in this chapter, the experiments with audio-visual aids and supplementary materials will be discussed.

Experiments in the Use of Audio-Visual Aids

As stated previously, since the usefulness of audio-visual aids in foreign language teaching appeared to have been substantiated, only a limited number of experiments have been conducted in last 15 years.

Boyer reported on his experiment with the use of the tape recorder in 1949. He pointed out various uses of the tape recorder, including drills in pronunciation and vocabulary as well as the recording of songs, poems, and plays, in foreign language classes. The use of the tape recorder appeared to promote the students' interest, and Boyer stated that the students learned the foreign language easily through laughter.⁶³

Cowan conducted an experiment with a wire recorder in teaching general phonetics. According to his report, a recorder, adequate in fidelity to record and play back, was of great aid in teaching general phonetics for demonstrations, mimicry practice, and oral testing.⁶⁴

Reiss made a report on "German Syntax on the Screen" conducted

⁶³Boyer, Leonard, "Teaching Through Laughter: The Uses of a Tape Recorder," High Points, February, 1949, pp. 72-74.

⁶⁴Cowan, George M., "An Experiment With a Wire Recorder in Teaching General Phonetics," The Language Learning, II (July-September, 1949), pp. 76-82.

at the German Department of the University of Michigan in 1951. According to the report, this projector method was very successful in teaching German syntax to the graduate students.⁶⁵

A report on an experiment in language teaching with visual aids was made by Kensit in 1950. The author of the report taught foreign language by the direct method with the help of visual aids. The direct method with visual aids helped build up knowledge of the language in the mind of the learner without the use of any other language.⁶⁶

Rosselot reported on an experiment on audio-visual techniques in foreign language teaching at the French Department of Otterbein College in Ohio in 1949. According to the report, three years of experimentation with mechanical learning aids achieved satisfactory success. The aim of the experiment was to find techniques basic enough to be adapted to other languages, keep within the regular class schedule, and keep cost and staff at a minimum.⁶⁷

Experimentations in the Use of Supplementary Materials

In addition to the experiments in the use of audio-visual aids, experiments in the use of supplementary materials were conducted.

⁶⁵Reiss, F. A., "German Syntax on the Screen," Modern Language Journal, XXXV (February, 1951), pp. 135-138.

⁶⁶Kensit, D. B. J., "An Experiment in Language Teaching with Visual Aids," English Language Teaching, IV (June, 1950), pp. 199-205.

⁶⁷Rosselot, La Velle, "Audio-Visual Techniques in Foreign Language Teaching," Modern Language Journal, XXXIII (November, 1949), pp. 544-550.

However, they were limited scope as well as in number. This might have been because the use of supplementary material such as magazines and newspapers appeared to have been substantiated in arousing the students interest in foreign language learning.

Cheney made a report on an experiment with supplementary reading materials in 1949. The language course was designed as a supplementary French course for credit for the student who desired to know more about France and its culture. Time was devoted to French lectures, and reading from supplementary materials such as books, magazines, and newspapers. This supplementary course with supplementary materials appeared to be successful.⁶⁸

An experiment with the periodical material in an intermediate German class was reported by Halzmann in 1949. The periodical, Jugendpost was used as a background for questions and answers in German on the content. This experiment appeared to promote the students interest and the reporter seemed to believe that this method was very successful for his German class.⁶⁹

Each teaching aid has its own particular function. One type may be more useful than another in a particular situation. All have their advantages and disadvantages. An expensive, intricate ortho-
phonic system is not the best device for all occasions. In its proper

⁶⁸Cheney, Genevieve, "A Successful Experiment," French Review, XXII (January, 1949), pp. 261-263.

⁶⁹Holzmann, Albert W., "An Experiment in Methodology," Modern Language Journal, XXXIII (January, 1949), pp. 63-64.

setting and in the hands of a skilled teacher, an illustration clipped from a magazine may be more useful than a film. The teaching aid makes it possible to add more interest to the class, and enrich the student's knowledge of the foreign country, its people, and its culture. Furthermore, it helps improve linguistic skill. Since these excellent media are available, they should be used as much as possible for enrichment and more effective teaching of foreign languages.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND A FEW REMARKS ON
SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING IN JAPAN

Summary

The problems of the learning and teaching foreign languages are centuries old. One method after another, and one objective after another, has been pursued and abandoned. In this long span of time, some progress has been made, yet too little is known about the most efficient methods of language teaching and language learning at the present time.

In the last two decades, however, a new shift from the grammatical approach to the oral method has been made. This oral or direct approach in foreign language teaching appeared to have advantages over the conventional grammatical one. Some might have thought that this was a real discovery, but it was not new. It was experimented with years ago by pioneers in the field of foreign language teaching. They were Algernon Coleman, Emile B. de Sauze, and the contributors of the Army Specialized Training Program.

As far back as the 1920's, Coleman and de Sauze were well aware of the psychological factors in foreign language teaching and advocated the oral method which promoted students interest in learning languages. On the other hand, the ASTP added extensive use of the teaching aids such as audio-visual materials as well as various extra-curricular activities to their oral approach. These were the great contributions of our pioneers to the field of foreign language learning and teaching.

experimentation seemed to indicate that the differences in results were very much less than those in methods.

According to the report by McMullen on an experiment on the intensive method using the oral approach at the State Teachers' College at Eau Clair, Wisconsin in 1955, the results of the cooperative test given at the end of the first semester did not prove that the student taught by the oral approach were superior to the conventionally taught students. However, the observation seemed to show that the students in the experimental classes had more ability to converse than the students in the conventional classes.

Other experiments on a smaller scale and with smaller scope including the experiment reported by White, were not facilitated with test data or with a detailed syllabus. Consequently, objective results were not adequately obtained. However, most of the reporters of the experiments, with a few possible exceptions, appeared to believe that their experiments were successful and that the oral or direct method was the better approach for foreign language teaching. We have to remember, however, the two factors concerning measurements: (1) measurement of this type is not as accurate and complete as the data obtained from experiments in pure science. And (2) at the present time, there is not a perfect test to measure accuracy of pronunciation, the ability to comprehend the spoken language or the ability to express oneself in idiomatic language.

In addition to the experimentation with the oral or direct method, experiments with teaching aids have also been conducted. However, the confirmation of the usefulness of audio-visual aids in

foreign language learning appeared to have been well established since the time of the ASTP. Consequently, the experimentations on the use of teaching aids were in less number in comparison to the experiments on methods.

Most of the reports on experimentations with the use of audio-visual aids as well as supplementary teaching materials revealed that these (1) helped promote the students interest, (2) helped the students learn the language easier, and (3) helped build up a knowledge of the language in the mind of the learners. However, at the present time, the fullest use is not being made of these materials.

Conclusions

The conclusions based on the review of the literature on experimentations are as follows:

1. In spite of the fact that the test data did not substantiate the general hypothesis of the direct method being superior to the conventional approach, it was suggested by the experimental test data as well as by observation of experiments that the direct method appeared to have advantages over the conventional grammar method in foreign language teaching. In fact, oral proficiency as well as auditory comprehension were apparently improved more by the direct method than by teaching the rules of "how the letters are pronounced." Correct pronunciation is not easily acquired by studying the theory of linguistic structure.
2. The skillful utilization of audio-visual aids as well as supplementary material definitely contributes to the enriching of the classroom environment, and to arousing students' interests in foreign language learning. It is not necessary to have intricate expensive articles, but an illustration clipped from a magazine can serve just as effectively on certain occasions.

The problems of foreign language learning and teaching still are not completely solved, and experimentation remains the only effective means of achieving progress in the techniques of teaching foreign languages. The difficulties of such work are so great and the work is so time-consuming that only men of good will and insight can continue and redouble their efforts to bring about a better method of foreign language teaching.

A Few Remarks on Second Language Teaching in Japan

In the Japanese educational system, the English language is one of the compulsory subjects in junior and senior high schools, and colleges. Consequently, the problems of foreign language teaching, as well as learning, are not new in Japan.

According to the Teachers' Manual for elementary English, the objectives of English language teaching for junior high schools (seventh grade through ninth grade) were similar to those which were pointed out by the authorities on the direct method in the United States. They are as follows:

1. Auditory comprehension.
2. Oral proficiency.
3. Development of reading knowledge.
4. Skill in writing the language.
5. Understanding of the language, its people, and their customs and manners; and appreciation of the culture of the new language.

Despite the supreme objectives, the situation existing in Japan, at the present time, is far from reassuring. It is not surprising to

meet a high school graduate who has studied English for six years and who cannot utter a word of English. However, it is amazing to know that this student has tremendous detailed knowledge of English grammar.

Many factors have contributed to this situation. First of all, college entrance examinations have been very severe in Japan. In order to pass the examination, the high school students should be equipped with every detail of grammar, since the English tests consist of grammar and reading. This may be because there are no adequate tests for oral and auditory proficiency in existence. Even if there were, it might not be in use, since it would be time-consuming to administer these tests for thousands of individual applicants.

Consequently, the high school English teachers apply the "grammar method" to fit the students for college entrance examinations. Furthermore, this method is the best one for candidates for colleges and for the Japanese-born English teachers, who themselves are not able to pronounce English words correctly.

The second factor concerns the sound system of the Japanese language. There are five standard vowels in the Japanese language: "a", "i", "u", "e", and "o". The Japanese people since their birth, have been trained to distinguish between these five vowels. As a result, they are not able to distinguish (a:) in "father" from (ʌ) in "uncle;" nor (i:) in "leave" from (i) in "live."

Moreover, the Japanese sound system does not have (æ) in "cat;" (f) in "forest;" (θ) or (ð) in "thick" or "father;" (v) in "violet;" (r) in "rose;" (l) in "live;" and (w) in "wood." Consequently, they

are not able to make differentiate between "food" and "hood;" "think" and "sink;" "very" and "berry;" and "collection" and "correction." They call "that" "dat" or "zat."

It is feasible to apply the direct method to Japanese English teaching. In fact, many English teachers in Japan have been trying to adopt this method. However, this change from the grammar method to the direct approach has been gradual and probably will not be completely adopted unless changes in college entrance examination should occur and unless the teachers learn correct pronunciation and colloquial English.

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