Students in my English classes sometimes ask for my opinion on the best method of learning a foreign language. The answer I give is always the same: learning a foreign language can never be quick and easy. There is no single method that can guarantee success. In the Callan Method, the teacher talks a lot and makes the students repeat questions and answers. By contrast, in the Silent Way Method, invented by Dr Caleb Gatcngno, the teacher tries not to talk at all! The teacher uses pictures, diagrams, objects to give the students problem-solving activities. The idea is that students learn better if they can discover the rules by themselves. Certainly that is an important part of learning. But I'm not sure it can guarantee success.

I think that it is wrong to look for a method of teaching/learning that gives all the answers. Often, the method is not so important. Obviously, you need good materials (e.g. a good course book, etc) that are interesting and dear. And you need a good teacher too. The individual qualities of the teacher are very important. The teacher and the students must have a good relationship. The students must like their teacher. That is one important way to help make learning fun.

At the same time, we have to recognize that you can't make progress without doing some old-fashioned hard work. There must be a method involved in teaching and learning, but the same method doesn't work for everyone. People are different and they have different reasons for wanting to learn. The method will naturally change depending on the purpose of the lesson. However, it is important that each lesson should have a clear objective. The material should be presented in a context. There should be practice and consolidation work. Students should use all four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

There is nothing revolutionary about these ideas. But they give the best chances of success for different kinds of learners.
1. The article says about the Silent Way Method and the Callan Method. Read aloud the extract which says about it.

2. What does the writer answer when asked about the best teaching method?

3. What is really important for learning a foreign language according to the author?

1. This text is about teaching and learning a foreign language. There are different methods of teaching and learning a language but one can’t make progress without doing some old-fashioned hard work. In the Callan Method, the teacher talks a lot and makes the students repeat questions and answers. By contrast, in the Silent Way Method, invented by Dr Caleb Gattegno, the teacher tries not to talk at all! The teacher uses pictures, diagrams, objects to give the students problem-solving activities. The idea is that students learn better if they can discover the rules by themselves. Certainly that is an important part of learning. But I'm not sure it can guarantee success.

2. The writer answers that learning a foreign language can never be quick and easy.

3. According to the author it is really important for learning a foreign language to work hard, to have a clear objective, to have good materials, a good teacher, and students should use all four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Grammar acquisition is increasingly viewed as crucial to language acquisition. However, there is much disagreement as to the effectiveness of different approaches for presenting vocabulary items. Moreover, learning grammar is often perceived as a tedious and laborious process. In this report I would like to examine some traditional techniques and compare them with the use of language games for grammar presentation and revision, in order to determine whether they are successful in presenting and revising grammar than other methods. From my teaching experience I have noticed how enthusiastic students are about practicing language by means of games. I believe that the grammar games are not only fun but they help students learn without a conscious analysis or understanding of the learning process while they acquire communicative competence as second language users.

There are numerous techniques concerned with grammar presentation. However, there are a few things that have to be remembered irrespective of the way new lexical items are presented. If teachers want students to remember new grammar it needs to be learnt in the context, practiced and then revised to prevent students from forgetting. Teachers must take sure of that students have understood the new words, which will be remembered better if introduced in a “memorable way”. Bearing all this in mind, teachers have to remember to employ a variety of techniques for new grammatical presentation.

We suggest the following types of grammar presentation techniques:

1 Visual technique. These pertain to visual memory, which is considered especially helpful with the grammar retention. Learners remember better the material that has been presented by means of the visual aids. The visual techniques lend themselves well to presenting concrete items of grammar. They help students to associate the presented material in a meaningful way and incorporate it into their system of the language units.

2. Verbal explanation. This pertains to the use of illustrative situations connected with the grammar material studied.

A lot of experienced textbook and methodology manuals writers have argued that games are not just time-filling activities but they have a great educational value. We hold that most grammar games make learners use the language instead of thinking about learning the correct forms. The grammar games should be treated as central, not peripheral to the foreign language teaching programmers. Games, as Richard Amato thinks, are to be fun, but he warns against overlooking their pedagogical value, particularly in foreign language teaching programmers.

There are many factors to consider while discussing games, one of which is appropriacy. Teachers should be very careful about choosing games if they want to make them profitable for the learning process. If games are to bring desired results, they must correspond to either the students’ level, or age, or the materials that are to be introduced or practiced. Not all of the
games are appropriate for all students irrespective of their age. Different age groups require various topics, materials and modes of games. For example, children benefit most from games which require moving around, imitating a model, competing between groups, and the like. Furthermore, structural games that practice or reinforce a certain grammatical aspects of language have to relate to students’ ability and prior knowledge. Games become difficult when the task or the topic is unsuitable or outside the students’ experience. Games are often used as short warm-up activities or when there is some time left at the end of the lesson. As Mr. Lee observes, a game should not be regarded as a marginal activity filling in odd moments when the teacher and class have nothing better to do. Games ought to be at the heart of teaching foreign languages. Mr. Rixon suggests that games should be used at all stages of the English lesson, provided that they are suitable and carefully chosen. At different stages of the lesson, the teachers’ aims connected with a game may vary:

1. Presentation. It presents and provides a good model making its meaning clear.
2. Controlled practice. It elicits a good imitation of the language and appropriate responses.
3. Communicative practice. It gives to the students a chance to use a foreign language. Grammar games also lend themselves well to revision exercises helping learners to recall a grammar material in a pleasant, entertaining way. All authors referred to in my report agree that even the grammar games resulted only in noise and entertained students, they are still worth paying attention to and implementing in the classroom since they motivate learners, promote the communicative competence, and generate the fluency. However, can they be more successful for presentation and revision than other techniques? My teaching practice proves that the answer to this question is absolutely affirmative.

ЛИТЕРАТУРА


