

DR. WEST'S NEW METHOD

Dr. West conducted an extensive research and experiments on the problems of teaching English as a foreign language in India. **Teaching English The new method is the outcome of his research. It stood as a reaction against the Direct Method.**

Dr. West was of the opinion that in India, English is taught due to the following reasons,

- **It promotes internationalism**
- **It is a medium of communication among different parts of the world**
- **No Indian language is rich in the field of science.**

❖ Main Features

The West's method puts emphasis on important elements like

- ✓ **Reading**
- ✓ **Readers with selected vocabulary and**
- ✓ **Judicious use of the mother tongue**

This method lays more emphasis on the development of reading abilities, improvement of vocabulary. Dr. West laid more emphasis on the development of reading ability due to the following reasons.

- **Though English is a compulsory subject in many States, all second language learners do not have to speak English in schools or at their jobs. It was enough if all of them develop the reading skill which was an attainable goal for everyone · Reading is a ‘passive’ activity whereas speaking and writing are ‘active’ activities. The passive work is like the foundation of active work.**

Students after leaving school can continue self-education by reading English material.

- **By reading pupil can have an idea of structure of English language**
 - **Pupil can also develop a taste of English literature.**
 - **Reading facilitates speaking and writing.**
 - **Indian students have more chances of hearing incorrect English.**
- therefore Dr. West says, “ Children should better be entrusted to the guidance of books”.**

Dr .West designed new type of books called ‘Readers And Rapid Readers’

Features of book are,

- New words and phrases equally distributed over the pages
- Mother- tongue is frequently used
- Matter is explained with the help of pictures
- Grammatical rules are not explained
- Long stories included for developing reading habits.

In this method reading vocabulary is emphasized more.

Advantages of West's Method

- 1. Children improve their reading skill with this method.**
- 2. It initiates pupils for self-activity**
- 3. Reading helps in the development of power of comprehension**
- 4. Reading helps to make the speaking and writing easy**
- 5. The use of the mother –tongue makes student feel at home**

- 6. It helps to increase the vocabulary of the student.**
- 7. Develops a taste over the English literature.**
- 8. Pupils do not feel the over –load of grammatical rules.**
- 9. Both in terms of time and money, it is an economical method.**
- 10. It develops the habit of reading books in other subjects.**

- DEMERITS:

- 1. Dr. West has over-estimated the value of reading by saying that it by far the shortest road to learning to speak and write it. **but it can not be ‘the shortest road’ to learning then.**

- 2. If the pupils have to start with reading in the initial stage, the language learning is sure to be dull and lifeless to him. So **it is un-psychological.**

- 3. Dr. West’s view that ‘a reading knowledge of a language is easier to acquire than a speaking’ **is not supported by the modern educationists.** Moreover, ‘children should not begin reading till they have acquired facility in speech and a fairly large vocabulary.

- 4. Dr. West has **over emphasized the importance of acquiring a vocabulary** and has selected the commonest words. But he has neglected the graduated introduction of sentence patterns and also of the phrases and idioms that are essential elements in developing language sense.
- 5. The frequent use of the same word **may develop an artificial style.**
- 6. This method attaches **too much of importance to silent reading.** No doubt, in learning of a language, silent reading has an important role.
- 7. This method does not give due importance to the oral work. **To neglect oral work in the lower classes is unscientific and un-psychological.**
- 8. Dr. West's new method of teaching English **does not help Indian students to achieve the four-fold objectives of language learning.**

- Concluding Remarks

- In spite of the above drawbacks, Dr. West's method can put to a thorough test. It has done a useful service in the teaching of English in India. This method may be effective In modern approach.