

**English Language teaching: Methods and Teaching Aids used by Secondary School  
Teachers in Mizoram, India**

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**Abstract:** *In Mizoram, a state located in the north eastern region of India, teaching and learning of English as a second language is often faced with problems of understanding on the part of students which leads to failure and even increase in dropout rates. Teachers are found to be facing certain problems in selecting their methods of teaching in order to deal and teach different kinds students at secondary level of education. The present study is an attempt to find out the teaching methods and teaching aids used by English teachers in Mizoram. Descriptive survey method was used for the present study and the population comprised of all English teachers of secondary level of education in Mizoram collected by stratified random sampling method. A questionnaire to find out the methods of teaching and use of teaching aids was constructed by the investigators. The study found that majority of the teachers used Bilingual method, Direct method and the Grammar translation method. In relation to the use of teaching aids, majority of the teachers were found to be relying on the prescribed textbooks and the use of blackboard/whiteboards in the classroom. Some teachers were also found to be frequently using picture charts, projectors, computers, newspapers and supplementary reading materials to teach English language.*

**Keywords:** English language teaching, methods, secondary school teachers, Mizoram.

## Introduction

Teaching and learning English as a second language has become an important aspect of the educational system in India. In Mizoram too, one of the North-eastern states of India, English plays a vital role in determining the success, achievements and careers of students across the state. Secondary level of school education in Mizoram comprises of Class IX and Class X in which English textbooks prescribed by the Mizoram Board of School Education are used for teaching and learning of English language. Teaching of English as a second language to Mizo students at secondary level of education is quite a challenging task as there are many students from Mizo medium schools. These students are often found to be lacking behind in understanding different school subjects as all the prescribed textbooks except Mizo and Hindi textbooks are now written in English language. To have an effective teaching and learning to take place, it is of great importance that teachers use the best appropriate and suitable teaching methods in their teaching.

Common methods of teaching English language:

Some of the common methods of teaching English as a second language are as follows:

- Direct Method
- Bilingual Method
- Grammar Translation Method
- Audio Lingual Method
- Dr. West's New Method
- Communicative Language Teaching Method
- Eclectic Method

## Rationale

A common problem encountered by students in Mizoram is that many students struggle with learning and mastering English as a second language. This affects the academic achievement of students in several ways and even lead to the increase rate of drop outs in many schools in Mizoram. Many students are somehow compelled to take extra tuitions creating further financial problems for their parents. Teachers have to utilise a variety of methods and strategies in the classroom when teaching English as a second language. This can further lead to achieving a better and an effective teaching-learning process to take place. However, due to insufficient teaching aids and lack of trained teachers, the teaching and learning of English tend to become less interesting for students who use English as their

second language. Moreover, many students are found to be shy and hesitant to use English for communication.

To overcome these barriers, it is of great importance that teachers use the right kind of teaching methods, techniques and appropriate teaching aids while teaching English language in schools. The present study is an attempt to find out the various teaching methods employed by teachers at secondary level of school education in Mizoram.

### **Research Questions**

1. What methods are used by teachers in teaching English language to secondary school students?
2. What kinds of teaching aids are used by teachers while teaching English language to secondary school students?

### **Review of literature**

Ahmad and Rao (2013) in their experimental study, “Applying Communicative Approach in Teaching English as a Foreign Language: a Case Study of Pakistan” found that to teach English language to higher secondary students, Communicative method to teaching English is better than the Grammar translation method. It was also found that students could increase their speaking skills if they are provided with suitable conditions in the classroom and that the use of the Communicative approach was found to be an important factor in motivating students to learn English language.

According to Grover (2014) in her study titled, “Teaching of English in Indian Schools through Grammar Translation Method—Low Performance—A Field Study” it was revealed that students who are taught English through Grammar translation method have low performance.

Nguyen et.al. (2014) found that teaching aids and technology were not used much by the teachers. It was also found that teachers prepared handouts for students only in three classes out of eight classes which were being under observation. All classrooms were equipped with over-head projectors, however, not all teachers used them for their lessons. Some teachers did not use them at all. The teaching materials used by these teachers were mainly textbook and CD players. Some teachers were found to preparing PowerPoint slides which included pictures and video clips. The study also showed that problems in relation to

teachers' uninteresting teaching styles were factors responsible to have an impact in the teaching and learning process.

Rajkhowas and Das (2015) found that that 83% in urban and 89% in rural areas used the Translation Method to teach English and that majority of the teachers were found to be never using teaching learning materials in the class.

Awan and Shafi (2016) in their study, "An Analysis of teaching methods of English language at government secondary school level in D.G. Khan City, Pakistan" found that most of the teachers i.e., 80% agreed that Grammar Translation Method was most suitable method for the students but they also agreed that Direct Method had the capacity to lead their students towards the today's demand of language.

Ajoke (2017) found that there is a statistically significant difference in the performance of students taught with the use of visual instructional materials and those taught without the use of instructional materials. Students in the experimental group were found to be performing better than students in the control group in their achievement test which denoted that visual instructional materials have positive effect in students' academic achievement.

Omar (2019) in his study, "Influence of grammar translation method (GTM) on Libyan students' English performance in communicative situations" found the common teaching method used in Libya is GTM, and that this method negatively affected the Libyan students' English performance in communicative situations. The study also revealed that the participants prefer using communicative language teaching approach.

### **Research Methodology**

Descriptive Survey Method of research was employed for the present study. The population comprised of all English teachers of secondary education in Mizoram, India out of which a sample of 100 English teachers were selected by the investigator. A questionnaire to find out the methods employed and the teaching aids utilised in teaching English language was constructed by the investigator. The questionnaire was administered to the sample teachers. All respondents were informed about the objective of the study and all were assured of the confidentiality of their respective responses. Simple statistical techniques such as frequencies and percentages were worked out to facilitate the analysis and interpretation of data.

### **Analysis and Interpretation**

## 1. Methods of teaching English language employed by teachers at secondary level of education in Mizoram:

Table1. Methods of Teaching

Name of the method	Frequently	Rarely	Never
Direct Method	64	26	0
Bilingual Method	74	17	0
Grammar Translation Method	62	21	2
Audio-Lingual Method	15	40	28
Dr. West's new Method	15	26	38
Communicative Language Teaching method	55	32	2
Eclectic Method	45	32	6

An analysis of data vide Table shows that 64% of the teachers frequently and 26% rarely use Direct Method to teach English language to students while no teachers are found to never use this Method in teaching English language. The study also reveals that 74% of the teachers frequently and 17% rarely use Bilingual Method to teach English language to students while no teachers are found to be never using this Method in teaching English language. It was found that 62% of the teachers frequently and 21% rarely use Grammar translation Method to teach English language to students while 2% never use this Method in

teaching English language. The study also reveals that 15% of the teachers frequently and 40% rarely use Audio Lingual Method to teach English language to students while 28% never use this Method in teaching English language. 15% of the teachers frequently and 26% rarely use Dr. West's New Method to teach English language to students while 38% never use this Method in teaching English language while 55% of the teachers frequently and 32% rarely use Communicative language teaching Method to teach English language to students while 2% never use this Method in teaching English language. As many as 45% of the teachers are found to be frequently using Eclectic method in teaching English language to secondary school students while 32% rarely use this method. 6% are also found to be never using the Eclectic Method to teach English language to students.

As a whole, Bilingual Method is found to be frequently used by majority of the teachers in teaching English language to students as this method allows the usage of both the mother tongue and the target language. Majority of the teachers are also found to be favouring the use of methods like the Direct method, the Grammar Translation method and the Communicative Language teaching method

## **2. Teaching aids used by English teachers while teaching English language to secondary school students:**

Table 2. Teaching aids used in teaching English language

Name of teaching aid	Frequently	Rarely	Never
Radio	2	4	77
Television	9	6	70
Computer/laptop	15	38	32
Language laboratories	4	13	66
Picture charts	38	36	19

Flash cards	15	28	40
Projectors/Ppt	13	17	53
Prescribed textbooks only	85	6	4
Mobile phones	26	49	17
Tablets	2	26	49
Supplementary reading materials	38	47	6
Newspapers	15	45	26
Magazines	9	45	30
Globes	6	28	51
Maps	9	32	47
Picture charts	28	34	30
Flipcards	11	23	49
Flipcharts	11	26	49
Mounted pictures	6	23	53
Flannel boards	2	17	64
Tape recorder	2	9	77
Gramophone	0	4	81
Movies/films	9	36	45
Models/real objects	13	51	21
Blackboard/whiteboard	94	4	

Roll-up board	0	21	62
Cut-outs from magazines, newspapers etc.	9	47	30
Smartboards	9	15	62
Slides	2	23	62
Filmstrips		11	72

The table above shows that 2% of teachers frequently and 4% rarely use a radio for teaching English language to students while 77% never use it in the teaching-learning process. The study also reveals that 9% of teachers frequently and 6% rarely use a television for teaching English language to students while 70% never use it. The percentage of teachers who frequently make use of computers or laptops is 15% while those who rarely use these devices are 38%. 32% are found to be never using computers or laptops in the teaching of English language. 4% of teachers frequently and 13% rarely make use of language laboratories for teaching English language to students while 66% never use them. The percentage of teachers who frequently make use of picture charts is 38% while those who rarely use these devices are 36%. 19% are found to be never using picture charts. The study reveals that 15% of teachers frequently and 28% rarely use flash cards for teaching English language to students while 40% never use it. It was also found that 13% of teachers frequently and 17% rarely use projectors for teaching English language to students while 53% never make use of projectors.

There are as many as 85% of teachers who frequently and 6% rarely use only the prescribed textbooks in teaching English language to secondary school students while 4% said that they never use only the prescribed textbooks. 26% of teachers frequently and 49% rarely are found to be using mobile phones for teaching English language to students while 17% never use it in the teaching of English language. The study also reveals that the percentage of teachers who frequently make use of tablets is 2% while those who rarely use it are 26%. 49% are found to be never using tablets in the teaching of English language. The table shows that 38% of teachers frequently and 47% rarely make use of supplementary reading materials for teaching English language to students while 6% never use such



materials. It was also found that 15% of teachers frequently and 45% rarely use of newspapers for teaching English language to students while 26% never use it. The percentage of teachers who frequently make use of magazines is found to be 9% while those who rarely use magazines are 45%. 30% are found to be never using them in the teaching of English language.

It was further found that 6% of teachers frequently and 28% rarely use of globes for teaching English language to students while 51% never use it. 9% of teachers frequently and 32% rarely use of maps for teaching English language to students while 47% never use it. The table shows that 112% of teachers frequently and 23% rarely make use of flipcards for teaching English language to students while 49% never use such teaching aids. The study also reveals that the percentage of teachers who frequently make use of flipcharts is 11% while those who rarely use it are 26%. 49% are found to be never using flipcharts in the teaching of English language. The table also shows that the percentage of teachers who frequently make use of mounted pictures is 6% while those who rarely use it are 23%. 53% are found to be never using these in the teaching of English language. The study reveals that the percentage of teachers who frequently make use of flannel boards is 2% while those who rarely use it are 17%. 64% are found to be never using them in the teaching of English language.

The study also reveals that 2% of teachers frequently and 9% rarely use a tape recorder for teaching English language to students while 77% never use it. The percentage of teachers who frequently make use of gramophone is 0% while those who rarely use it are 4%. 81% are found to be never using a gramophone in the teaching of English language. The study also reveals that the percentage of teachers who frequently make use of movies or films is 9% while those who rarely use it are 36%. 45% of the teachers never make use of movies and films in teaching English to students.

The percentage of teachers who frequently make use of models/real objects is found to be 13 % while those who rarely use them are 51%. 21% are found to be never using models in the teaching of English language. The study also reveals that 94 % of teachers frequently and 4% rarely use a blackboard/whiteboard for teaching English language to students while no teachers are found to be never using the blackboard/whiteboard. The study also reveals that the no teachers frequently make use of roll-up boards while those who rarely use these kinds of teaching aids are 21%. 62% of the teachers are found to never make use of them in teaching English to students. It is also seen that 9% of teachers frequently and 47% rarely use cut-outs from magazines and newspapers for teaching English language to students

while 30% never use such materials. The percentage of teachers who frequently make use of smartboards is found to be 9% while those who rarely use them are 15%. 62% are found to be never using smartboards in the teaching of English language. The study also reveals that 2% of teachers frequently and 23% rarely use slides for teaching English language to students while 62% never use it. No teachers are found to be frequently using filmstrips while those who rarely use them are 11%. 72% are found to be never using these teaching aids in the teaching of English language.

In conclusion, majority of the teachers never use radio, television, computer/laptop, language laboratories, flannel boards, tape recorder, gramophone, roll-up board, smartboards, slides and filmstrips while teaching English language while majority of the teachers are also found to be making use of the prescribed textbooks and blackboards/whiteboards in teaching English language to secondary school students.

### **Discussion**

The present study explored various methods of teaching English and teaching aids used by English teachers at secondary level of school education in Mizoram. The findings of the present study were in line with the findings of Rajkumar and Das (2015) and Awan and Shafi (2016) which reflected that majority of English teachers used the Translation method in teaching English to secondary school students. On the other hand, Grover (2014) and Omar (2019) in their studies highlighted the negative effects of the Grammar translation Method in the teaching and learning process of English language.

Aman and Shafi also found that Direct Method had the capacity to lead their students towards the today's demand of language which is in line with the findings of the present study that revealed that majority of teachers utilised the Direct method in teaching English language. The findings of the present study were also in line with that of Ahmad and Rao (2012) which stated that Communicative method of teaching English is better than the Grammar translation method in teaching students.

The findings of the present study were also in line with the findings of Nguyen et.al. (2014) which revealed that teaching aids and technology were not used much by the teachers. The present study found that majority of teachers never use the radio, television, language laboratories, projectors, globes, mounted pictures, flannel boards, tape recorders, gramophones, roll-up boards, smartboards, slides and filmstrips while teaching English to secondary school students in Mizoram. It was however found that majority of the teachers i.e., 85% frequently made use of prescribed textbooks in the teaching of English language.

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