

The Audio-Lingual method

Basic information

- = ALM
- = the Army Method
- The Audiolingual Method has also been called audiolingualism, the aural-oral approach and — reflecting its military roots — the Army Method
- With the outbreak of World War II armies needed to become orally proficient in the languages of their allies and enemies as quickly as possible.
- This teaching technique was the first to be based on linguistic theory and behavioral psychology.
- Based on Skinner's Behaviorism theory, it assumed that a human being can be trained using a system of reinforcement. Correct behaviour receives positive feedback, while errors receive negative feedback.
- This approach to learning is similar to the Direct Method, in that the lesson takes place entirely in the target language.
- Emphasis is on the acquisition of patterns in common everyday dialogue.
- The emphasis is not on the understanding of words, but rather on the acquisition of structures and patterns in common everyday dialogue.
- These patterns are elicited, repeated and tested until the responses given by the student in the foreign language are automatic.
- The Audio-lingual Method is still in use today, though normally as a part of individual lessons rather than as the foundation of the course. These types of lessons can be popular as they are relatively simple, from the teacher's point of view, and the learner always knows what to expect.
- This extensive memorization, repetition and over-learning of patterns was the key to the method's success, as students could often see immediate results, but it was also its weakness.
- It was discovered that language was not acquired through a process of habit formation.
- The method's insistence on repetition and memorization of standard phrases ignored the role of context and knowledge in language learning. As the study of linguistics developed, it was discovered that language was not acquired through a process of habit formation, and that errors were not necessarily bad.
- It was also claimed that the methodology did not deliver an improvement in communicative ability that lasted over the long term.
- **Backchaining is a drilling technique intended to help learners pronounce difficult sound groups, words or phrases. The teacher begins with the last sound, which the learners repeat, and then gradually builds up the word or phrase by going 'back' to the beginning. Backchaining is one of many drilling techniques which can be used to focus on pronunciation problems. It is particularly useful to help learners pronounce weak, elided or intrusive sounds. In addition to helping learners say difficult phrases, it is also fun.**

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- RICHARDS, Jack C. a Theodore S. RODGERS. Approaches and methods in language teaching. Third edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. ISBN 978-1-107-67596-4.
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<p>Example</p> <p>The following sequence is an example of a backchaining drill:</p> <p>Teacher: Known</p> <p>Learners: Known</p> <p>Teacher: I'd known</p> <p>Learners: I'd known</p> <p>Teacher: If only I'd known</p> <p>Learners: If only I'd known etc.</p>	
<p>Key words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drill • Pronunciation • Vocabulary in context • Habit • Chunks • Ss don't express themselves • Teacher-centred • Repetition • Oral based • Correction 	
<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backchaining drill • Pronunciation and practice drill – the only way to learn pronunciation • Pronunciation Habit for tongue • Starting from the oral, than written form – good for 1st graders • Vocabulary in context – we can imagine, using drama 	<p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ss don't express themselves • Too much drill • It can be boring for learners, no chance to express themselves • Ss never try to imitate and improvise – no trained to that •

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• Creating habit, automatic reaction – How are you? I am fine, thank you.	•	
•	•	
Principles and procedures	Yes/no - particular exercise/activity	My notes
• Target language/some mother tongue.	Yes – in every activity	Ss know vocabulary, T uses E instructions
• Teacher-centred.	Yes – a lot of T work	
• Mechanical habit-formation activities with little opportunity for ("bad habit"-causing) mistakes.	Yes – a lot of repetition	
• Immediate reinforcement of correct responses.	Yes	
• Correct responses are positively reinforced immediately.	Yes	It's sometimes good to over learn something
• Presentation of new structural patterns and vocabulary through oral repetition and memorization of scripted dialogues.	Yes – the dialogue	
• Vocabulary is taught in context.	Yes	
• Oral pattern-drills of key structures from dialogues (repetition drills, chain drills, substitution drills...).	Yes - repetition	
• Drills are used to teach structural patterns.	Yes – reading and dialogues	

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• Inductive learning of grammar rules based on dialogues (ie no explicit grammar teaching).	No – they do not try to notice the regularity	It could be possible if Ss try to create a different sentence.
• Grammatical explanations are kept to a minimum.	Yes – no grammar was explained	
• Use of tapes, visual aids and ultimately language labs.	No	I am not sure about this one.
• Reading and written work based on earlier oral work, sometimes given as homework.	Yes	No homework was given
• Set phrases are memorised with a focus on intonation.	Yes	
• Focus is on pronunciation.	Yes – based on repetition,	
• Speaking and listening		
• Memorization chunks of language	Yes – the dialogue	
• Implicit learning of grammar rules based on dialogues	Yes – more than inductive	
• Order of activities L,S,R,W	Yes – good order	
• Ss don't express themselves	It is not a principle it's true though.	

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• T monitors and correct Ss	Yes	
• Instructions in spoken form	Yes	
• Reading connected to the dialogue	There was no connection and not enough context	
• 1 st listening, than reading	Yes	
• Structure is not emphasized	It is not typical	
• No reflection in ALM	????	I am not sure about this one.
• Cultural awareness		
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