

names for the same ideas and the question arises, Shall the new names be associated directly with the ideas themselves or with the English names? This question divides the two methods. The exponents of the Translation Method say, Let them be associated with the English names. If the pupils wish to express themselves, let them think in English and then translate their utterances into French. On the other hand, the advocates of the natural method maintain that the new names should be associated directly with the conceptions existing in the minds of the pupils, in which case they will not require to go through the hazardous process of thinking in English and translating into French. Now, in order to realize the importance of this difference, it is necessary to recall that it is impossible to speak French until we have got rid of this habit of translating. The two languages differ in their mode of expression. You wish to say, Here is a red apple, and, pressed for time, you hurriedly translate, Ici est une rouge pomme. Your experience may suggest many instances of this kind.

Another of the points of excellence of this method is that the stress of the teaching is placed where it should be, on the sounds of the language. The ear and the tongue are the organs which should be trained rather than the eye. Let pupils learn to read by learning first to speak. Let them learn written composition through oral composition. Many persons learn French so well that they are able to read and understand a French story, but if you take the book from them and tell them the story they will not understand you, nor will they be able to relate it even imperfectly to others. Such a knowledge of French is of unquestionable value, but it is not the kind of knowledge that we most require in this province.

I shall now proceed with a discussion of the conditions under which an oral method may be expected to succeed in public schools. Let us consider the necessary qualifications of the teacher. I do not hesitate to admit that the method is somewhat exacting from this point of view. First of all, the teacher's knowledge of the language must be of the practical kind. Within the limits of the work, which, after all, are narrow enough in junior classes, she must be able to pronounce correctly and to speak with reasonable fluency.