

# **LANGUAGE IN INDIA**

**Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow**

**Volume 10 : 1 January 2010**

**ISSN 1930-2940**

**Managing Editor: M. S. Thirumalai, Ph.D.**

**Editors: B. Mallikarjun, Ph.D.**

**Sam Mohanlal, Ph.D.**

**B. A. Sharada, Ph.D.**

**A. R. Fatihi, Ph.D.**

**Lakhan Gusain, Ph.D.**

**K. Karunakaran, Ph.D.**

**Jennifer Marie Bayer, Ph.D.**

***Language and Literature: An Exposition -***  
**Papers Presented in Karunya University International Seminar**

**Editor:**

**J. Sundarsingh, Ph.D.**

*Language in India* [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com)

**10 : 1 January 2010**

A. Selvalakshmi, M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed., Ph.D.

The Silent Way

## The Silent Way

A. Selvalakshmi, M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed., Ph.D.

---

### Teaching Method

The teaching of any subject matter is usually based on an analysis of the nature of the subject itself and the application of teaching and learning principles drawn from research and theory in educational psychology. The result is generally referred to as a teaching method or approach, by which we refer to a set of core teaching and learning principles together with a body of class room practices that are derived from them.

### *Silent Way: A New Approach to Language Teaching*

New approaches and methods proliferated throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One among them seems to be the *Silent way*. *The Silent way* is the name of a method of language teaching devised by Calels Gattegno.

It is based on the premise that the teacher should be silent as much as possible in the class room but the learner should be encouraged to produce as much language as possible. It is also related to a set of premises that we have called “problem – solving approaches to learning.” These premises are succinctly represented in the words of Benjamin Franklin:

Tell me and I forget,  
Teach me and I remember,  
Involve me and I learn.

### A Structural Syllabus

Normally the material chosen and the sequence in which it is presented in a Silent way class room, is basically structural syllabus, with lessons planned around grammatical items and related vocabulary.

The learning tasks and activities encourage and shape student’s oral response without direct oral instruction form or unnecessary modeling by the teacher. Learners are expected to develop independence, autonomy and responsibility.

Basic to the method are simple linguistic tasks in which the teacher models a word, phrase or sentence and then elicits learner responses.

*Language in India* [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com)

10 : 1 January 2010

A. Selvalakshmi, M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed., Ph.D.

The Silent Way

Learners then go on to create their own utterances by putting together old and new information. Thus learners have only themselves as individuals and the group to rely on and so must learn to work co-operatively rather than competitively. They need to feel comfortable both correcting one another and being corrected by one another.

### Teacher Silence

Teacher silence is perhaps, the unique and for many traditionally trained language teachers, the most demanding aspect of the Silent way. Teachers are exhorted to resist their long-standing commitment to model, remodel, assist and direct desired student responses. The teacher uses gestures, charts and manipulative in order to elicit and shape student responses and so must be both facile and creative as a pantomimist and puppeteer.

Thus the Silent way teacher is like the complete dramatist, writes the script, choose the props, sets the mood, models the action, designates the player and is critic for the performance. Fidel's charts are used to visually illustrate pronunciation, the colours Cuisenaire rods are used to directly link words and structures with their meanings in the target language, thereby avoiding translation into the native language.

### Sound/Color Charts

Sound /Color Charts have been created for many languages and have been used by teachers around the world for more than 20 years. The English Sound /Color Chart is a 40 x 55 centimeter wall chart with 58 rectangles of different colors. The vowels are placed above a line nearly halfway down the chart and the consonants are placed below this line.

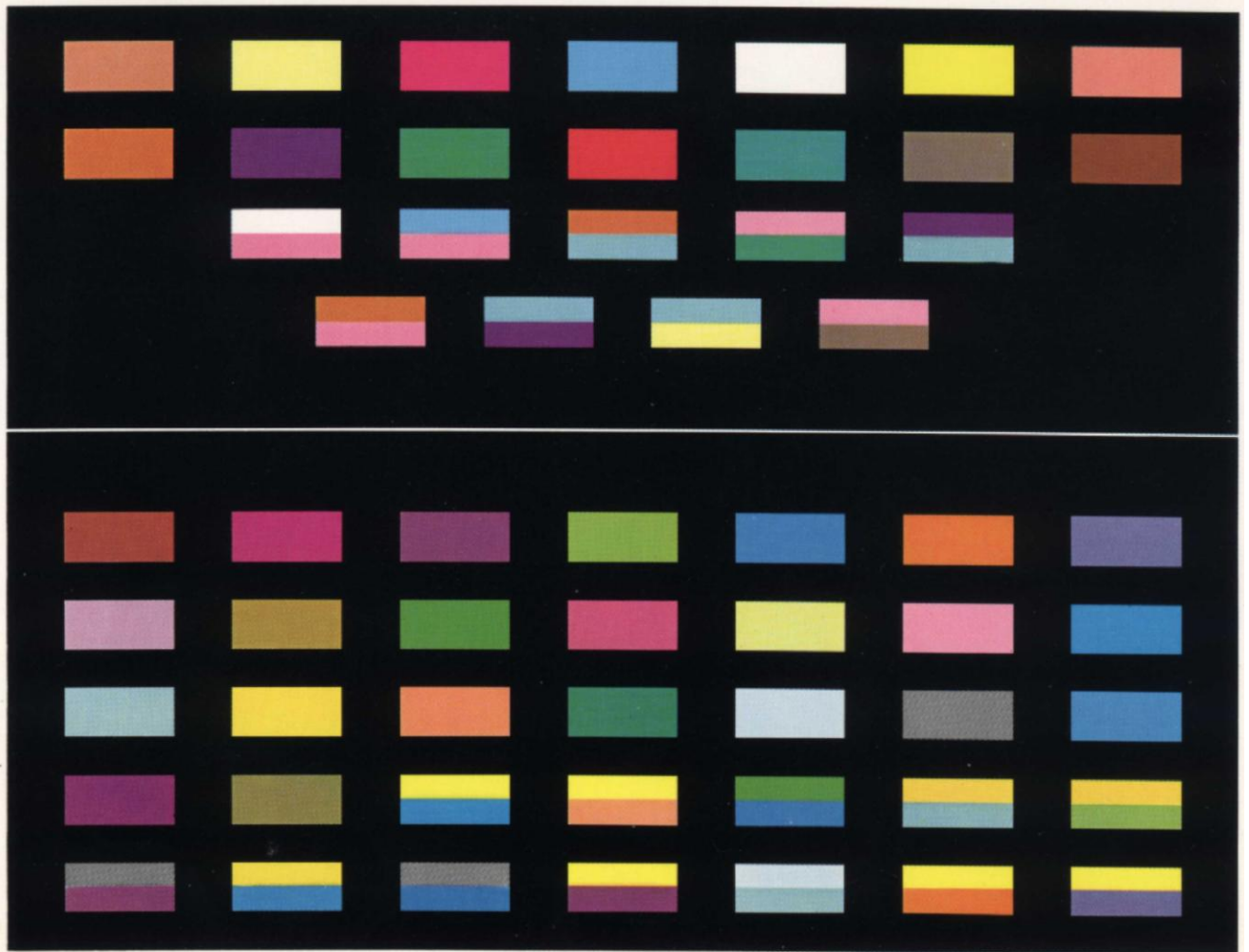
<u>a</u> t	<u>u</u> p	<u>i</u> n	<u>p</u> et	<u>n</u> ot	<u>a</u> bove	<u>h</u> er
<u>a</u> ll	<u>a</u> re	<u>n</u> oon	<u>e</u> at	<u>a</u> ir	<u>u</u> t	<u>o</u> r
	<u>h</u> igh	<u>m</u> ay	<u>o</u> we	<u>y</u> ou	<u>o</u> t	
	<u>b</u> oy	<u>m</u> emoir	<u>o</u> ne	<u>y</u> our		
pup	at	is	us	azure	my	nice
fan	van	did	the	thin	yes	let
we	kit	run	by	hot	gum	she
chin	sing	little	fire	just	quite	ax
exit	anxious	luxury	Jones's	whale	rhythm	isn't

*Language in India* [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com)

10 : 1 January 2010

A. Selvalakshmi, M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed., Ph.D.

The Silent Way



Copyright © 1977, C. Gattegno

ENGLISH Sound-Color Chart

Educational Solutions, Inc., USA

Thirty-seven of the rectangles are of one color, 21 are of two. The two-colored rectangles are divided horizontally and are read or sounded out, from top to bottom. Thus the color for the /a/ phoneme is combined with the color for the /y/ phoneme to produce the diphthong found in “high”. On the consonant side the chart, the “qu” sound found in “quite” is represented by a rectangle the top half of which is the color for /k/ and the bottom half the color for /w/.

Thus, learning is facilitated by discovering and creating rather than remembering and repeating what is to be learned. Learning is facilitated by accompanying physical objects and learning is facilitated by problem solving the material to be learned.

*Language in India* [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com)

10 : 1 January 2010

A. Selvalakshmi, M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed., Ph.D.

The Silent Way

## Works Consulted

Burner, J. *On Knowing: Essays for the Left Hand*. New York : Atheneum. 1966.  
Jack C.Richards and Theodore S.Rodgers. *Approaches and methods in language Teaching*. Mauoa. 1986.

Stervick, E.W. *Teaching language: A Way and Ways* Rowky , Mass : Newbury House. 1980.

Sunney Tharappan. *Communicative English: A Basic Course in Spoken and Written English*. Mangalore 2003.

---

A. Selvalakshmi, M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed., Ph.D.  
Sri Sarada College for Women (Autonomous)  
Salem -636016  
Tamilnadu, India  
[selvalakshmi.masc@yahoo.co.in](mailto:selvalakshmi.masc@yahoo.co.in)

*Language in India* [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com)

**10 : 1 January 2010**

A. Selvalakshmi, M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed., Ph.D.  
The Silent Way