

THE BERLITZ METHOD

FOR TEACHING MODERN LANGUAGES.

ENGLISH PART

FIRST BOOK

BY

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The Berlitz Method of Teaching Languages.

„Every one learns German or any other language much better from hearing it spoken in the house, in business and at church, than from books.“

Dr. Martin Luther.

The generous favor with which this method, although intended at first only for the “Berlitz Schools“, has been received in America from 1878, as well as also the numerous letters sent by renowned European Educators to the Author, prompted him eight years ago to publish his first European edition in which have been placed a number of notes and hints for the purpose of enabling other teachers to employ the method with the excellent results usually obtained by this method.

The Berlitz Method is an imitation of the natural process by which a child learns its mother tongue. In it, translation as a means of acquiring a foreign language, is entirely abandoned. From the very first lesson, the student hears only the language he is studying. The reasons for this mode of introducing the new tongue are as follows:

1. In all translation-methods, most of the time is taken up by explanations in the student's mother tongue,

while but few words during the lesson are spoken in the language to be learned. It is evident that such a procedure is contrary to common sense.

2. He who is seeking to acquire a foreign language by means of translation, neither gets hold of its spirit nor does he become accustomed to think in it; on the contrary, he has a tendency to base all he says on what he would say in his mother tongue and he cannot prevent his vernacular from assimilating the foreign idiom, thereby rendering the latter unintelligible or, at least, incorrect.

3. A knowledge of a foreign tongue acquired by means of translation, is necessarily defective and incomplete; for there is by no means for every word of the one language, the exact equivalent in the other. Every language has its peculiarities, its idiomatic expressions and turns, which cannot possibly be rendered by translation. Furthermore the ideas conveyed by an expression in one language, are frequently not the same as those conveyed by the same words in the other. This undeniable fact alone suffices to show clearly that all translation-methods are deficient, and proves that every language must be learned out of itself. This is also confirmed by the well known experience of a traveler in a foreign country. He learns with little trouble and in a comparatively short time to speak fluently the foreign language, whilst the student at school, in spite of his wearisome work with grammar

and translation exercises, vainly strives for years to obtain the same result.

The instruction by the Berlitz method, is to the student what the sojourn in a foreign land is to a traveler. He hears and speaks only the language he wishes to learn, as if he were in a foreign country — He has however, the advantage that the language has been methodically and systematically arranged for him.

In order to make himself understood, the teacher in the Berlitz method resorts at first to object lessons. The expressions of the foreign language are taught in direct association with perception; the student thus forms the habit of using the foreign tongue spontaneously and easily, as he does his mother tongue, and not in the roundabout way of translation. The difficulties of grammar, which frequently are created only by translation and the consequent comparison with the mother tongue, are greatly diminished. It is, for instance, just as easy for the student to learn "I you see" (French form) as it is "I see you" (English form), the difficulty appears only when the student compares the foreign expression with that of his mother tongue in which the construction is different. It is also evident that the value of the various words and constructions are understood much more easily by means of the practical and striking examples of object lessons, than by the abstract rules of theoretical grammar.

What cannot be taught by means of object lesson is elucidated by being placed in proper context; i.e. the new words are used among previously learned expressions in such a manner that the meaning of the new becomes perfectly clear from its connection with what precedes and follows. In the more advanced lessons, the new words are frequently explained by simple definitions containing the previously acquired vocabulary.

The entire stock of words used in the lessons, is given principally in the form of conversation between the teacher and the student. The order followed is such as always to give the most necessary and the most useful first, so that if the student discontinue after having taken only few lessons, he has acquired a sufficient knowledge of the language to be able to make a practical use of it.

These are the more important advantages claimed for this method, and the author feels confident that this new edition will prove of great value to teachers who are willing to work hard, if by it they insure the complete success of their students.

Teachers using the Berlitz method can obtain from the Publisher, Mr. S. Cronbach, a card entitling them to gratuitous instruction at any of the Berlitz Schools, in applying it. Those who desire additional information should correspond directly with the author of this work.

