



METHODS AND APPROACHES IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Approaches, methods, procedures, and techniques

- *Approach*: this refers to “theories about the nature of language and language learning that serve as the source of practices and principles in language teaching”. It offers a model of language competence. An approach describes how people acquire their knowledge of the language and makes statements about conditions which will promote successful language learning.
- *Method*: a method is the practical realization of an approach. Methods include various procedures and techniques as part of their standard fare.
- *Procedure*: a procedure is an ordered sequence of techniques. A procedure is a sequence which can be described in terms such as *first you do this, then you do that...* Smaller than a method and bigger than technique.

- *Technique*: a common technique when using video material is called “silent viewing”. This is where the teacher plays the video with no sound. Silent viewing is a single activity rather than a sequence, and as such is a technique rather than a whole procedure.
- A term that is also used in discussions about teaching is *“model”* – used to describe typical procedures, usually for teachers in training. Such models offer abstractions of these procedures, designed to guide teaching practice.

The Grammar – Translation Method

- This is a method that has been used by language teachers for many years.
- At one time it was called Classical Method, since it was first used in the teaching of the classical languages, Latin and Greek.
- Earlier in this century, it was used for the purpose of helping students read and appreciate foreign language literature.

The Grammar – Translation Method

- Classes are taught in the students' mother tongue, with little active use of the target language;
- Vocabulary is taught in the form of isolated word lists;
- Elaborate explanations of grammar are always provided;
- Reading of difficult text is begun early in the course of study;
- Little attention is paid to the content of text, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis.

Audio-lingualism

- Audio-lingual methodology owes its existence to the *Behaviourist models* of learning using the Stimulus-Response-Reinforcement model, it attempted, through a continuous process of such positive reinforcement, to engender good habits in language learners.
- Audio-lingualism relied heavily on drills like substitution to form these habits.
- Habit-forming drills have remained popular among teachers and students, and teachers who feel confident with the linguistic restriction of such procedures

Presentation, Practice, and Production

- A variation on Audio-lingualism in British-based teaching and elsewhere is the procedure most often referred to as PPP, which stands for **Presentation, Practice, and Production**. In this procedure the teacher introduces a situation which contextualises the language to be taught. The students now practice the language using accurate reproduction techniques such as choral repetition, individual repetition, and cue-response drills

PPP and alternatives to PPP

- The PPP procedure came under a sustained attack in the 1990s.
- Michael Lewis suggested that PPP was inadequate because it reflected neither the nature of language nor the nature of learning.
- Jim Scrivener advanced what is perhaps the most worrying aspect of PPP, the fact that it only describes one kind of lesson; it is inadequate as a general proposal concerning approaches to language in the classroom.
- In response to these criticisms many people have offered variations on PPP and alternatives to it: ARC, OHE/III, ESA.

ARC

- put forward by Jim Scrivener
- stands for **A**uthentic use, **R**estricted use and **C**larification and focus
- Communicative activity will demonstrate authentic use; elicited dialogue or guided writing will provoke restricted use of language by students; finally clarification language is that which the teacher and students use to explain grammar, give examples, analyse errors, elicit or repeat things.

OHE/III

- Michael Lewis claims that students should be allowed to Observe (read or listen to language) which will then provoke them to Hypothesise about how the language works before going on to the Experiment on the basis of that hypothesis.

ESA

- In the ESA model three components will usually be present in any teaching sequence, whether of five, fifty or a hundred minutes
- *E* stands for *Engage* - students have to be engaged emotionally
- *S* stands for *Study*
- *A* stands for *Activate* - any stage at which students are encouraged to use all and/or any of the language they know

The Communicative Approach

- The communicative approach or *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)* is the name which was given to a set of beliefs which included not only a re-examination of what aspects of language to teach but also a shift in emphasis on how to teach!

Non-communicative activities

No communicative desire
No communicative purpose
Form not content
One language item only
Teacher intervention
Materials control

Communicative activities

A desire to communicate
A communicative purpose
Content not form
Variety of language
No teacher intervention
No materials control



The communication continuum

Task-based learning (TBL)

- Popularised by prof. Prabhu, who speculated that students were likely to learn language if they were thinking about a non-linguistic problem.
- Three basic stages of TBL according to Jane Willis:
 1. Pre task (introduction to topic and task)
 2. Task cycle (task, planning and report)
 3. Language focus (analysis, practice).

Four methods

- These methods developed in the 1970s and 1980s as humanistic approaches to remove psychological barriers to learning.

I. Community Language Learning

- students sitting in a circle
- a counsellor or a knower
- making the utterance

2. The Silent Way

- the teacher says as little as possible
- interacting with physical objects, especially with *Cuisenaire rods*



- pointing to a phonemic chart

3. Suggestopaedia

- Georgi Lozanov
- physical surroundings and atmosphere of the classroom are of a vital importance;
- the reason for our inefficiency is that we set up psychological barriers to learning: we fear that we will be unable to perform, that we will be limited in our ability to learn, that we will fail;
- one result is that we do not use the full mental powers that we have and according to Lozanov, we may be using only 5 – 10% of our mental capacity
- In order to make better use of our reserved capacity, the limitations we think we have need to be ‘desuggested’
- parent-children (teacher-student) relationship
- three main parts: oral review, presentation and discussion, concert session (listening to classic music)

Suggestopaedia

- Desuggestopedia/suggestopedia, the application of suggestion to pedagogy, has been developed to help students eliminate the feeling that they cannot be successful or the negative association they may have toward studying and, thus, help them overcome the barriers to learning.
- One of the ways the students' mental capacities are stimulated is through integration of the fine arts.



Techniques

- **CLASSROOM SET-UP** – the challenge for the teacher is to create a classroom environment which is bright and cheerful. (The teacher should try to provide as positive environment as possible.)
- **PERIPHERAL LEARNING** – this technique is based upon that we perceive much more in our environment than that to which we consciously attend. It is claimed that, by putting poster containing grammatical information about the target language on the classroom walls, students will absorb the necessary facts effortlessly.
- **POSITIVE SUGGESTION** – it's the teacher responsibility to orchestrate the suggestive factors in a learning situation, thereby helping students break down the barriers to learning that they bring with them. Teachers can do this through direct and indirect means.

Techniques

- **BAROQUE MUSIC** – it has a specific rhythm and a pattern of 60 beats per minute, and Lozanov believed it created a level of relaxed concentration that facilitated the intake and retention of huge quantities of material.



4. *Total Physical Response (TPR)*

- The originator of TPR, James Asher, worked from the premise that adult second language learning could have similar developmental patterns to that of child acquisition.
- Children learn language from their speech through the forms of commands, then adults will learn best in that way too.
- In responding to commands students get a lot of comprehensible input, and in performing physical actions they seem to echo the claims of Neuro-linguistic programming that certain people benefit greatly from kinaesthetic activity.

Total Physical Response (TPR)

- This method is developed to reduce stress people feel while studying foreign languages. Learners are allowed to speak when they are ready.

1. Using commands to direct behaviour

2. Role reversal

3. Action sequence



PRINCIPLES

1. The students' understanding of the target language should be developed before speaking.
2. Students can initially learn one part of the language rapidly by moving their bodies.
3. Feelings of success and low anxiety facilitate learning.
4. Language learning is more effective when it is fun.
5. Students are expected to make errors when they first begin speaking. Teachers should be tolerant of them. Work on the fine details of the language should be postponed until students have become somewhat proficient.

HUMANISTIC TEACHING



- Humanistic teaching has found a greater acceptance at the level of procedures and activities, in which students are encouraged to make use of their own lives and feelings in the classroom.
- Such exercises have a long history and owe much to a work from 1970s called *Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Classroom* by Gertrude Moscowitz in which many activities are designed to make students feel good and remember happy times while, at the same time, they practise grammar items.
- *When I was a child my favourite food was hamburger, or When I was a child my favourite relative was my uncle. I was shown how to crawl. I pushed out of my mother's womb.*

THE LEXICAL APPROACH

- The lexical approach, discussed by Dave Willis and popularised by the writer Michael Lewis is based on the assertion that language doesn't consist of traditional grammar and vocabulary, but also of phrases, collocations, and idioms.
- A lexical approach would steer us towards the teaching of phrases which show words in combination. Thus, instead of teaching *will* for the future, we might instead have students focus on its use in a series of archetypical utterances such as *I'll give you a ring.*

METHODS AND CULTURE

- A mismatch between „teacher intention and learner interpretation“. Our attitudes to the language, and to the way it is taught, reflect cultural biases and beliefs about how we should communicate and how we should educate each other.
- Many of the approaches and teaching methods are based on a very western idea of what constitutes “good learning“. For example, American teachers working in other countries sometimes complain that their students have nothing to say when in fact it is not an issue of the student's intelligence, knowledge, or creativity which makes them reluctant to communicate, but their educational culture. Teachers need to understand student wants and expectations just as much as they are determined to push their own methodological beliefs. DISCUSSION!

MAKING CHOICES

- Exposure to language: students need constant exposure to language since this is a key component of language acquisition
- Input: students need comprehensible input but this is not enough in itself, they need some opportunity for noticing or consciousness-raising to help students remember language facts.
- CLT: communicative activities and task-based teaching offer real learning benefits,
- The affective variable: anxiety needs to be lowered for learning to take place.
- Discovery: where culturally appropriate, students should be encouraged to discover things for themselves.

- *Grammar and lexis*: showing how words combine together and behave both semantically and grammatically is an important part of any language learning programme.
- *Methodology and culture*: teaching methodology is rooted in popular culture. Therefore, compromise may be necessary.
- Pragmatic eclecticism does not just mean that “anything goes“. On the contrary, students have a right to expect that they are being asked to do things for a reason, and that their teacher has some aim in mind which he or she can, if asked, articulate clearly. Teaching plans should always be designed to meet an aim or aims.

PAIR WORK- CLOSURE

- What seems to work in English classes will depend upon the age and character-type of learners, their cultural backgrounds, and the level they are studying at – not to mention **the teacher's own beliefs and preferences!**