



OVERVIEW OF ELT METHODS & APPROACHES: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this research article is to study the overview of the Methods and Approaches of English Language Teaching (ELT) and to know the background knowledge. It is fact that, in these methods, some can be directly implemented where as others may need further preparation. According to the History of ELT, many applied linguists and psychologists believed that, there is no one such method which can be called as the best to teach English language teaching, nevertheless teacher can make use of different methods, approaches and techniques as per the learners' needs.

Key Words: Method, Approach, Technique, Translation, Multiple intelligences, Participatory

INTRODUCTION

It is fact that, many young language teachers often think and get confuse which method/approach can be used in ESL/EFL classroom. The reason behind it is there are many methods and approaches in ELT that is why, teachers of English often get confuse and doubt themselves whether they are using appropriate method/approach or not. According to history of English Language Teaching (ELT), most of the practical applied linguists and psychologists, particularly Henry Sweet believed that, teacher can use any method which students feel comfort and as per their needs and requirements. Therefore, it is high time to discuss and differentiate among all these methods, approaches and techniques in order to avoid confusion. Before to discuss the overview of all the methods and approaches let us study the definitions of method, approach and technique.

Approach:

DR. KOTTACHERUVU NAGENDRA

1Page



An approach deals with different theories about the nature of language and how languages are learnt. These theories are based on a set of assumptions which deal with linguistic and psychological factors that are accepted at large for the acquisition of languages (2008, p-171).

Method:

A method is a set of procedures; a plan that tells us specifically how to teach a language. It specifies an order for language material which in turn is based on the selected approach. All the methods involve principles like selection, gradation, presentation and repetition in one way or the other; because without involving these principles there can be no method of teaching (2008, p-171).

Technique:

Technique is how a thing is done in the class. It is a classroom device activity. Some techniques are widely used in many methods as against some that are specific to a given method. Whatever technique we use, we should conform to the method under which it is to be used (2008, p-171-172).

The Grammar Translation Method (GTM):

GTM also known as the classical method since it was first used in the teaching of classic languages, Latin and Greek. Earlier in the 20th century, this method was used for the purpose of helping learners to read and appreciate literature like Greek and Latin. In this method students start with reading comprehension in target language and translate into their native language. The teacher facilitates the learners with new vocabulary. Then there will be an exercise in which learners have to translate the words from the given passage to their native language. This method will insist lots of revision, memorization and reading comprehension. Further, it emphasizes on accuracy, grammar rules and rote learning. If students are able to say and read literature correctly they will get a word of encouragement and appreciation otherwise, they will get punishment. In this method there will be no scope for thinking creatively and innovatively. Somehow it is very boring and passive method. Teacher plays an authoritative role in the class.

The Direct Method:

The principles of the Direct Method have been practiced by many language teachers for many years. The very basic rule of this method is 'no translation is allowed'. Meaning is to be conveyed directly in the target language through the use of demonstration and visual aids.

DR. KOTTACHERUVU NAGENDRA

2P a g e



The teacher asks whether students have any questions. If they have any question, teacher explains it. After the clearing the doubts, teacher asks the questions related to the topic and students had to give the answers in complete sentence instead of using 'yes' or 'no'. Then the students ask the questions one by one to the class. Then follows the exercise in which students are given the fill in the blanks. The students have to read aloud the sentence by filling up the given blanks. Lots of reading, question answer exercise, conversation practice and dictation takes place in Direct Method. This method has become so popular and widely in private and corporate schools.

The Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) / Army Method:

Linguists at the University of Michigan invented this method in the late 1950s. Charles Fries (1945) of the University of Michigan led the way in applying principles from structural linguists in developing the method and for this reason it has been called for sometime as Michigan Method. ALM is an oral-based approach. Even though it shares some common features of direct method, it is different. It emphasizes vocabulary acquisition through exposure to its use in situations. ALM drills learners in the use of grammatical sentence patterns and teacher presents a new dialogue and instructions will be given only in target language. Sometimes the teacher uses actions to convey meaning, but not one word of the learners' native language. Teacher makes the learners to read aloud the dialogues after him. And the learners have to repeat the same dialogue several times. Then the teacher tells them to play the role according to the dialogue. Lots of drill is made before the role play. There will be dialogue memorization and different kinds of drills complete to the dialogue and role plays and so on.

The Silent Way Method:

This method is based on a problem solving approach and it is developed by Caleb Gattegno. It shares certain principles with cognitive approach, that 'teaching should be subordinated to learning'. In other words, he believed that to teach means to serve the learning process rather than to dominate it. He looked at learning language from the point of view of the students by observing the way children learn. The teacher teaches the phonetics with the help of a chart which is having black background and number of rectangle shaped blocks of different colours drawn on it. Teacher points out the colored rectangle and tries to teach about that particular sound with the help of the colorful chart. With the same chart the teacher help the learners to learn new words. Sound-color chart, teacher's silence, peer correction, self-correction gestures and structured feedback are some of the features of this method.

Suggestopedia / Desuggestopedia:

DR. KOTTACHERUVU NAGENDRA

3P a g e



This method was developed by Georgi Lozanov a Bulgarian psychologist. He believes that learning language can occur at a much faster rate than ordinary transpires. The reason for our inefficiency Lozanov asserts is that we set up psychological barriers to learning. This is the submission of the study of suggestion to pedagogy, which has been developed to assist students to get rid of that they cannot be victorious and the negative association they may have towards studying and thus to help them overcome the hurdles to learning. Teacher explains few points about English grammar and vocabulary and leads the class in various activities involving the dialogue, question and answer, repetition and translation. Peripheral learning, positive suggestion, role-play, creative adaptations are some of the important features of this method.

Community Language Teaching (CLT):

It is similar to silent way method, seeing the students as a whole person, students will sit in a circle and teacher encourages them to use their feelings, intellect, relationships and reactions. This method takes its principles from the more general counseling-learning approach developed by Charles Arthur Curran. He believed that a way to deal with the fears of the students is for teachers to become language counselors. He says that “A language counselor does not mean someone trained in psychology; it means someone who is skillful person of the struggle student’s face as they attempt to internalize another language”. The teacher starts the dialogue with the students, later they will be encouraged to share their experience about the conversation. Student’s native language is used to make the meaning clear and to build a bridge from the known to the unknown. The teacher encourages student initiative and independence. Students learn best when they have a choice in what they practice. Reflective Listening, small group tasks are the features of this method.

Total Physical Response (TPR):

In this method, teacher gives the commands in target language and performs the action with the students. Student’s understanding of the language is developed before speaking. Students can learn through observing actions as well as by performing the actions themselves. They need not to memorize fixed routines. Correction should be carried out in an unobtrusive manner. Spoken skills are emphasized over written skills. Using commands to direct behavior, role reversal, action sequence are the features of the method.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):



This method aims at making communicative competence the goal of language teaching. Language as it is used in a real context is introduced. Target language is used in classroom communication. Students learn about cohesion and coherent. Speaker receives the immediate feedback from the listener. They are given an opportunity to express their ideas and opinions. Errors are tolerated and seen as a natural outcome of the development of communication skills. Teacher's responsibility is to establish situations likely to promote communication.

Content-based Teaching:

In this method, both the content and the language are target for learning. Teaching is built on students' previous experience. Language is learnt effectively if it is used as a medium to convey content of interest to the students. Vocabulary is easier to acquire when there are contextual clues to help convey meaning. Learners work with meaningful cognitively demanding language and content within the context of authentic material and tasks.

Task-based Teaching:

In this method, the class activities have a perceived purpose and a clear outcome. The teacher breaks down into smaller steps the logical thinking process necessary to complete the task. The teacher seeks the way of knowing how involved the students are in the process. She provides good models of the target language. Students receive feedback on their level of success in completing the task. 'Listen-to-do' tasks promote acquisition of new vocabulary and provide a good model of grammatical form. This task follow-up can enhance the learning that has taken place earlier.

The Participatory Approach:

It is similar to the content-based teaching. Paul Freire developed this approach, what happens in classroom should be connected with what happens outside. The curriculum is not predetermined product, but the result of an ongoing context-specific problem-posing process. In this approach, learners are motivated by their personal involvement. They learn to see themselves as social and political beings. Language teaching occurs with texts that the students have co-constructed. The main objective of this approach is for students to evaluate their own learning and to increasingly direct it themselves.

Learning Strategy Training (LST):



In Learning Strategy Training, the teacher's role is not only to teach just language, but also to teach learning. In this approach, learners have to work on their own and become independent, self-regulated learners. This approach even contributes self-assessment to learner autonomy.

Cooperative Learning:

According to Diane Larsen-Freeman, in Cooperative Learning learners are encouraged to think in terms of 'positive interdependence'. Students often stay together in the same groups for a period of time so they can learn how to work better together. Even though they work together each individual student is responsible.

Multiple Intelligences:

Multiple Intelligences developed by psychologist, Howard Gardener. These multiple intelligences are divided into eight categories: they are like, logical or mathematical, visual or spatial, body or kinesthetic, musical or rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, verbal or linguistic and naturalist. The teacher creates various activities that draw on all eight intelligences. In this approach, activities are categorized based on type of intelligence. Another way to teach from a multiple intelligence perspective is to deliberately plan lessons so that the different intelligences are represented.

Technology in Language Teaching:

It is true that use of technology has brought drastic changes in language teaching and learning. In this, students usually find online tasks to be motivated. Language learning takes place through social interaction and learners are taught to use the tools that technology provides. Reflecting on language and developing language awareness are very important. Students learn from one another and they will have good deal of freedom in choosing what they will engage with in and out of the class. Teachers use archives of online students' work to evaluate and to direct them.

CONCLUSION:

Let us conclude by recollecting some of the important points which discussed in this article. Firstly, this paper describes about the different methods, approaches and techniques in language teaching. Secondly, number of examples which are described with different activities which can be implemented in the language classroom. Thirdly, it talked about which method is best and ended by saying there is no one such method which can be called as best method in language teaching and learning. But only teacher can make use of these

DR. KOTTACHERUVU NAGENDRA

6P a g e



methods according to the needs of the learners. Finally, for some teachers one method is useful whereas for others there may be other method which they find best for their students. The answer remains with the teachers which method he/she finds suitable for their students.

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