

Creating New Approaches to Teach a Language

Atoboyeva Aziza Muhiddin qizi

National University of Uzbekistan, Foreign Philology Faculty, 3rd year student

Eshmirzayev Nozima Bahodir qizi

National University of Uzbekistan, Foreign Philology Faculty, Master's degree student

Article Information

Received: June 21, 2023

Accepted: July 22, 2023

Published: Aug 23, 2023

Keywords:

ABSTRACT

The point is: The best teachers make use of all possible approaches at the appropriate time, for the appropriate activities and for those students whose learning styles require that approach. The ultimate goal is to choose the foreign language teaching methods that best fit your students, not to force them to adhere to a particular or method. In this article some methods of teaching and their benefits will be analysed. It is known that.

Those who've studied an ancient language like Latin or Sanskrit have likely used this method. It involves learning grammar rules, reading original texts and **translating both from and into the target language**.

You don't really learn to speak—although, to be fair, it's hard to practice speaking languages that have no remaining native speakers.

For the longest time, this approach was also commonly used for teaching *modern* foreign languages. Though it's fallen out of favor, there are **some benefits to it for occasional use**.¹

With grammar-translation, you might give your students a brief passage in the target language, provide the new vocabulary and give them time to try translating. The reading might include a new verb tense, a new case or a complex grammatical construction.

When it occurs, **speaking might only consist of a word or phrase** and is typically in the context of completing the exercises. Explanations of the material are in the native language.²

After the assignment, you could give students a series of translation sentences or a brief paragraph in the native language for them to translate into the target language as homework.

¹ Kevin D. Besnoy, Lane W. Clarke, High-Tech Teaching Success! A Step-by-Step Guide to Using Innovative Technology in Your Classroom, Prufrock Press, Inc. October 1, 2009

² Lynne T. Diaz-Rico, Teaching English Learners: Strategies and Methods Marlene D. LeFever, Creative Teaching Methods, Cook Ministry Resources; March 1, 1997

Direct

The direct method, also known as the natural approach, was a response to the grammar-translation method. Here, the **emphasis is on the spoken language**.

Based on observations of children learning their native tongues, this approach centers on listening and comprehension at the beginning of the language learning process.

Lessons are taught in the target language—in fact, the native language is strictly forbidden. A typical lesson might involve viewing pictures while the teacher repeats the vocabulary words, then listening to recordings of these words used in a comprehensible dialogue.

Once students have had time to listen and absorb the sounds of the target language, speaking is encouraged at all times, especially because **grammar instruction isn't taught explicitly**.³

Rather, students should learn grammar inductively. Allow them to use the language naturally, then gently correct mistakes and give praise to proper language usage. (Note that many have found this method of grammar instruction insufficient.)

Direct method activities might include pantomiming, word-picture association, question-answer patterns, dialogues and role playing.⁴

Audio-lingual

The theory behind the audio-lingual approach is that repetition is the mother of all learning. This methodology **emphasizes drill work** in order to make answers to questions instinctive and automatic.

This approach gives **highest priority to the spoken form** of the target language. New information is first heard by students; written forms come only after extensive drilling. Classes are generally held in the target language.

An example of an audio-lingual activity is a substitution drill. The instructor might start with a basic sentence, such as “I see the ball.” Then they hold up a series of other photos for students to substitute for the word “ball.” These exercises are drilled into students until they **get the pronunciations and rhythm right**.

The audio-lingual approach borrows from the behaviorist school of psychology, so languages are taught through a system of reinforcement. Reinforcements are anything that makes students feel good about themselves or the situation—clapping, a sticker, etc.

Immersion

Full immersion is difficult to achieve in a foreign language classroom—unless, of course, you're **teaching that language in a country where it's spoken** and your students are doing *everything* in the target language.

For example, ESL students have an immersion experience if they're studying in an Anglophone country. In addition to studying English, they either work or study other subjects in English for the complete experience⁵.

Attempts at this methodology can be **seen in foreign language immersion schools**, which are becoming popular in certain districts in the US. The challenge is that, as soon as students leave school, they are once again surrounded by the native language.

³ Edgar H. Schuster, Edgar H. Schuster, *Breaking the Rules: Liberating Writers Through Innovative Grammar Instruction*, Heinemann; February 13, 2003

⁴ Nicholas McGuinn, David Stevens, *The Art of Teaching Secondary English: Innovative and Creative Approaches*, Routledge; August 7, 2004

⁵ Paul Nation, *New Ways in Teaching Vocabulary (New Ways in Tesol Series: Innovative Classroom Techniques)*; TESOL, January 1, 1995

One way to get closer to the core of this method is to **use an online language immersion program**, such as FluentU. The authentic videos are made by and for native speakers and come with a multitude of learning tools.

Expert-vetted, interactive subtitles provide definitions, photo references, example sentences and more. Each lesson contains a quiz personalized to every individual student.

You can also import your own flashcard lists and assign tasks directly to learners with FluentU in order to **encourage immersive learning outside of class**.

Total Physical Response

Also known as TPR, this teaching method emphasizes aural comprehension. **Gestures and movements play a vital role** in this approach.

Children learning their native language hear lots of commands from adults: “Catch the ball,” “Pick up your toy,” “Drink your water.” TPR aims to teach learners a second language in the same manner with as little stress as possible.

The idea is that when students see movement and move themselves, their brains create more neural connections, which makes for more efficient language acquisition.

In a TPR-based classroom, students are therefore **trained to respond to simple commands**: stand up, sit down, close the door, open your book, etc.

The teacher might demonstrate what “jump” looks like, for example, and then ask students to perform the action themselves. Or, you might simply play Simon Says!

This style can later be expanded to storytelling, where students act out actions from an oral narrative, demonstrating their comprehension of the language.

Communicative

The communicative approach is the **most widely used and accepted approach** to classroom-based foreign language teaching today.

It emphasizes the learner’s ability to communicate various functions, such as asking and answering questions, making requests, describing, narrating and comparing.

Task assignment and problem solving—two key components of critical thinking—are the means through which the communicative approach operates.

A communicative classroom includes activities where students can work out a problem or situation through narration or negotiation—composing a dialogue about when and where to eat dinner, for instance, or creating a story based on a series of pictures.

This helps them establish communicative competence and **learn vocabulary and grammar in context**. Error correction is de-emphasized so students can naturally develop accurate speech through frequent use. Language fluency comes through communicating in the language rather than by analyzing it.

Task-based Learning

Task-based learning is a refinement of the communicative approach and focuses on the completion of specific tasks through which language is taught and learned.

The purpose is for language learners to **use the target language to complete a variety of assignments**. They will acquire new structures, forms and vocabulary as they go. Typically, little error correction is provided.

In a task-based learning environment, three- to four-week **segments are devoted to a specific topic**, such as ecology, security, medicine, religion, youth culture, etc. Students learn about each topic step-by-step with a variety of resources.

Activities are similar to those found in a communicative classroom, but they're always based around the theme. A unit often culminates in a final project such as a written report or presentation.

Community Language Learning

In this type of classroom, **the teacher serves as a counselor** rather than an instructor.

It's called community language learning because the class learns together as one unit—not by listening to a lecture, but by interacting in the target language.

For instance, students might sit in a circle. You don't need a set lesson since this approach is learner-led; **the students will decide what they want to talk about.**⁶

Someone might say, "Hey, why don't we talk about the weather?" The student will turn to the teacher (standing outside the circle) and ask for the translation of this statement. The teacher will provide the translation and ask the student to say it while guiding their pronunciation.

When the pronunciation is correct, the student will repeat the statement to the group. Another student might then say, "I had to wear three layers today!" And the process repeats.

These **conversations are always recorded and then transcribed and mined** for lesson continuations featuring grammar, vocabulary and subject-related content.

The Silent Way

Proponents of this approach believe that teaching too much can sometimes get in the way of learning. It's argued that **students learn best when they discover** rather than simply repeat what the teacher says.

By saying as little as possible, you're encouraging students to do the talking themselves to figure out the language. This is seen as **a creative, problem-solving process**—an engaging cognitive challenge.

So how does one teach in silence?

You'll need to **employ plenty of gestures and facial expressions** to communicate with your students.

You can also **use props**. A common prop is Cuisenaire Rods—rods of different colors and lengths. Pick one up and say "rod." Pick another, point at it and say "rod." Repeat until students understand that "rod" refers to these objects.

Then, you could pick a green one and say "green rod." With an economy of words, point to something else green and say, "green." Repeat until students get that "green" refers to the color.

Functional-notional

The functional-notional approach **recognizes language as purposeful communication**. That is, we use it because we need to communicate something.

Various parts of speech exist because we need them to express functions like informing, persuading, insinuating, agreeing, questioning, requesting, evaluating, etc. We also need to express notions (concepts) such as time, events, action, place, technology, process, emotion, etc.

Teachers using the functional-notional method must **evaluate how the students will be using the language**.

For example, very young kids need language skills to help them communicate with their parents and friends. Key social phrases like "thank you," "please" or "may I borrow" are ideal here.

For business professionals, you might want to teach the formal forms of the target language, how to

⁶ R. Patrick Solomon, Dia N. R. Sekayi, *Urban Teacher Education and Teaching: Innovative Practices for Diversity and Social Justice*, Routledge; March 30, 2007

delegate tasks and how to vocally appreciate a job well done. Functions could include asking a question, expressing interest or negotiating a deal. Notions could be prices, quality or quantity.

You **can teach grammar and sentence patterns directly**, but they're always subsumed by the purpose for which the language will be used.

Reading

A student who wants to learn with the reading method **probably never intends to interact with native speakers** in the target language.

Perhaps they're a graduate student who simply needs to read scholarly articles. Maybe they're a culinary student who only wants to understand the French techniques in her cookbook.

Whoever it is, these students **only require one linguistic skill: reading comprehension**.

Do away with pronunciation and dialogues. No need to practice listening or speaking, or even much (if any) writing.

With the reading approach, simply **help your students build their vocabulary**. They'll likely need a lot of specialized words in a specific field, though they'll also need to know elements like conjunctions and negation—enough grammar to make it through a standard article in their field.

Other Methods

These approaches are not necessarily as common in the classroom setting but deserve a mention nonetheless:

- **Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL):** A number of commercial products (Pimsleur, Rosetta Stone) and online products (Duolingo, Babbel) use the CALL method. With careful planning, you can likely employ some in the classroom as well.
- **Cognitive-code:** Developed in response to the audio-lingual method, this approach requires essential language structures to be explicitly laid out in examples (dialogues, readings) by the teacher, with lots of opportunities for students to practice.
- **Suggestopedia:** The idea here is that the more relaxed and comfortable students feel, the more open they are to learning, which therefore makes language acquisition easier.⁷

How to Choose a Foreign Language Teaching Method

Now that you know a number of methodologies and how to use them in the classroom, how do you choose the best?

You should always try to choose the methods and approaches that are most effective for your students. After all, our job as teachers is to help our students to learn in the best way for *them*—not for us or for researchers or for administrators.

So, the best teachers choose the best methodology and the best approach for each lesson or activity. They aren't wedded to any particular methodology but rather **use principled eclecticism**:

- Ever taught a grammatical construction that only appears in written form? Had your students practice it by writing? Then you've used the **grammar-translation method**.
- Ever talked to your students in question/answer form, hoping they'd pick up the grammar point? Then you've used the **direct method**.
- Ever repeatedly drilled grammatical endings, or numbers, or months, perhaps before showing them to your students? Then you've used the **audio-lingual method**.

⁷ Patrick Schwarz, Paula Kluth You're Welcome: 30 Innovative Ideas for the Inclusive Classroom; Heinemann, August 17, 2007

- Ever played Simon Says? Or given your students commands to open their textbook to a certain page? Then you've used the **total physical response method**.
- Ever written a thematic unit on a topic not covered by the textbook, incorporating all four skills and culminating in a final assignment.

References:

1. Kevin D. Besnoy, Lane W. Clarke, *High-Tech Teaching Success! A Step-by-Step Guide to Using Innovative Technology in Your Classroom*, Prufrock Press, Inc. October 1, 2009
2. Lynne T. Diaz-Rico, *Teaching English Learners: Strategies and Methods* Marlene D. LeFever , *Creative Teaching Methods*, Cook Ministry Resources; March 1, 1997
3. Edgar H. Schuster, *Breaking the Rules: Liberating Writers Through Innovative Grammar Instruction*, Heinemann; February 13, 2003
4. Nicholas McGuinn, David Stevens, *The Art of Teaching Secondary English: Innovative and Creative Approaches*, Routledge; August 7, 2004
5. Paul Nation, *New Ways in Teaching Vocabulary (New Ways in Tesol Series: Innovative Classroom Techniques)*; TESOL, January 1, 1995
6. R. Patrick Solomon, Dia N. R. Sekayi, *Urban Teacher Education and Teaching: Innovative Practices for Diversity and Social Justice*, Routledge; March 30, 2007
7. Patrick Schwarz, Paula Kluth *You're Welcome: 30 Innovative Ideas for the Inclusive Classroom*; Heinemann, August 17, 2007