

Applying the Eclectic Principles in English Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews several existing English Language Teaching Methodologies used in teaching and learning process nowadays. Since a long time ago educational experts have been thinking and trying hard how to find ways of the learning processes is getting better by finding theory of teaching methodologies. They are considered to have crucial role both for the teachers and the learners. Educators then tried out and used the methods and finally they got bored and felt unsatisfied. Realizing that there was no single method had been good enough to be accepted by all educators as the best in teaching practice, then they were searching a way to solve the problem. Finally they were applying the strengths and leaving the weaknesses of several methods. They apply a set of principles to adapt the teaching procedures, known as Eclecticism/ Eclectic principles.

Keywords : approach, eclecticism, educators, Methodology, principles

1. Introduction

Teaching Methodology has important role in learning process both for the students and the teachers. Many students are successful to achieve high achievement because they are taught by using good teaching methodology. On the other hand, many students are easily getting bored when they are learning using the same methods. In order to be able to teach well, teachers should be familiar with some teaching methodologies, then apply them in their teaching. As facilitators, the teachers have to be able to choose the best method and the most appropriate for teaching their students.

Up to now, we have been familiar with several different methods or methodologies. We have tried out and then found it unsatisfactory, then we tried others. Every method has its strength and weakness. Many educators or teachers realize that there is no single method seems to be the

best and accepted or appropriate in teaching practice, then many educators have to try to combine some existing methods which is called eclecticism. They generally apply the strength of each method and leave the weakness. That is where the teachers need a set of principles to adapt their teaching procedure, known as Eclecticism or eclectic principles.

This article will review the theories and nature of several English learning methodologies and approaches as well as their applications in English language teaching nowadays. Hopefully it would give additional information that is beneficial for the teachers in carrying out their task, and provides more variations or alternatives for them to avoid boringness. While selecting among several existing methods, and looking for the most appropriate one, finally it comes to a decision that the eclectic method or eclectic principles seems to be the best choice because it offers various approaches, methods, procedures and techniques. **Research Methodology**

The methodology used in this research is Library Research. According to <http://www.google.com>, "A library is a collection of sources of information and similar resources, made accessible to a defined community for reference or borrowing. It provides physical or digital access to material, and may be a physical building or room, or a virtual space, or both." While "Library Research" means the activity of searching for any information needed to write a piece of academic writing.

From the above definition it can be summed up that "Library research" is a research which is conducted based on literature work, such as books, magazines, newspapers, reports, journals, proceedings, and other printed and online media including research which has or hasn't been published.

3. Discussion & Literature Review.

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2015), teaching methodology is, "a set of methods and principles used by teachers to perform a particular activity in teaching and enable students learning." There are some terms concerning the methodology such as approach, method, procedure and technique. **Approach** refers to theories about the nature of language and language learning that serves as a source of practices and principles in language teaching. It offers a model of language competence, it describes how people acquire their knowledge of the language and makes statements about conditions which will promote successful language learning; **methods**, the practical realization of an approach that includes various procedures and techniques as part of

their standard fare; procedures, an ordered sequence of techniques which can be described in terms such as first you do this, then you do that; **technique**, is a particular way of teaching, where teachers use certain tools or ways to teach the class, example a common technique when using video material that is called “silent viewing”, the teacher plays the video with no sound. It is a single activity rather than a sequence, and as such is a technique rather than a whole procedure. The following will be an overview of some of the existing popular methods:

Grammar-translation Method.

This is considered the oldest method that has been used in the learning process, because it has been used since a long time ago. At one time it was called the Classical Method, since it was first used in the teaching of classical languages, Latin and Greek. At the beginning of this century, it was used for the purpose of helping students read and appreciate foreign language literature.

The Grammar translation method (which was first named in Germany in the 1780s) introduced the new idea of presenting students with short grammar rules and word lists, and then translation exercises in which the learners had to make use of the same rules and words. It was introduced in the reform of the German secondary school system and soon, with changes and expansion, spread much further afield (Hammer, 2007).

Some characteristics of the Grammar-translation Method are usually that teachers use the mother tongue and only limited use of the target language; vocabulary is taught by using a form of isolated word lists; they explain grammar, and then at the beginning read the difficult words of the text; little attention is paid to the content of the text, as in exercises in grammatical analysis. Then the teachers read and explained grammar rules, by translating sentences and later paragraphs from and into the target language; they read the mother language text, and translate the texts into English—which is probably read aloud in class. The next the students learned more complicated grammatical constructions through these readings and translations. As a consequence students never learned to speak, although, it would be hard to practice speaking.

For very long time, teachers have used this approach for teaching modern foreign languages. A teacher explains a grammatical rule in the native language, followed by translation exercises; sometimes preceded by some fill-in-the-blank. Speaking was in the context of completing these exercises orally and might consist of only a word or a phrase. There was no attempt at “real” communication.

Direct Method.

Direct Method is the opposite of Grammar-translation Method, in many ways, people also call it the natural approach. In this classroom, the native language is strictly forbidden, and grammar (grammatical explanation) is de-emphasized in favor of induction, where students are supposed to construct rules for themselves. Students are encouraged to speak at all times, making students as the center of learning.

In theory, students would learn the foreign language naturally, as they learned their native language as a child, and automatic responses to questions would become instinctive. The focus would always be on natural language, and habit formation was the key to learning. When students made mistakes, teachers would gently correct them. When they used the language correctly, they were praised. In this way, students were supposed to be able to determine a grammatical rule for themselves..

What a teacher does in a direct method or natural approach? Usually a teacher asks questions and the students answer them, it is followed by a correction or praise by the teachers. It could be an instructor reading a passage aloud, giving it to her students, and then having them read it aloud, so that through repetition and correction, students would understand in the same way that children learn patterns through having their parents read to them. Or it could be asking students to write a paragraph in their own words, again with correction or praise to follow.

Audio-lingual

The theory behind audio-lingualism is that language learning requires learning habits. Repetition is the basic of all learning. This methodology emphasizes drill work in order to make answers to questions instinctively and automatically. New forms are first heard by students, with written forms coming only after extensive drilling. The language used for these drills is based on what is required for practicing the specific form; it might or might not be natural, (Hammer,2007).

An example of an audio-lingual activity is a substitution drill. The teachers might start with a basic sentence, such as "I see the ball," after which she holds up a series of pictures through which students substitute "ball" with each new picture. Another possibility is a transformation drill, where the instructor says, "I read a book," which the students change into, "I don't read a book."

Communicative approach.

The communicative approach is the most widely used and most widely accepted approach to classroom-based foreign language teaching today, and in many ways, is a culmination of those approaches and methodologies that appeared before.

The communicative approach emphasizes the learner's ability to communicate various functions, like making requests, asking and answering questions, describing, narrating and comparing. The two components of critical thinking, task assignment and problem solving are the means through which the communicative approach operates.

Unlike the direct method, grammar is not taught in isolation. Learning happens in context; detailed error correction is de-emphasized in favor of the theory that students will naturally develop accurate speech through frequent use. Students develop fluency through communicating in the language rather than by analyzing it.

A communicative classroom includes activities through which students are able to work out a problem or situation through narration or negotiation, and thus establish communicative competence. Thus some activities might include composing a dialogue in which the participants negotiate when and where they are going to eat dinner, creating a story based on a series of pictures or comparing similarities and differences between two pictures.

Eclecticism

The eclectic method was popularized in the beginning of 1990's and is becoming more popular these days. Larsen Freeman(2000) and Mellow (2000) both have used the term principle eclecticism to describe a desirable, coherent, pluralistic approach to language learning teaching. Eclecticism involves the use of a variety of language learning activities, each of which may have very different characteristics and objectives. The different components of language (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, etc..) have no meaning when they are isolated from each other (Freeman, 1992). Language should not be separated into chunks like pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary.

Eclectic approach is the techniques and activities taken from several teaching approaches and methodologies. The use of methodology or approach is depending on the aims of the lesson and the learners in the group. Eclectic approach for teaching foreign language is the appropriate choices to apply when the condition does not allow for the adoption of a single method. Learners of foreign languages nowadays are prepared to invest less time than before in learning a foreign

language. However, they expect to become sufficiently competent in that language in order to be able to perform well under particular condition (Watson,1998).

Each approach has advantages and disadvantages. The use of eclecticism does not mean to mix up different approaches randomly. There must have some philosophical backgrounds and some systematic relation among different activities. Usually it is recommended to mix structural approaches with communicative use of language. The kind of eclecticism we tried to implement here is a mixture of traditional based approach and some conversational practice for students. Language is based on structures which are used to convey meanings, which perform functions. We see language learning as combined process of structural and communicative activities.

Eclectic method is getting more popular method these days because of different intelligent level of the students in the classroom. However, some teachers are very sensitive of using various methods; they find particular method as comfortable using in the classroom without taking much trouble. Teacher should use all the principles of language teaching including cognition and linguistic objectives. A technique of teaching through eclectic ways is a rich combination of multiple activities. The most significant features of approach include the low level grammar and oriental context of culture texts which may not bring out whole linguistic competence of the students if they are to be trained for global market leaders. (International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications),

Teaching of foreign language including English should be made easy by bringing into realistic situation, the best way of teaching English is by creating situations. The situation makes the language easily comprehensible. It connects a closer link between an expressions and usage by coordinating meaning. It is also important that creating situations should be appropriate to students 'level and their context culture. Teachers of English themselves are not very efficient in many cases. This is why Eclectic method may be appropriate in many situations. It advocates that number of methods can be used based on the selection of particular method which depends on level of students. However, basic principle learning is simplicity. Eclectic method of learning is an integral part of the total learning process.

Kumar (2013:1) notes that —the eclectic method is a combination of different method of teaching and learning approaches. It can also be viewed as principled eclecticism implying that the approach is characteristically desirable, coherent and pluralistic to language teaching. It also

involves the use of a variety of language learning activities which are mostly different characteristically and may be motivated by different underlying assumptions of language teaching (Al Hamash 1985; Larsen -Freeman 2000; Mellow 2000, 2002).

3. Conclusion.

In fact no single approach or methodology is always the best and appropriate to be applied in any classroom and situation. Each has its own strength and weaknesses. We don't need to teach our students only by using the same method which sometimes is boring. It is not necessary to insist upon a mandatory method in learning process. We should always try to choose those approaches and methodologies that are most effective for our students. Since, our job as teachers is to help our students to learn in the best way to meet the goal of learning. Our students enjoy and understand our learning, not for researcher and not for any teachers or administrators.

As teachers, we should choose the best methodology and the best approach for each lesson or activity. We should apply some particular methodologies, while selecting the most appropriate one, then we use principles of eclecticism/ eclectic method, where we are freely moving between lessons, tasks, methodologies and approaches.

When you teach by using the mother tongue and only limited using the target language, you teach vocabulary by using a form of isolated word list; you explain grammar, and then read the difficult word of the text, you present translate the the words every words, sentence and paragraph from mother tongue to target language, it means you have practiced **grammar-translation method**. When you start teaching by writing or pronouncing words and sentences, then asking and answering questions from students, means you are teaching by using the direct method. If on other occasion, you have ever repeatedly drilled grammatical endings, or numbers, or months, perhaps before showing them to your students, then they have used **the audio-lingual method**. And then if you have ever written a thematic unit on a topic not covered by the textbook, incorporating all four skills and culminating in a final assignment. It means that you've used task-based learning.

By doing all of those, then you have already practiced the most appropriate method, called the **eclecticism** or eclectic principles. The point is that the best teachers should make use of all possible methodologies and approaches at the appropriate time, for the appropriate activities, which is considered the best one to support the learning process.

The final goal of applying eclectic principles is choosing and applying a way of teaching that is appropriate for our students, by adapting the strength of any possible approach, not by forcing the students to follow any particular approach or limiting methodology, but to encourage students to enjoy their learning and at the end they are able to understand and learn what we are teaching and obtain maximal output .

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