

THE TEACHER'S PRIMARY ROLE IN CLASS

Alieva Dilafroz Mukhtarovna

Doctor of philosophy (PhD) on pedagogical sciences

Annotation

This article is about some tools of teaching, the role of teacher's in class is described directly, Teacher-Centered Approach to Learning, Teachers are the main authority figure in this model. Students are viewed as "empty vessels" whose primary role is to passively receive information (via lectures and direct instruction) with an end goal of testing and assessment.

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Every teacher has some kind of theoretical principles which function as a frame for their ideas of methods and techniques. A technique is, the narrowest of all three; it is just one single procedure to use in the classroom. Methods are between approaches and techniques, just the mediator between theory and classroom practice. Some methods can share a number of techniques and, though some techniques have developed autonomously, the most important ones start from the main methods.

Now it seems appropriate to mention the three major language learning issues that language pedagogy and ELT have dealt with through this century and that always concern researchers and the teaching profession. Stern labels them as follows:

1. The Language 1-Language 2 connection, that is, the disparity in the learner's mind between the inevitable dominance of the mother tongue and the weaknesses of the second language knowledge.
2. The explicit-implicit option, that is, the choice between more conscious ways of learning a foreign language and more subconscious or automatic ways of learning it. This issue remains to a great extent unresolved and has very often posed a dilemma to the FLT profession and research, as, for example, during the debate between cognitivism and audiolingual strategies in the 60s.
3. The code-communication dilemma has become a major issue recently. It refers to the problems that learners have to cope with when learning a new language, as they have to pay attention on the one hand to linguistic forms (the code) and on the other to real communication.

Classification of active methods in learning a foreign language

The term teaching method refers to the general principles, pedagogy and management strategies used for classroom instruction. Your choice of teaching method depends on what fits you — your educational philosophy, classroom demographic, subject area(s) and school mission statement. A teaching method comprises the principles and methods used for instruction to be implemented by teachers to achieve the desired learning in students. These strategies are determined partly on subject matter to be taught and partly by the nature of the learner. For a particular teaching method to be appropriate and efficient it has to be in relation with the characteristic of the learner and the type of learning it is supposed to bring about. In today's school the trend is that it encourages a lot of creativity. It is a known fact that human advancement comes through reasoning.

This reasoning and original thought enhances creativity. The strategies for teaching can be broadly classified into teacher centered and student centered. In Teacher-Centered Approach to Learning, Teachers are the main authority figure in this model. Students are viewed as "empty vessels" whose primary role is to passively receive information (via lectures and direct instruction) with an end goal

of testing and assessment. It is the primary role of teachers to pass knowledge and information on to their students. In this model, teaching and assessment are viewed as two separate entities. Student learning is measured through objectively scored tests and assessments. In Student-Centered Approach to Learning, while teachers are an authority figure in this model, teachers and students play an equally active role in the learning process. The teacher's primary role is to coach and facilitate student learning and overall comprehension of material. Student learning is measured through both formal and informal forms of assessment, including group projects, student portfolios, and class participation. Teaching and assessments are connected; student learning is continuously measured during teacher instruction. Commonly used teaching methods may include class participation, demonstration, recitation, memorization, or combinations of these.

Different teaching methods are used to meet the purpose of making the students understand the subjects. Nowadays, technological gadgets like computer, cameras are used frequently to enhance the impact of understanding of a particular topic. Technical speaking, teaching is an information giving process which flows from teacher to the student. The appearance of a new method corresponds with a loss of expectation of the former one along with the progressions of theory, research and the experience of school practice. There is not, broadly speaking, a marked line between different methods, but often an eclectic mixture between methods is present. In this sense methods are considered representations of language knowledge for pedagogical purposes and are unit of theory, research and practice, which means a predominant way of building up theories, doing research and carrying out classroom activities. In fact, FLT methods have appeared as a result of the application of the new theoretical findings.

Methods are also conditioned by educational philosophy, approaches about language nature and how it can be taught and learnt, and conceptions about classroom interaction. All this pervaded by those values concerning society and human relationships. When these aspects start to change it can be said that a shift of model is taking place. The different teaching methods are also called instructional methods.

The followings are the types of methods:

THE TRADITIONAL OR GRAMMAR – TRANSLATION METHOD

This method applied the study of Latin and Greek grammars to the study of foreign languages from the XVIIth to the XXth centuries. In the 19th century this method was rather widespread for learning foreign languages, though by the end of the century moves towards the Direct Method were noticed. Even today, in spite of its obsolescence, it has not entirely died out as some textbooks still in use and the practice of some classes are there to prove.

The Grammar-Translation Method focuses on the teaching of the foreign language grammar through the presentation of rules together with some exceptions and lists of vocabulary translated into the mother tongue. Translation is considered its most important classroom activity. The main procedure of an ordinary lesson followed this plan: presentation of a grammatical rule, followed by a list of vocabulary and, finally, translation exercises from selected texts (Stern 1983: 453).

Other activities and procedures can be the following:

- reading comprehension questions about the text;
- students find antonyms and synonyms from words in the text;

- vocabulary is selected from the reading texts and it is memorized;
- sentences are formed with the new words;
- students recognize and memorize cognates and false cognates;

DIRECT TEACHING METHODS

The most common and widely accepted teaching method. This works wonders in case of children in school kindergarten. The teacher directly interacts and makes the student understand the requirements. Direct teaching method makes analyzing the understanding the level of the student easier. For this the teacher has to make advance preparation and find out the requirement of the students beforehand.

COOPERATIVE TEACHING METHOD

This type of teaching creates more interest about the subject amongst the students. Since this method is research oriented, it inspires the students to be more passionate about the subject and increase their attention towards the topic. Sharing is one of the important aspects of this learning method. During interaction, the students understand the subject better. The teacher needs to teach the students the ways of learning in group.

INSTRUCTOR/TEACHER CENTRED METHODS

Here the teacher casts himself/herself in the role of being a master of the subject matter. The teacher is looked upon by the learners as an expert or an authority. Learners on the other hand are presumed to be passive and copious recipients of knowledge from the teacher. Examples of such methods are expository or lecture methods - which require little or no involvement of learners in the teaching process.

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