

***method -Understanding Post  
Pedagogy***

# The Concept of Method

*Theory and Practice of Methods* is an **integral part of language teacher education programs** all over the world ○

survey of 120 teacher education programs for TESOL: ○

Methods course functions as the **primary vehicle** for the development of **basic knowledge** and skill in the prospective teacher ○

**specific classroom techniques** receive “the greatest amount of attention and time in the methods courses” ○

The three main books deal almost exclusively with specific language teaching methods ○

The term **methods** does not refer to what teachers actually do in the classroom; rather, it refers to **established methods conceptualized and constructed** by **experts** in the field. ○

The most common methods included in books are : ○

Audiolingual Method ○

Communicative Methods ○

Community Language Learning, ○

Direct Method ○

Grammar-Translation Method ○

Natural Approach ○

Oral Approach ○

Silent Way ○

Situational Language Teaching ○

Suggestopedia ○

Total Physical Response ○



Note that: ○

These methods are not **different paths** ○

There is considerable **overlap** ○

A new method is usually a **variant** of an existing method ○

To be able to analyse we prefer classify them as: ○

(a) language-centered methods ○

(b) learner-centered methods ○

(c) learning-centered methods ○

# *Language-Centered Methods*

- principally concerned with **linguistic** forms, also called grammatical structures ○
- Opportunities for learners to practice **preselected, pre-sequenced** linguistic structures ○
- form-focused** exercises ○
- language development is largely **intentional** rather than **incidental** ○
- Language development takes place through **conscious effort** ○
- language learning as a **linear, additive** process “accumulated entities” ○

**Assumption: preoccupation with form will ultimately lead to a **mastery** of the target language and that learners can draw from this formal repertoire whenever they wish to communicate in the target language outside the class**

## In practice:

- Vocabulary items are **carefully selected** for their potential use
- **graded** from simple to complex
- teacher's task is to introduce them **one at a time**
- There is **explicit introduction, analysis, and explanation** of linguistic systems

# *Learner-Centered Methods*

Concerned with **language use** and **learner needs** ○

opportunities for learners to practice **preselected, presequenced** grammatical structures as well as **communicative functions** ○

**meaning-focused** activities are used ○

language development is largely **intentional** rather than **incidental** ○

making language learners **grammatically accurate** and **communicatively fluent** ○

**Assumption: preoccupation with both **form** and **function** will ultimately lead to target language mastery and that the learners can make use of both formal and functional repertoire to fulfil their communicative needs outside the class**

take into account the learner's **real-life language use** for social interaction or for academic study ○

present necessary **linguistic structures** in **communicative contexts** ○  
**accumulated** entities ○

represent structures plus **notions** and **functions** ○

Each functional category could be matched with one or more linguistic **Forms** ○

**sequentially** presented and **systematically** explained ○



# *Learning-Centered Methods*

- principally concerned with **learning**
- opportunities for learners to participate in **open-ended meaningful interaction**
- **communicative** activities or **problem-solving** tasks

**Assumption:** preoccupation with meaning-making will ultimately ○  
lead to grammatical as well as communicative **mastery** of the  
language and that learners can learn through the process of  
**communication**

- language development is considered more **incidental** than **intentional** ○
- language development is a **nonlinear** process ○
- does **not** require preselected, pre-sequenced systematic language input ○
- requires **conditions** in which learners can engage in meaningful activities ○
- Language is learned when the learner's attention is focused on **understanding**, **saying** and **doing** something with language ○
- linguistic systems are too complex to be neatly analysed, explicitly explained, and sequentially presented ○
- Rely on insights from **research** in second language acquisition which can inform the theory and practice ○

# Theoretical principles

insights derived from **linguistics, second language acquisition, cognitive psychology, information sciences,** and other **allied disciplines** that provide theoretical bases for the study of language, language learning, and language teaching

# Classroom procedures

teaching and learning techniques indicated by the syllabus designer and/or the materials producer, and adopted/adapted by the teacher and the learner in order to jointly accomplish the goals of language learning and teaching in the classroom ●

# Limitations of the Concept of Method

- First and foremost, methods are based on **idealized concepts** geared toward idealized contexts
- needs, wants, and situations are unpredictably **numerous**
- **no idealized method can visualize all the variables**
- the conception and construction of methods have been largely guided by a **one-size-fits-all**, cookie-cutter approach
- methods tend to wildly drift from **one** theoretical extreme to the **other**
- certain aspects of learning and teaching get **overly emphasized** while certain others are utterly ignored
- **too inadequate** and **too limited** to satisfactorily explain the complexity of language teaching operations
- **multiple factors** such as teacher cognition, learner perception, societal needs, cultural contexts, political exigencies, economic imperatives, and institutional constraints

# Conclusion

“the term method is a label without substance” (Clarke, 1983, p. 109) ●

“diminished rather than enhanced our understanding of language teaching” ●  
(Pennycook, 1989, p. 597)

“language teaching might be better understood and better executed if the ●  
concept of method were not to exist at all” (Jarvis, 1991, p. 295).

# Dissatisfaction with Method

Studies show clearly:

- teachers who are trained in and even swear by a particular method do not conform to its theoretical principles and classroom procedures
- teachers who claim to follow the same method often use different classroom procedures that are not consistent with the adopted method
- teachers who claim to follow different methods often use same classroom procedures
- over time, teachers develop and follow a carefully delineated task hierarchy, a weighted sequence of activities not necessarily associated with any established method.

“no single perspective on language, no single explanation for learning, and no unitary view of the contributions of language learners will account for what they must grapple with on a daily basis” (Larsen-Freeman, 1990, p. 269). ○

That is why... ○

teachers rely on their **intuitive ability** and **experiential knowledge** ○

And have chosen to be '**eclectic**'. ○



# What is wrong with 'eclecticism'?

"The weakness of the eclectic position is that it **offers no criteria** according to which we can determine which is the best theory, nor does it provide any **principles** by which to include or exclude features which form part of existing theories or practices. The choice is left to the individual's **intuitive judgment** and is, therefore, too **broad** and too **vague** to be satisfactory as a theory in its own right."

~~comfort of a context-sensitive professional theory~~

~~confidence of a fully developed personal theory~~

# Postmethod Condition

It includes **three interrelated attributes:** ○

**First** search for an **alternative** to method rather than an alternative method ○

we need to refigure the relationship between the **theorizer** and the **practitioner** of language teaching. ○


It empowers practitioners to construct **personal theories** of practice ○


Looks for enabling practitioners to generate **location-specific, classroom-oriented innovative** strategies. ○

**Second:** the post-method condition signifies teacher **autonomy**. ○

It recognizes the **teachers' potential** (how to teach + how to act autonomously ○  
within the academic and administrative constraints imposed)

It promotes the ability of teachers to know **how to develop a critical approach** in ○  
order to **selfobserve**, **self-analyze**, and **self-evaluate** their own teaching practice for  
effective desired changes

**Third:** based on pragmatism unlike eclecticism constrained by the conventional 

It is based on the **pragmatics of pedagogy** where “the relationship between theory and practice, ideas and their actualization, can only be realized within the domain of application, that is, through the immediate activity of teaching” (Widdowson, 1990, p. 30). 

It focuses on **how classroom learning can be shaped and reshaped** by teachers as a result of selfobservation, self-analysis, and self-evaluation. 

# To do so.....

Teachers need "a sense of **playfulness** (Gardner, 1990)   
**self-understanding** 

own  
experienc  
e

profession  
al  
education

peer  
consultatio  
n

# What is the goal?

“not whether it implies a **good** or **bad** method, but more basically, whether it is **active, alive,** or **operational** enough to create a sense of involvement for both the teacher and the student”

# Postmethod Pedagogy

Is a **three-dimensional** system ○

*The Parameter of **Particularity*** ○

*The Parameter of **Practicality*** ○

*The Parameter of **Possibility*** ○

# *The Parameter of Particularity*

particular  
sociocultural  
milieu

particular  
institutional  
context

particular  
group of  
learners

particular  
set  
of goals

particular  
group of  
teachers

and *through*

at the same time ●



# How?

It starts with practicing teachers, either **individually** or **collectively**, **observing** their teaching acts, **evaluating** their outcomes, **identifying** problems, **finding** solutions, and **trying** them **out** to see once again what works and what doesn't. ○

Such a continual cycle of **observation**, **reflection**, and **action** is a prerequisite for the development of context-sensitive pedagogic theory and practice. ○

# *The Parameter of Practicality*

- a **teacher-generated** theory of practice
- no theory of practice can be fully useful unless there is practice

# *The Parameter of Possibility*

- any pedagogy is implicated
- in relations of **power** and **dominance**
- recognition of learners' and teachers' **subject-positions**
- **Individual** identity

practical, and the possible are blurred.

The result of such a relationship will vary from context to context depending on what the parameters to bear on it.

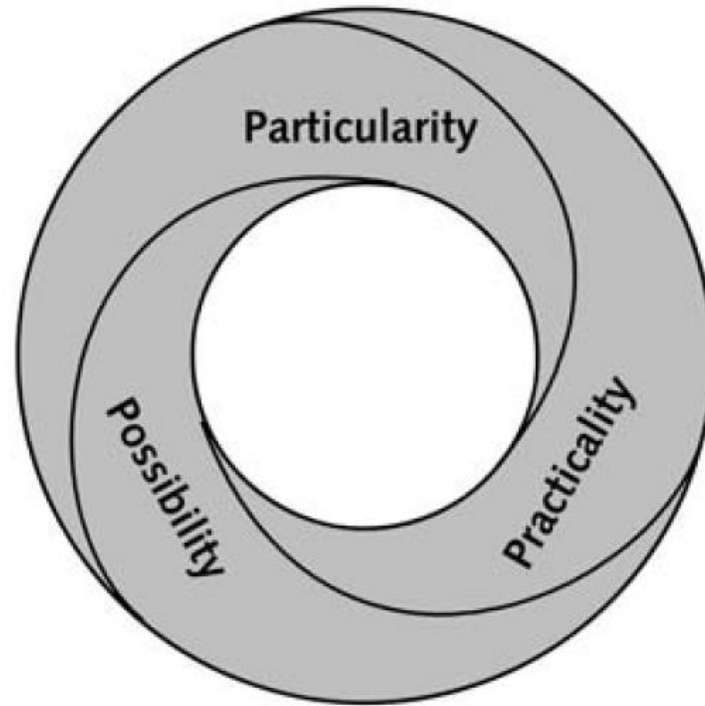


Figure 2.1. Parameters of a postmethod pedagogy

# Macrostrategic Framework

Macrostrategies

Microstrategies

# Macrostrategies

Defined as: ○

guiding principles derived from **historical, theoretical, empirical**, and **experiential** insights related to L2 learning and teaching.

theory-neutral & method-neutral ○

a **general** plan/broad guideline ○

are made operational in the classroom through **microstrategies** ○

• **Maximize learning opportunities:** ○

This macrostrategy envisages teaching as a process of creating and utilizing learning opportunities, a process in which teachers strike a balance between their role as managers of teaching acts and their role as mediators of learning acts ○

• **Minimize perceptual mismatches:** ○

This macrostrategy emphasizes the recognition of potential perceptual mismatches between intentions and interpretations of the learner, the teacher, and the teacher educator ○

• **Facilitate negotiated interaction:** ○

This macrostrategy refers to meaningful learner-learner, learner-teacher classroom interaction in which learners are entitled and encouraged to initiate topic and talk, not just react and respond; ○

***Promote learner autonomy:*** ○

This macrostrategy involves helping learners learn how to learn, equipping them with the means necessary to self-direct and self-monitor their own learning

● ***Foster language awareness:*** ○

This macrostrategy refers to any attempt to draw learners' attention to the formal and functional properties of their L2 in order to increase the degree of explicitness required to promote L2 learning;

● ***Activate intuitive heuristics(using experience):*** ○

This macrostrategy highlights the importance of providing rich textual data so that learners can infer and internalize underlying rules governing grammatical usage and communicative use;



***Contextualize linguistic input:*** ○

This macrostrategy highlights how language usage and use are shaped by linguistic, extralinguistic, situational, and extrasituational contexts

***• Integrate language skills:***

This macrostrategy refers to the need to holistically integrate language skills traditionally separated and sequenced as listening, speaking, reading, and writing

***• Ensure social relevance:*** ○

This macrostrategy refers to the need for teachers to be sensitive to the societal, political, economic, and educational environment in which L2 learning and teaching take place

***Raise cultural consciousness:*** ○

This macrostrategy emphasizes the need to treat learners as cultural informants so that they are encouraged to engage in a process of classroom participation that puts a premium on their power/knowledge.

# The Pedagogic Wheel

- in a systemic relationship ●
- supporting one another. ●

