

2.3 Methods, approaches and beyond

Activities

Activity 1.1: Introduction to methods (a)

Think of one of your first learning experiences as, for example, riding a bicycle or learning to swim.

- Was it a successful experience? Yes? No? Partly?
- Why? Provide a reason for the answer you chose and use the following to frame your answer.
 - How old were you? Where did you learn?
 - Were you part of a group of learners or was it an individual experience?
 - What helped you learn? Who helped you learn?
 - Are you still able to ride a bike/swim? Why?
 - As in most learning experiences, factors mostly influencing their success is HOW we learnt and WHO/WHAT helped us.

Write your views in the text box below.

Activity 1.2: Introduction to methods (b)

Now think of your own experience as a second language learner.

- Was it a successful experience? Yes? No? Partly?
- Why? Provide a reason for the answer you chose and use the following to frame your answer.
 - How old were you? Who helped you learn?
 - Where did you learn the second language?
 - Were you part of a group of learners or was it an individual experience? What helped you learn? How?
 - Do you ever think of your own learning experience when you teach? Yes? No?
 - What has helped you and how in your job?

Write your views in the text box below.

Activity 2: Methods and beyond

In the last 60 years, there have been several changes in the ways suggested to teach languages both in terms of methods and of approaches.

- Can you recall approaches that are no longer used? If so, can you explain why?
- Have you ever used an approach that you no longer use? If so, can you explain why?

Now, watch the video “Empowering the Language Learner | The New School” where Diane Larsen-Freeman discusses the role of language learners, as well as some issues related to the role of methods. You can find the link in the “Supplementary Materials” part of this Section.

Focus on the extract from 09.30 to 15.50 and do the following:

- Identify 3 issues she raises when she speaks about methods that offer, in your opinion, a different perspective on methods.
- Would you agree on what she says? Why?

Write your views in the text box below.

Activity 3: Challenges in ELF-aware teaching (a)

Think of your own experience as a former English learner and now, as an EL teacher and respond to the following 2 questions:

- WHAT does teaching such an 'unstable' language might imply for an EL teacher?
- HOW does learning English now occur among our learners?
- WHAT & HOW can an English teacher sustain learning in an ELF aware perspective?

Write your views in the text box below.

Activity 4: Challenges in ELF-aware teaching (b)

Watch a video “David Crystal - The Biggest Challenges for Teachers”, where David Crystal, a well-known linguist, describes English language teachers’ current challenges. You can find the link in the “Supplementary Materials” part of this Section.

Based upon what you’ve learnt so far and on your experience:

- Does Crystal add something you had not thought of? Yes? No? If so, what exactly is that?
- Does he not mention anything important for ELF-aware teaching? What?
- Does he mention useful suggestions? If so, which ones?
- Can you identify the implications of teaching English in an ELF-aware perspective?

Write your views in the text box below.