

Methods, Approaches and Beyond

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ACTIVITY 1.1

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

Was it a succesful 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

Click the link under the video to share your responses in the Forum

ACTIVITY 1.2

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

Was it a succesful 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?
- >>> Click the link under the video to share your memories and thoughts with your colleagues in the FORUM. Anything in common?

Learning to teach

Learning to teach is related to a number of **factors that will determine our decisions**, as for example:

- Our own notion of learning & teaching as well as our learning experiences
- Our learners' needs
- Our choice of the method/s that will inform our teaching
- The context where learning will take place
- The language level to be achieved by the learners
- The available teaching resources: books, videos, ICT
- The overall results you wish to achieve

Teaching is made up of a number of concurrent actions and ways of carrying them out, and these are usually referred to as **approach, method, procedures and techniques**

What's behind terms?

Let's look at some of the most used terms in language teaching when we come to **HOW we teach** (ref. to '*Defining Teaching*')

- **Approach**: general assumptions about what language is and how learning a language occurs
- **Method**: overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material
- **Procedures**: the step-by-step measures to execute a method
- **Technique**: the actual moment-to-moment classroom steps that lead to a specified outcome
- **Activity**: traditionally activities are meant to have learners practice language
- **Task**: an activity in which the meaning is primary and it is closely related to real-world activities

Methods and beyond

- The long history of **teaching methods**, primarily concerned with finding more effective methods of language teaching, has witnessed a shift from “**a preoccupation with ‘methods’**” to “a more complex view of language teaching which encompasses a multi-faceted understanding of the teaching and learning processes, a **“focus on pedagogy”**”
- Originally methods were considered **‘top-down impositions’** of **experts’ views of teaching** and the role of the individual teacher was minimized

❖ **Think now of your language learning experience, can you recall the method adopted by your teacher?**

❖ **Is you teaching *now* based upon a particular method?**

(adapted from H. Douglas Brown, 2002, 5/6)

Methods and beyond

ACTIVITY 2.1

- 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?**

Methods and beyond

ACTIVITY 2.2

- Watch the extract of Diane Larsen-Freeman's presentation on the role of language learners where she discusses some issues related to the role of methods
 - **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?**
- Click the link under the video to share your views in the Forum**

Methods and beyond

- Traditionally held theories and views on what to teach and how to teach in a language classroom have been recently revisited by scholars from different parts of the world who have addressed teaching issues on the bases of the observation of classroom activities and of the EL teachers' active contribution, e.g. in **action-research**

Methods and beyond

This emerging perspective has led to the development of **different foci in the choice of methods & approaches and in the design and implementation of language teaching**—for example:

- learners' roles, motivation and strategies
- learners' difficulties in EL learning
- learners' out-of-school learning
- teachers' understanding and awareness of ELT implementation
- teachers' attitudes and deeply held beliefs

Methods and beyond

Teachers are becoming more and more central in the teaching-learning process

They are the **“informed practitioners”**:

- aware of the language their learners are exposed to
- capable of choosing among different methods
- knowledgeable of the local contexts
- capable of perceiving the emerging instantiations of English
- aware of the multilingual contexts where their teaching takes place
- aware of the potential of classroom-based research

Challenges in ELF-aware teaching

- Besides our *general assumptions about what English is (approach)*, we need to consider *what language we have in mind when teaching*
- If English is changing so fast, because of the Internet and of the **globalization of English**, then...
- ❖ Teachers have to keep pace with this unstoppable change since their students are already ahead of them
- ❖ We should thus revisit our **overall plan (method)** in terms of the language materials and the presentation order, the **measures (procedures)** to adopt, the **steps (techniques)** to use and the **outcomes** we foresee, as well as the role of *activities* and *tasks*

Challenges in ELF-aware teaching

- There are several methods and approaches in ELT that are still valid—currently, all of them are still adopted and can be implemented in an ELF-aware approach, specifically:
- those that *focus on learners' active role as a successful language user, and explorer*, promote *their autonomy* and allow teachers to go *beyond traditional ELT standards and normative prescriptions*, with **a focus on 'language in use'**.
- To mention a few, besides the well-known **Communicative Approach**:
>>> *Cooperative learning, Project work, Lexical approach, Task-based learning, CLIL* etc. whereby the use of **ICT** and **Data Driven Learning** can better sustain teachers in their **'informed practice'**

Challenges in ELF-aware teaching

ACTIVITY 3

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

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

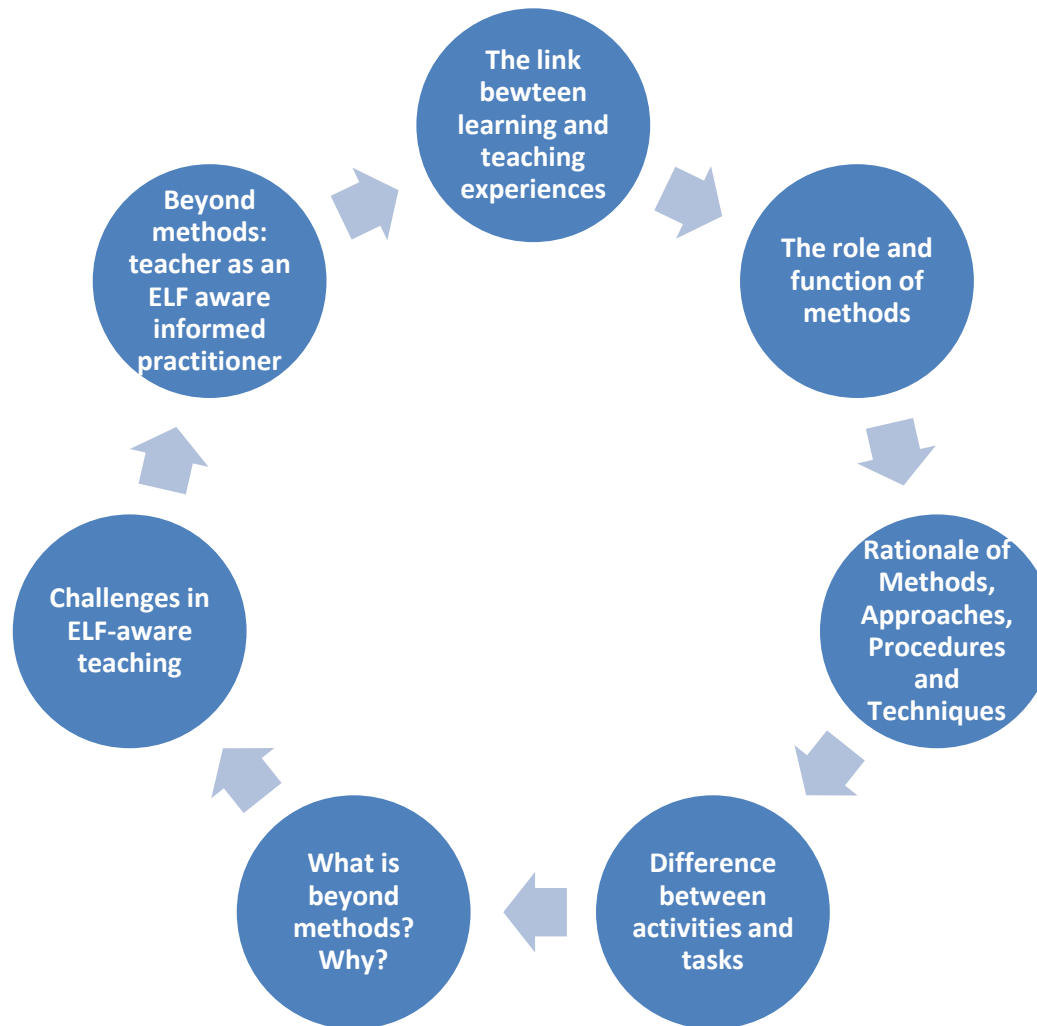
>>> Report your ideas in the FORUM and compare what your colleagues think about these three issues

Challenges in ELF-aware teaching

ACTIVITY 4

- Watch the video where David Crystal describes EL teachers' current challenges—based upon what you've learnt so far and on your experience...
 - a) Does he add something you had not thought of? **What?**
 - b) Does he not mention anything important for an ELF-aware teaching? **What?**
 - c) Does he mention useful suggestions? **Which ones?**
 - d) Can you identify the **implications** of teaching English in an ELF-aware perspective?
- >>> **Report your ideas in the FORUM and compare what your colleagues think about these three issues**

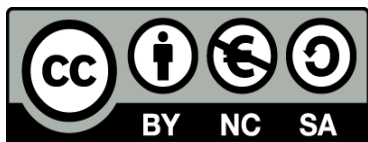
What have you learnt about METHODS?



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