

2.3 Methods, approaches and beyond

Transcript

Slide 1

Hello! Welcome to the section on methods of the ENRICH Course. This section called **Methods, approaches and beyond**, deals with the notion of methods and approaches and with all that has been differently regarded as ways to organize and carry out foreign or second language teaching.

Slide 2

Let's start with a reflective activity concerning our experience with learning. 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

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

Slide 3

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?

Click the link under the video to share your memories and thoughts with your colleagues in the FORUM. Anything in common?

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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

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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

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- 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)

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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?

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- 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

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- 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 a form of research carried out by teachers and classroom based

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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

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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

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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*

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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'

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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

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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

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Let's now check what we have learnt about Methods and beyond

- The link between learning and teaching experiences
- The role and function of methods
- Rationale of Methods, Approaches, Procedures and Techniques
- Difference between activities and tasks
- What is beyond methods? Why?
- Challenges in ELF-aware teaching
- Beyond methods: teacher as an ELF aware informed practitioner