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PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES, INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND TEACHING METHODS IN EFL/ELT CONTEXTS

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Abstract

In this unprecedented era of transformation, the enduring mission of EFL/ELT remains the empowerment of individuals to communicate effectively, transcend cultural boundaries, and actively participate in a globalized society. By embracing these forward-looking directions, ELT educators, institutions, and policymakers play a pivotal role in equipping learners with the linguistic and critical thinking competencies essential for success in an increasingly dynamic and interconnected world.

This article explores the most widely recognized and frequently employed approaches and methods in teaching English as a second or foreign language. Each approach or method is grounded in a distinct theoretical orientation and encompasses a set of strategies and instructional activities designed to achieve specific pedagogical objectives and learning outcomes. While numerous teaching methodologies exist, this discussion does not encompass every possible method. The absence of a particular method should not be interpreted as a reflection of its ineffectiveness or lack of relevance. Teaching English as a foreign language (EFL/ELT) should not be confined solely to grammatical features; rather, it must emphasize the use of language as a communicative tool. Consequently, EFL/ESL instruction ought to be communicative and interactive in nature. Through an analysis of the core principles and methods of EFL/ELT, it becomes evident that each method represents only one facet of the vast landscape of language education. Any instructional methodology – particularly in language teaching – must incorporate the principles of gradation, presentation, and repetition. Only by adhering to these foundational principles can educators determine what to teach, how to teach it, and formulate coherent instructional policies.

Keywords: *Communicative language teaching; Technology into EFL/ELT; Teaching strategies; Current trends; Challenges*

Introduction

The field of English language teaching (EFL/ELT) is undergoing significant transformation, driven by technological advance-

ments, evolving pedagogical paradigms, and the shifting needs of learners. At the forefront of this change is the integration of technology, with online platforms, mobile applications,

and virtual reality redefining the landscape of language learning. This qualitative study aims to explore the teaching methods, approaches, and strategies commonly employed in EFL/ELT classrooms, particularly in contexts where English is taught as a foreign language. The research also addresses the dynamic and ever-changing nature of English language instruction, investigating innovative strategies, acknowledging existing challenges, and envisioning future directions that will shape the trajectory of English language teaching and learning. Findings from the study revealed that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), and Total Physical Response (TPR) were the three predominant approaches observed in the foreign language learning environments examined. In contemporary practice, technology plays a crucial role in English language instruction, encompassing a wide array of digital tools and resources that enhance both teaching and learning. These include hardware such as computers and mobile devices, software applications, online platforms, interactive whiteboards, and educational software. Globally, the teaching of English as a foreign language has a long-standing history. Over the past two decades, English has increasingly influenced all forms of communication and entertainment. Numerous websites indicate that millions of individuals speak and write in English, both in everyday life and professional domains. The backdrop of English's global dominance is a phenomenon that has expanded rapidly over the past century. Today, English is the most widely studied second language worldwide. This study focuses on classroom-based English language instruction, highlighting the core teaching approaches and methods used with learners. A variety of pedagogical methods and approaches were employed in the research. Specifically, the Oral Approach and Situational Language Teaching initially emphasized the teaching of spoken language, with the target language serving as the medium of instruction. New linguistic content is introduced and practiced within situational contexts.

- The Grammar-Translation Method centers on fostering appreciation for literature in the target language and emphasizes language instruction through

reading comprehension. Learners are provided with texts in the target language and respond to accompanying questions;

- The Audio-Lingual Method is grounded in the behaviorist belief that language acquisition involves the formation of correct linguistic habits. Learners repeat patterns until they can produce them spontaneously;
- Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) underscores the importance of communicative competence over mere linguistic competence, prioritizing functions over forms. Learners typically engage with authentic materials in small groups through communicative activities.

The four language skills – reading, writing, speaking, and listening – are universally recognized as essential components of foreign language instruction.

English language teaching (EFL/ELT) stands at the intersection of global communication and cultural exchange. In an increasingly interconnected world – where English has emerged as the lingua franca of international business, diplomacy, academia, and popular culture – the importance of effective English instruction cannot be overstated. Community Language Learning (CLL), a psychological counseling technique adapted for educational purposes, is known as counseling-learning. CLL applies the principles of counseling-learning theory to language education, emphasizing learner-centered approaches grounded in community and interpersonal dynamics. To achieve meaningful outcomes in foreign language instruction, it is essential to integrate a range of pedagogical methods, including: the Oral Approach and Situational Language Teaching, the Grammar-Translation Method, the Audio-Lingual Method, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Total Physical Response (TPR), the Silent Way, Community Language Learning, and the Direct Method. Each of these contributes distinct theoretical and practical dimensions to the language learning process. Task-based and communicative approaches remain central, highlighting the development of practical language skills and cultural competence. EFL/ELT

materials increasingly prioritize authentic tasks and experiential learning, reflecting a pedagogical shift toward real-world applicability.

Global citizenship and intercultural competence have become foundational pillars of contemporary EFL/ELT, mirroring learners' need to navigate a globalized society. As such, EFL/ELT transcends linguistic instruction, fostering cultural sensitivity and awareness of global issues.

The global significance of the English language is not merely a linguistic phenomenon; it is deeply intertwined with economic, political, and cultural forces. English has become the primary medium of communication in international business and diplomacy, a prerequisite for academic success across numerous disciplines, and a gateway to global popular culture through music, film, and the internet. Consequently, proficiency in English has emerged as a valuable asset, opening doors to education, employment, and intercultural exchange. In this context, the importance of English Language Teaching (ELT) is paramount. ELT serves as the conduit through which individuals acquire the linguistic competencies necessary to participate effectively on the global stage. Effective EFL/ELT instruction extends beyond grammar and vocabulary; it encompasses the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, as well as cultural awareness and intercultural communication competence. EFL/ELT is no longer confined to traditional classroom settings. It now spans online and blended learning environments, immersive language programs, and specialized courses tailored to specific industries and professional domains. Whether it is a young learner beginning their English language journey or an experienced professional seeking to enhance their proficiency, EFL/ELT offers a diverse array of opportunities and methodologies.

Statement of the Research Problem:

Despite the immense significance of EFL/ELT, the field is not without its challenges. Language acquisition is a complex and multi-faceted process, and teaching a dynamic language such as English presents unique obstacles. Educators must address the diverse

needs of their target learners, adapt to an evolving technological landscape, and consider the sociocultural factors that influence language learning. These challenges underscore the need for responsive, inclusive, and innovative pedagogical approaches within EFL/ELT.

Multimodal literacy is emerging as a vital skill, shaped by the diverse modes of communication characteristic of the digital age. English language teaching (EFL/ELT) programs increasingly incorporate multimedia materials and digital storytelling to foster visual literacy and digital content creation skills. Inclusivity and diversity are foundational principles that help create welcoming environments for learners of all backgrounds and abilities. Training in inclusive pedagogy ensures support for diverse student populations. Continuous learning is emphasized, involving both students and educators who engage in ongoing professional development. Institutions provide various opportunities for skill enhancement. Sustainability and eco-linguistics are emerging themes that connect language learning with environmental awareness. English language teaching materials increasingly address ecological consciousness and sustainable living. Purpose-driven language instruction is on the rise, serving professionals across various industries. Specialized programs equip learners with industry-specific linguistic competencies. Assessment methods are evolving, with traditional tests being supplemented by performance-based evaluations that measure real-world language proficiency. However, standardized assessments often fail to capture learners' true language abilities or their capacity to use English in authentic contexts. As a result, identifying valid and reliable assessment methods aligned with communicative language teaching principles remains a persistent challenge for contemporary educators. This research article focuses on describing modern teaching methodologies, research design, data collection techniques, and analytical procedures used to examine the current state of EFL/ELT, innovative strategies, prevailing challenges, and future directions in the field. One of the central challenges in EFL/ELT is the diversity of learner needs. English language learners come from

varied linguistic backgrounds, possess different levels of proficiency, and exhibit distinct learning styles and goals.

Effective EFL/ELT relies on well-prepared educators who continuously expand their knowledge and refine their teaching practices. However, access to high-quality professional development opportunities may be limited, particularly in resource-constrained settings. Therefore, educators must adapt their instruction to meet these diverse needs – an endeavor that can be both complex and demanding. At the same time, language learning platforms and mobile applications have made English instruction more accessible and convenient. These platforms offer interactive lessons, quizzes, and opportunities for learners to practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Online language courses and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have enabled students to receive high-quality English instruction from global experts. Technology has profoundly transformed the EFL/ELT landscape, introducing innovative tools and resources that enhance language learning in multiple ways. It facilitates accessibility, personalization, engagement, exposure to authentic language, instant feedback, and enriched language production. Nonetheless, it also presents challenges related to digital inequality, teacher preparedness, and the assurance of instructional quality.

Conclusion

In recent years, the field of English Language Teaching (EFL/ELT) has undergone transformative changes, marked by an increasing emphasis on innovative instructional strategies that respond to the dynamic needs of learners in an interconnected world. Technology has revolutionized nearly every aspect of modern life, including education. Within EFL/ELT, technology has become an integral component of teaching and learning, offering a wide array of opportunities

and challenges. This study investigates the role of technology in EFL/ELT, its impact on language acquisition, and the challenges educators face in utilizing it effectively. As digital tools and platforms reshape pedagogical practices, understanding their influence is essential for developing responsive, inclusive, and effective language instruction in the 21st century.

In conclusion, the field of English Language Teaching (EFL/ELT) stands at a pivotal juncture, poised to embrace a future defined by innovation, adaptability, and inclusivity. As technology continues to reshape the educational landscape, EFL/ELT is increasingly integrating online platforms, artificial intelligence, and immersive experiences to offer learners flexible and engaging opportunities for language acquisition. Personalized learning pathways empower individuals to take ownership of their language learning journey, while task-based and communicative approaches equip them with practical skills essential for real-world communication. The role of EFL/ELT extends beyond linguistic proficiency; it encompasses the cultivation of global citizenship, intercultural competence, and sustainability awareness.

In this study, we sought to explore several innovative strategies that have emerged and are reshaping the landscape of English Language Teaching (EFL/ELT). As a result, EFL/ELT is recognized as a dynamic field that plays a pivotal role in fostering effective communication, intercultural understanding, and global interconnectedness. Nevertheless, EFL/ELT faces its share of challenges, which can impact both educators and learners. This article has examined the ongoing difficulties encountered by EFL/ELT practitioners and students, as well as several potential strategies for addressing these issues. By identifying and analyzing these challenges and innovations, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of the evolving nature of language education in a global context.

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