

THE ROLE OF EFFECTIVE METHODS IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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Annotation: Effective methods for teaching English play a critical role in ensuring successful language learning. As English becomes increasingly important for global communication, educators face the challenge of selecting the most effective teaching strategies. The strategic application of contemporary methodologies is currently proving valuable not only in language instruction but also across a range of other disciplines.¹ This article examines different approaches to teaching English, assesses their effectiveness, and emphasizes the significance of choosing the right methods to enhance student outcomes. By analyzing modern techniques like communicative language teaching, task-based learning, and the direct method, the paper provides a deeper understanding of how these strategies facilitate language acquisition.

Key words: Effective methods, teaching English, language acquisition, EFL students, communicative language teaching, task-based learning, direct method, educational strategies.

A method is a strategic approach employed to accomplish a specific objective. In reality, methods are deeply embedded in our daily routines, influencing nearly every moment of our lives. For instance, something as ordinary as walking to school in the morning or taking a bus reflects our chosen method for navigating our environment effectively and purposefully. In today's interconnected world, proficiency in English is essential for academic achievement, professional growth, and international communication. However, teaching English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) poses significant challenges.² To ensure effective language learning, educators must select appropriate teaching methods that engage students and cater to their unique linguistic needs. This paper investigates the role of effective teaching techniques in English instruction, with a focus on key methods that have been shown to significantly improve language learning in diverse educational environments.

1. **Complex Grammar:** English grammar is difficult for students to learn, especially in using correct tenses and sentence structures. Learners often confuse past, present, and future tenses while speaking.

2. **Overuse of Native Language:** Excessive use of the native language in classrooms hinders English learning. Teachers should encourage communication in English to improve fluency and pronunciation.

3. **Lack of Confidence:** Many students feel insecure speaking English in public. This is often due to insufficient encouragement from teachers. Confidence is essential, and students should be motivated to speak even if they make mistakes, as learning comes from those errors.

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.¹

² Harmer, J. (2007). *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (4th ed.). Longman.

4. Over-Reliance on Translation: Students often use dictionaries or translation apps, which can lead to inaccurate translations—especially with idioms and phrases. Literal translations can distort meanings and affect speaking quality.

5. Dominance of Top Students: Teachers should not focus only on high-achieving students but also motivate weaker ones to participate actively in class.

The famous educator and psychologist Lev Vygotsky once said: “The effectiveness of education is closely linked to the learner’s zone of proximal development.”³ If a teacher correctly identifies this zone and chooses appropriate methods accordingly, the outcomes of education will be significantly enhanced. Therefore students should learn English not as an obligation, but out of genuine interest and curiosity. To prevent these issues, it would be appropriate for teachers to use innovative and effective teaching methods. Below, we outline effective pedagogical methods for enhancing student learning.

Quick answers

This technique involves fast question-and-answer interactions during a lesson. The teacher engages students with quick questions, which helps to increase their attention and response speed. The teacher rapidly asks students simple questions (e.g., “What is the capital of France?”). Students must answer as quickly as possible within a time limit (e.g., 10 seconds). Points are awarded for correct and fast answers.

Pantomime

This method uses gestures to demonstrate new words. The teacher shows a word using body language while students guess the correct term. This keeps learners from getting bored and introduces vocabulary in a playful manner. A student or teacher acts out a word using gestures without speaking. The rest of the class must guess the word. (Examples: “swimming,” “reading,” “eating”).

Learning Through Observation

It is known that young learners remember more of what they see than what they hear. Teachers can use visual aids like posters, flashcards, and real-life objects to reinforce vocabulary. For instance, everyday items such as books, pens, windows, and tables can be used in classroom activities to help learners practice using new words in sentences. Students choose an object in the classroom and describe its color, shape, and use in English without naming it directly. Others guess which object it is.

Using Songs and Poems

Difficult-to-remember words can be taught through songs and poems. Singing vocabulary helps children develop their speaking skills and better remember words. For example, teaching the English alphabet through a song is more effective than rote memorization. Students sing a popular children’s song in English (such as “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes”) while acting out the lyrics with appropriate movements.

Grammar Games

Games can be used to enhance vocabulary and grammar skills. Most of these games involve active participation and creativity. Students are given various tasks, and this

³ Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

encourages competition and engagement, making language learning more exciting. Students are divided into teams. Each team is given a grammar task (for example, using the correct tense) and must take turns answering. Teams lose points for incorrect answers.

Educational Games

Language learning can be enriched with subject-based games. During class, such activities can spark interest in students who are usually passive. One example is: “Merry Riddles” – a game where students guess riddles in English. They must think critically and use their vocabulary to solve the riddles. Such activities develop students’ problem-solving skills and confidence. The teacher reads English riddles aloud. Students must guess the answers. Correct guesses earn rewards (such as points or small prizes).

As Jerome Bruner has emphasized any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development. It can thus be concluded that the careful selection of instructional methods plays a pivotal role in achieving successful educational outcomes. While the previously mentioned techniques are well-suited for early-grade students, we shall now examine pedagogical approaches that cater to the needs of more mature learners.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): This approach emphasizes communication over memorization, encouraging students to use English in realistic situations. It fosters practical language use, particularly in speaking and listening. Dell Hymes argues that knowing a language involves more than mastering grammar; it also requires understanding how to use language appropriately in different contexts. Sandra Savignon highlights that communicative language teaching sees language as a tool for expressing meaning, and it encourages learners to perform tasks that reflect real-life communication. Jack C. Richards and Theodore S. Rodgers explain that in CLT, interaction is both the method and the goal of language learning.

Task-Based Learning (TBL): Focusing on language learning through completing relevant tasks, TBL connects the language learning process to real-world activities, such as role-playing and problem-solving, thereby motivating students. Jane Willis emphasizes that task-based learning offers a natural environment for language use and allows learners to engage in real communication, which is essential for language development. Rod Ellis points out that task-based teaching focuses on helping students build communicative competence through meaningful interaction.

This method requires the exclusive use of English in the classroom, focusing on oral communication to immerse students in the language, which accelerates their ability to understand and use English. François Gouin believed that language should be learned naturally, in the same way children acquire their first language—through direct use and exposure, not through translation. Harold E. Palmer maintained that the Direct Method is most effective when only the target language is used in the classroom, helping learners to think directly in that language. Charles Berlitz claimed that the best way to teach a language is through active use in conversation, without relying on the learner’s native language.

Blended Learning: A combination of in-person and online learning, blended learning allows flexibility and enhances accessibility, making it a popular method for modern classrooms.

The Silent Way and Suggestopedia: These less conventional methods encourage self-discovery through visual aids, gestures, and a more passive teacher role, supporting diverse learning styles.

In conclusion, effectively and appropriately chosen methods significantly contribute not only to language instruction but also to time efficiency, error prevention, and the streamlined achievement of objectives across various fields. Effective English language teaching requires a combination of modern, student-centered methods that promote active participation and communication. Approaches such as the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Learning (TBL), and the use of technology in the classroom have proven to be highly successful. These methods focus on improving learners' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in real-life contexts. Additionally, creating a supportive and motivating learning environment plays a crucial role in student success. By applying these strategies, teachers can significantly enhance language acquisition and help students achieve fluency and confidence in English. According to the eminent educational expert Dylan William "Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better. And effective teaching strategies are the key to that improvement."

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