THEORETICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF APPROACHES, METHODS, AND FRAMEWORKS IN TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Summary

The growing demand for English as a means of global communication has placed a strain on the supply of well-trained language teachers. Nevertheless, concepts such as approach, method, and framework in terms of methodology have become blurred, which may lead to a misunderstanding of pedagogical implications. This article aims to define these terms and discuss their interrelatedness in the context of teaching English as a second language.

It reviews some of the main pedagogical approaches (such as the Communicative and Lexical Approaches), as well as specific teaching methods and lesson models (including PPP, TBLT, and TTT). Particular considerations include the application of theoretical principles to practice and lesson planning.

The study is an outcome of a discourse analysis of recent literature in the fields of applied linguistics and English language teaching. Theoretical and comparative analyses are employed to incorporate methodological perspectives.

The results suggest that effective English language teaching is achieved through the situational combination of approaches, methods, and frameworks that meet the specific needs of learners and the learning situation. The paper emphasizes the role of methodological sensitivity in formulating communicative, learner-centered instruction that is appropriate to the particular teaching context.

Key words: English language pedagogy, classroom practice, communicative competence, lesson design, language teaching strategies, methodological analysis.

1. Introduction

The place of English is becoming more and more central, so the old question about whether to teach it or not is being replaced by how to teach. The increasingly high demand for quality in language education means that there are many teaching approaches, methods and frameworks. At times, these terms are used interchangeably, yet they refer to different levels of pedagogical thinking and organization. Understanding the distinction between an approach and a method framework is crucial when planning a program for language instruction. A definition of these three notions will help educators design effective language programs as well as make informed decisions about which practices fit within those programs. Each represents a particular vision on how language learning takes place. Depending on their perspective on a particular issue, proponents may choose one term over another. Before we analyze specific models, techniques, and so on, it would be desirable to establish what an approach method framework represents at this point. All authors subsequently analyze whether there are examples according to the theoreticians previously mentioned.

"Approach refers to theories about the nature of language and language learning that serve as the source of practices and principles in language teaching." *(Richards & Rodgers, 2014:19)*

This definition emphasizes that an approach is the theoretical level of language teaching. People hold a variety of traditional beliefs about how language functions or how to acquire it. An approach provides these beliefs with an overall framework of ideas that represent our thoughts on language and its use. Still, it does not offer specific methods or procedures for developing instruction in second or foreign languages.

Nevertheless, since it is necessary to put these theoretical assumptions into practice in actual classroom situations, teachers need clear guidance on how to do so, and this is provided through methods. "A method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon, the selected approach" *(Richards & Rodgers, 2014:20)*. This definition indicates that the method operates on a more concrete level than the approach.

Whereas an approach is a theory of what language is and how it is learned, a method is the application of that theory or approach in the classroom. It describes how teaching will be implemented in practice, specifically in terms of task formats and forms of interaction. However, methods themselves also require an organizational structure so that lessons are coherent and consistent; hence, instructional frameworks are necessary. "ESL lesson planning frameworks are step-by-step structures that support teachers in meeting linguistic and communication goals in the classroom" *(OnTESOL.org, n.d.)*. This definition suggests that a framework would be a kind of organization rather than one of the theories or methods. Frameworks help teachers plan and sequence lessons by providing a logical flow of teaching steps. They provide flexibility in teaching approaches and methodologies, while maintaining pedagogical coherence. This implies that frameworks offer the possibility of being practically interlinked with methods in a uniform educational format.

In summary, approach, method, and framework have interconnecting roles in the teaching of English at various levels–an approach based on theory that provides the structure for the how of language learning. The implementation of these principles in a classroom through an established protocol results in the creation of structured and systematic lessons that are connected with the learning goals or objectives. The structure/methods of these lessons can be adjusted according to the unique needs of the students in a specific classroom setting.

Once the differing definitions of approach, method, and framework have been established, it is time to examine how they function in practice. The following sections will provide examples of lesson frameworks and methods that illustrate how these three areas work together to create lesson plans that incorporate all the key ideas of language learning. The frameworks provide a structure for designing lesson plans, while the approaches and methods demonstrate how the ideas that help people learn languages work within the context of classroom activities. Examining examples of how these framework elements, approaches, and methods interact with each other enables us to see how theoretical concepts can be applied to create effective strategies for teaching and learning languages.

2. Frameworks

PPP (Presentation – Practice – Production)

The PPP (presentation-practice-production) framework represents one of the best-known methods of teaching English as a second language by providing an easy, sequential method by which teachers can introduce students to new vocabulary items, provide opportunities for students to practice their latest acquisitions, and develop the skills needed to use them when faced with varied situations. "Standing for Presentation, Practice, Production, the PPP model

is used in ELT as a prescriptive framework for the structuring of new language lessons, especially grammar and functional language, and is well known from its use in teacher training programmes worldwide" *(Anderson, 2017)*.

As defined in this statement, PPP should be viewed as a framework rather than merely a series of steps through which a teacher can systematically prepare a lesson plan. At the presentation phase, the teacher introduces vocabulary and grammatical structures through examples. During the practice stage, the teacher will provide controlled practice sessions to ensure students are well-prepared. To reinforce the concepts learned. Lastly, during the production phase, learners apply what they have learned to produce and incorporate the best aspects of both styles into their new work, along with original ideas and input received from the role-plays and discussions *(Oryza et al., 2022)*.

Practical use: The PPP process is also a suitable choice for beginning and intermediate learners, as it is structured in a step-by-step format, enabling learners to use the language independently by the end of the process. Additionally, PPP has been used to teach the structure of grammar points, express functional phrases, and introduce new vocabulary.

Lesson example: Direction Asking Lesson (B1; CEFR)

Presentation: Use a dialogue or instance of a map to demonstrate how to use phrases such as "Could you tell me ....?,.." and "At .., turn left/right...." as a lead-in to practice asking for directions.

Practice: Complete controlled practice, such as filling in the missing phrases for a map or dialogue practice in pairs.

Production: Use the maps of Classroom City to figure out how to ask for and give directions in pairs with Role Play.

Although the PPP framework provides teachers with a sequential, structured approach to lessons, many educators believe it also overemphasizes grammatical form over semantics (meaning). As such, many educators are beginning to adopt a more learner-centred and communicative model in their language instruction. TBLT has had the most significant impact on how we develop our approaches to communicative and learner-centered language teaching. It focuses on using 'meaningful' tasks as the basis for all instruction, instead of starting with the presentation of previously learned grammatical structures.

"Task-based language teaching is an approach based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching" *(Richards & Rodgers, 2014)*. Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is a type of communicative language teaching (CLT) or communicative approach in which tasks play a central and organizing role in defining content and structuring and sequencing activities *(Ellis, 2003)*. However, in TBLT, the focus is on language use for communicative purposes, and learners are encouraged to concentrate on accomplishing a real goal rather than on the exact production of a set of predetermined grammatical patterns.

In this model of language, the use of language to create meaning is emphasized, and grammatical structures are considered consistently after or during communication, often through reflection on the act of communicating, feedback received, or intensive consideration of the message itself through reflective or analytical tasks. Students have the opportunity to observe how language is used, as well as to work together as a team, define meaning through negotiation, develop solutions to problems, and engage cooperatively within a framework that supports communication and student-centered practices in language teaching. *(Ellis, 2003; Long, 2015)*.

TBLT is based on the premise that language is best learned through use, especially when learners are mentally and socially engaged in tasks that are similar to those in real life

(Ellis, 2003). Hence, accuracy is acquired gradually and naturally, rather than through instruction of some sort, and it develops from exposure and use, not from rules. TBLT is intended for learners of English at intermediate to advanced levels (B1-C1), who prefer an active hands-on experience over a theoretical approach. Both adults & teenagers learning English as a foreign or second language in both formal and informal settings can benefit from this approach. Classes using TBLT will encourage students to interact with one another through collaborative work on real-world tasks.

Sample Lesson

Topic: Planning a weekend trip (B1)

Pre-task: Talk/brainstorm; Teachable vocabulary (transportation, housing, budget) related to planning a weekend trip.

Task: Students work in pairs to plan a weekend getaway on a small budget and present their plan.

Post-task: The teacher points out and clarifies the language that occurred (future tenses, suggestions, comparatives).

Though lesson design frameworks like TBLT and PPP take contrasting but systematic approaches to designing lessons, both provide a prescribed instructional path. While PPP presumes the learner needs explicit 'input' before 'practising' or applying the input, TBLT introduces meaning-focused tasks from the very beginning of a lesson. In a real classroom situation, however, learners often arrive with partial/uneven knowledge of the target language; therefore, there is a requirement for a framework alternative to TBLT and PPP, which can facilitate instruction based on what learners know and have previously learned about the target language, rather than on what a teacher plans to deliver. TTT provides one such framework that centres on learner performance when designing and delivering instruction. "Test–Teach–Test is a lesson procedure in which learners first attempt a task or activity to reveal their current level of knowledge, followed by focused teaching, and then a second task to assess improvement." *(Richards & Rodgers, 2014)* Unlike the linear lesson model, which relies on the teacher developing a complete lesson before the first learner is either assessed or taught, the Test-Teach-Test (TTT) model is based on what the learner knows when they enter the classroom. The first stage of TTT (the test) identifies the learner's strengths and weaknesses, enabling the teacher to tailor instruction to the learner's needs rather than delivering predetermined lessons. This allows the teacher to focus on the learner's actual needs, and the final test provides immediate feedback on how well the learner has grasped the material *(Harmer, 2015)*.

The entire system is designed for older students, enabling them to complete their work promptly and receive feedback through reflection. It is also frequently utilized when taking exams and for learning skill-based courses, as these courses require students to be as accurate as possible.

3. Approaches

After considering lesson structures such as PPP, TBLT, and TTT, you need to step back from the lesson and take a look at the "big picture" – the whole-of-course view – the pedagogical principles that underpin how languages are taught and learned. These views are sometimes called approaches. Among the various methodologies for teaching English, the Communicative Approach, which has emerged as one of the most popular and influential, stands out due to its peculiarity of generalizability. "Communicative Language Teaching is an approach to language teaching that seeks to develop learners' communicative competence " *(Savignon, 2018)*.

The Communicative Approach views the learning of a second language as being about creating and developing an ability to communicate in the target language, rather than merely learning and memorising grammatical rules. This means that language is viewed as a means of expressing meaning in social situations with a functional component, and that within the Communicative Approach, what happens in class will emphasize things like using language to communicate, having real-world interactions when teaching students, and providing students with opportunities to experience authentic or semi-authentic forms of communication. Therefore, grammar and vocabulary are resources used to communicate rather than the focus of study *(Savignon, 2018)*.

In the everyday work of the classroom, the Communicative Approach is realized in activities that utilize the target language to achieve communicative ends. Typical activities include role-plays, information-gap activities, group discussions, problem-solving exercises, and cooperative projects. These activities are designed to simulate day-to-day communication and prompt learners to negotiate meaning, express opinions , and respond spontaneously. Errors are accepted at the fluency stage, as they are considered a normal outcome of rule application, rather than mistakes in the application of rules *(Harmer, 2015; Littlewood, 2014)*.

In terms of lesson design, the Communicative Approach can be adopted with a high degree of flexibility in various lesson formats, including the PPP, TBLT, and TTT approaches. Although the order of steps may vary among models, the basic tenets of communication remain the same: an emphasis on meaning, learner interaction, and the use of language for a communicative purpose. This adaptability has sustained the usefulness of the Communicative Approach in English language teaching today, as it can be modified to fit various learning situations and learner demands *(Littlewood, 2014)*.

The premise of the Lexical Approach is that the knowledge of a language is not the knowledge of grammatical structures. Still, it is the knowledge of how to understand and produce lexical chunks that is crucial. In this view, lexis is the central organising principle of language, and grammar is an emergent property of lexical use patterns. Thus, language learners come to language learning both as perceivers and as producers of, usually prefabricated, multi-word units of language, such as collocations, fixed expressions, and semi-fixed chunks *(Lewis, 2016)*.

Within the classroom, the Lexical Approach advocates for an emphasis on rich, authentic input and the conscious noticing of lexical patterns. Layered learning: individuals are encouraged to notice, record, and reuse help link language chunks, rather than single words or isolated rules. Learn more. moreEncouraged to notice, record, and reuse chunks of language, as opposed to individual words. Just as individual words do not exist in isolation, during the process of learning a language, individuals notice, record, and reuse language chunks, rather than separate words or abstract rules. Typical tasks involve working with transcripts, focusing on texts for repeated patterns of lexis, reformulating sentences or expressions, and analyzing with ants to compile expressions. Where grammar rules are given, these are typically inferred from lexical examples, rather than as prescriptive rules *(Lewis, 2016; Boers & Lindstromberg, 2012)*.

4. Methods

Although approaches are general and theoretical in their outlook on the nature of language and language for learning, methods are more practical in their focus. A specific set of emphases for teaching a language that is consistent with a particular approach and defines the

roles of teachers and learners in the classroom, rather than being. That is to say, methods transform theoretical assumptions about language and how to learn it into organized techniques for teaching *(Richards & Rodgers, 2014)*.

Grammar-Translation Method

The Grammar-Translation Method is distinguished by an emphasis on the rules of grammar, translation from and into the target language and the learners' first language, as well as the skills of reading and writing. Teaching is mainly teacher-centred, and there is little focus on spoken interaction. While it is by no means the best approach for every conceivable setting, the way it is taught is wholly dependent upon context, and many users still swear by it in situations where precision, literary criticism, or examination preparation is needed *(Richards & Rodgers, 2014)*.

Direct Method

As the suggested method advocates for complete immersion in the target language for the entire duration of the lesson, it emphasizes the specific needs of oral communication and learning through induction. Vocabulary and grammar are presented through demonstration and in context, rather than being translated. This approach to language teaching was influential in shifting language teaching away from a heavy reliance on translation and towards more natural language use *(Richards & Rodgers, 2014)*.

5. Conclusions

This article outlines the primary theoretical distinctions between approaches, methods, and techniques in teaching English as a foreign language. It demonstrates how, in practice, they fulfill complementary functions in the context of modern ELT. Approaches constitute the theoretical underpinnings that selectively influence what teachers believe about language and learning. Specifically, the realization of those beliefs through more effective classroom practices and techniques is the structure that methods use for the organization and sequencing lessons. The knowledge of the relationships between these concepts enables educators to base their pedagogy on what they know, rather than adopting what they are told.

The review of primary methodologies, including the Communicative and Lexical Approaches, indicates a distinct movement in contemporary EFL› pedagogy towards meaning-centered, learner-directed teaching. These methods emphasize the authentic use of the language, interaction, and provide meaningful practice, thereby developing communicative competence, as evidenced by the increased interest in understanding practical language in real-life situations. At the same time, the trajectory of methods suggests that traditional methods and techniques continue to inform teaching practice, often in the form of adaptations to meet the specific needs of a particular group of learners.

A further core finding in relation to lesson frameworks, such as PPP, TBLT, and TTT, is that there is no single best framework. Each approach has a series of benefits that are excellent for different learners, varying levels of proficiency, and other types of lessons. So effective teaching is a matter of flexibly combining approaches, methods, and schemes of work rather than rigidly sticking to one model.

To teach the English language effectively is to adopt a principled and reflective stance in which one's theoretical knowledge informs one's practice. In this way, by selecting and adapting approaches, methods, and procedures to their specific teaching contexts, teachers can provide more effective, sensitive, and meaningful learning opportunities for diverse groups of learners.

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