AN OUTLINE OF POPULAR ELT APPROACHES, METHODS, AND TECHNIQUES

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ABSTRACT

This study is aimed at presenting an outline of popular ELT approaches, methods, and techniques used as best practices in local and global ESL classrooms. The study used document analysis as its data gathering tool; whereas, analytic induction was used to analyze the collected data. As part of the findings the study reveals 16 approaches, 16 methods, and 55 techniques. The outcome of this study is primarily useful in terms of understanding the implications of ELT approaches, methods, and techniques for their effective uses in EFL/ESL classrooms by ELT practitioners.

1. INTRODUCTION

The history of English Language Teaching (ELT) dates back to the British colonial era. In its endeavour of colonizing the world using English, the British rulers left no stone unturned to make indigenous populations realize that all that is foreign and English is good and greater than their own. As a matter of fact, "language is the medium through which the child acquires the cultural, moral, religious and societal values (Klein, 1986.6). This way, the indigenous populations started losing their self-esteem, culture and more importantly their indigenous languages. Such an approach also played a significant role in shaping the language policies of the British colonies. Such a move of anglicization caused more harm than good. In the sense of harm,

English brought several regional languages of the world on the verge of extinct. In the sense of good, today, English has become the best means of globalization in almost all sectors be it industrial, economic, social, cultural, linguistic, or whatsoever We all know how English has become an indispensable entity in our daily paraphernalia (Jha, 2018). the world witnessed growing popularity of English and made it the sole lingua franca for effective communication across the globe. So much so that, a host of ELT experts like Crystal, Chen, and many others confirmed in their studies that today the number of non-native speakers of English is more than the number of native speakers. This surge of English in India and the world opened a new avenue of becoming ideal ELT practitioners. There comes the need of understanding the anatomy of language pedagogy associated with ELT.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Better one understands ELT pedagogy in terms of its approaches, methods, and techniques, better one can design ELT curricula, materials, and lessons. However, majority of ELT practitioners remain stuck in untangling the conundrum of ELT approaches, methods, and techniques.

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Considering the aforementioned statement of problem, this study sets three objectives as follows:

1. Exploring the major ELT approaches
2. Exploring the major ELT methods
3. Exploring the major ELT techniques

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the major ELT approaches?
2. What are the major ELT Methods?
3. What are the major ELT techniques?

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To maximize the effectiveness of English language learning and teaching, one must firstly understand the subtle distinctions between approach, method, and technique. Pertinently, Richards and Rogers (1986) make a remarkable distinction between these three terms. An approach according to them is a theory or hypothesis that tells us how language acquisition takes place and accordingly how language should be taught. A method tells us the way of actuating an approach in the forms of designing a syllabus, curriculum, or developing teaching materials. A technique refers to transforming a method into actual activities, drills, lessons, or any tasks to be completed by the learners in a systematic manner. In what follows, this study has listed all the major approaches, methods, and techniques.

In response to the first research question, the present study has revealed 10 approaches whose definitional compilations are as follows:

2.1 APPROACHES

1. **Communicative Approach**

   Communicative approach hypothesizes that learning a language becomes more effective when it is learnt through real life communication. It prioritizes function rather than form. This approach lays more emphasis on fluency and less on grammatical accuracy.

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2. **Audio-lingual Approach**

Audio-lingual approach hypothesizes that language learning takes place better by using stimulus and response as advocated by Behaviorist school of language acquisition. It looks at language learning as habit formation with immediate result.

3. **Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Approach**

This approach hypothesizes that a language can be learnt better by immersing into target language and target culture and by enabling learners to learn required skills to be used in real life. It prioritizes learners' interest and needs and downsizes covering units and modules of a coursebook and a syllabus.

4. **DOGME Approach:**

This approach, as proposed by Thornbury (2000), hypothesizes that a language can be learnt better involving learners in interactions rather than teaching them through textbooks or coursebooks.

5. **Natural Approach**

This approach hypothesizes that a language can be better learnt on the pattern of learning our mother tongue or first language. In other words, this approach helps learners to mimic natural language by exposing them communication rather than grammar drills. It follows input hypothesis of Stephen Krashen (0000) in which he lays emphasis on exposing learners to comprehensible input.

6. **Silent Way Approach**

This approach hypothesizes that a language can be better learnt by immersing learners into cognitive task. In other words, learners are given silent period to decode and infer rule formation of a language inductively rather than deductively.

7. **Situational Language Teaching Approach**

This approach hypothesizes that a language can be better learnt by involving learners in role play of real life situations with the help of props and realia.

8. **Task-Based Approach**

This approach hypothesizes that we learn a language better when it is used with the intention of completing a task. Thus, task is greater than the language (Harmer, 2006). Simply speaking, a language here is learnt by getting involved in certain task-completion activities by using daily conversation.

9. **Lexical Approach**

This approach hypothesizes that a language can be learnt better by learning vocabulary in the form of collocations, idioms, phrasal verbs, etc. of regular use.

10. **Semiotic Approach**

This approach hypothesizes that a language can be better learnt by learning signs, symbols, icons, body language, and visual communications.

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11. An Eclectic Approach

This approach hypothesizes that there is no one-size-fits-all concept in language learning too. Thus, this approach is amalgamation of all the best practices advocated by different approaches like communicative approach, audio-lingual approach, etc. Considering different potential, different learning styles and different needs, this approach makes a need assessment of the learners and accordingly employs what best suit them.

12. Functional-Notional Approach

This approach hypothesizes people learn a language because they wish to exchange their ideas with others, inform others, agree or disagree with others, question others, persuade others apart from other talking about various concepts, notions, and functions of life.

13. PPP Approach

This PPP (Presentation-Practice-Production) approach is based on the premise that one can learn a language by teachers' presentation followed by practice and production by the learners.

14. Learner Anatomy Approach

This approach hypothesizes that one can learn a language with one's ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Holec, 1981).

15. Structural Approach

This approach hypothesizes that language is a set of grammatical rules and structures which need to be learnt and taught in a graded manner.

16. TTT Approach

This Test-Teach-Test approach hypothesizes that language learning takes place better when learners' needs are understood. It uses some tasks to see learners' ability to use target language followed by providing remedial lessons followed by testing learners to see whether have they improved or not.

2.2 METHODS

1. Grammar Translation Method

Grammar translation method reinforces deductive learning in which grammar rules are given and taught explicitly with examples.

2. Montessori Method

Montessori method makes careful observation of learners' needs and target language is taught akin to source language.

3. Direct Method

Direct Method uses inductive learning in which grammar rules are taught implicitly with inference.

4. Community Language Learning Method

This method looks at learners as a 'whole person' and makes them sit in a circle and share their feelings, intellect, and reactions.

5. **Suggestopedia**

This is an expensive method in which learners' potential of learning is activated at cognitive level through relaxation and positive suggestion.

6. **Total Physical Response (TPR)**

This method is widely popular in which teachers give commands to the learners in English (target language) and the learners are expected to complete the commands physically.

7. **Audio Visual Method**

This method uses latest technology to lay equal emphasis on learning grammar and fluency.

8. **Cooperative Learning Method**

Cooperative learning method encourages mutual cooperation of the learners so that everybody could learn optimally.

9. **Multiple Intelligences Method**

This method uses eight intelligences namely linguistic, logical, intrapersonal, kinesthetic, interpersonal, naturalist, musical, and spatial-visual.

10. **Principled Eclecticism**

This method combines a variety of structural and communicative activities of language teaching as there is no single way of teaching a language.

11. **Flipped Classroom**

Using the method of flipped classroom, the learners learn the upcoming lessons beforehand through different types of audio, video, and online resources. Thus, class time used for practice drills, activities, and knowledge application.

12. **Project-Based Learning**

This method encourages real-life projects as a means of language learning in which learners work on some projects by using language (English) of real life, Apart from learning the language, the learners also improve their creative thinking and problem solving abilities.

13. **Gamification**

The method of gamification is learner-centric in which learning a language becomes more playful and interactive.

14. **Bilingual Method**

Bilingual method encourages the use of source and target language to learn and teach. Here source language is used for explaining grammar and vocabulary; whereas target language is used for conversational drills.

15. **Blended Learning**

Blended learning method is a useful method in which learners are supposed to do their skill-based tasks or activities on their own in their free time.

16. ChatGPT

ChatGPT method of language learning is supported by AI based learning tool in which learners need to be familiar with all the computer commands. This method helps learners learn not only accent but also stylistic variations in a short period of time. In addition, ChatGPT will prove a game changer in the field of language learning.

2.3 TECHNIQUES

Simply speaking, unlike approaches and methods, ELT techniques are more concrete, perceivable, executable, or implementable (Jha, 2019). For general awareness, the study lists the names of some popular techniques as follows:

1. Action sequence
2. Chain drill
3. Choosing a new identity
4. Circle the sage
5. Cognitive coding
6. Colour rods
7. Composition
8. Concert
9. Dictation
10. Discussion
11. Drawing
12. Fill-in-the-blank exercise
13. Films
14. Finger-plays
15. Fluency Drills
16. Grammar games
17. Handwriting
18. Information gap
19. Interview
20. Jigsaw
21. Language Games
22. Life Experience
23. Memorizing and completing dialogue
24. Memory Cards
25. Numbered heads together
26. Opposites
27. Pair work
28. Paragraph writing
29. Peer-editing
30. Peripheral learning through Video tapes, posters, tape recorders, radio, TV, computerized language lab, and language software
31. Phonics
32. Picture Strip Story
33. Practicing daily happenings
34. Pronunciation drills and Minimal pair
35. Question-answer display
36. Reading aloud
37. Reading comprehension
38. Role reversal
39. Scrambled Sentences to teach cohesion and coherence
40. Self-correction
41. Sentence patterns
42. Sharing learning experience
43. Simulation
44. Songs
45. Spelling
46. Stories
47. Structured feedback

48. Substitution drill

49. Teaching pronunciation with fidel charts

50. Teaching vocabulary using visual aids

51. Think-pair-share

52. Translating L2 into L1

53. Visualization

54. Vocabulary drills (finding synonyms, antonyms, and cognates)

55. Warm-up: Mimes, dance, songs, jokes, play

3. CONCLUSION

To sum up, it is quite evident that there is no single way of learning or teaching English. This is why, all the towering claims made by the proponents of different approaches, methods, and techniques could not fully prove what they had proclaimed. Today, ELT fraternity is flooded with an array of literature on ELT approaches, methods, and techniques. However, the majority of ELT practitioners fumble in distinguishing between approach, method, and technique. Given this, the present study in response to the three research questions tries to fill the gap by presenting definitional account of all the popular ELT approaches, methods, and techniques. In doing so, the study has reported 16 ELT approaches, 16 ELT methods, and 55 techniques.

Future Work: The present study is transitional in nature for the reason that all the major themes under discussion will continue to evolve in days to come and therefore the findings of this study will have some added values in the next publications.

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