
"ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE"

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Abstract

This article provides an interesting look at teaching English as a language.

Keywords: direct method, grammar translation method, audio-lingual method, suggestopedia.

Language teaching methods, applied linguistic, new pedagogical technologies, new proposals, evaluate, second language, communicative practice activities, form-focused, theoretical proposals. Every few years, new foreign language teaching methods arrive on the scene. New textbooks appear far more frequently. They are usually proclaimed to be more effective than those that have gone before, and in many cases, these methods or textbooks are promoted or even prescribed for immediate use. New methods and textbooks may reflect current developments in linguistic applied linguistic theory or recent pedagogical trends. Sometimes they are said to be based on recent developments in language acquisition theory and research. For example, one approach a set of correct sentences while another emphasizes the importance of encouraging ‘natural’ communication between learners. How is a teacher to evaluate the potential effectiveness of new methods? One important basis for evaluating is, of course, the teacher’s own experience with previous successes or disappointments. In addition, teachers who are informed about some of the findings of recent research are better prepared to judge whether the new proposals for language teaching are likely to bring about positive changes in students’ learning. This article is about how English language can be learned at classrooms on the bases of new pedagogical technologies with having taking into consideration the equal teaching materials consisted of:

- 1) group work which created situations for the use of the conditional in natural communicative situations;
- 2) written and oral exercises to reinforce the use of the conditional in more formal, structured situations;



3) self – evaluation activities to encourage students to develop conscious awareness of their language use.

The contrasting results of the native language immersion program teaching experiments (focuses on grammar) may also be explained by potential differences in input. But in this case, it seems more likely that differences in the experimental teaching materials and technology may have contributed to the different results. It is difficult to draw firm conclusions about the strength of the theoretical proposals until further research is completed. But it is possible to speculate on the ‘strongest contenders’ on the basis of the classroom research findings so far. There is increasing evidence that learners continue to have difficulty with basic structures of the language in programs which offer no form- focused instruction. This calls into question the ‘Just listen’ proposal, which in its strongest form not only claims no benefit from form- focused instruction and correction, but suggests that it can actually interfere with second language development. However, we don’t find support for the argument that if second language learners are simply exposed to comprehensible input, language acquisition will take care of itself. There are similar problems with the ‘Say what you mean and mean what you say’ proposal. As noted earlier in this chapter, there is evidence that opportunities for learners to engage in conversational interactions in group and paired activities can lead to increased fluency and the ability to manage conversations more effectively in a second language. However, the research also shows that learners in programs based on the ‘Say what you mean and mean what you say’ proposal continue to have difficulty with accuracy as well. Because these programs emphasize meaning and attempt to simulate ‘natural’ communication in conversational interaction, the students’ focus is naturally on what they say, not how to say it. This can result in a situation where learners provide each other with input which is often incorrect and incomplete. Furthermore, even when attempts are made to draw the learners’ attention to form and accuracy in such contexts, these attempted corrections may be interpreted by the learners as continuations of the conversation. Thus, programs based on the ‘Just listen’ and ‘Say what you mean and mean what you say’ proposals are incomplete in that learners’ gains in fluency and conversational skills may not be matched by their development of accuracy. Research has demonstrated that learners do benefit considerably from instruction which is meaning-based. The results of the native language immersion and intensive ESL program research are strong indicators that many learners develop higher levels of fluency through exclusively or primarily meaning-based instruction than through rigidly grammar-based instruction. The



problem remains, however, that certain aspects of the linguistic knowledge and performance of second language learners are not fully developed in such programs. Teachers and researchers do not face a choice between form-based and meaning-based instruction. Rather, our challenge is to determine which features of language will respond best to form-focused instruction, and which will be acquired without explicit focus if learners have adequate exposure to the language. In addition, we need to develop a better understanding of how form-based instruction can be most effectively incorporated into a communicative framework. Continued classroom-centered research in second language teaching and learning should provide us with insights into these and other important issues in second language learning in the classroom.

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