

TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE, TEACHING PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES

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Abstract. *In this article, the author investigated how it is essential for teachers to be aware of modern principles and techniques since professional teachers must meet all the requirements of the 21st century and keep up with the latest innovations in the world of education. This trend contributes not only to the overall performance of the teacher, but also to the amelioration of students` learning process.*

Keywords: *principles, techniques, English as a second language, modern approaches, standards, traditional approaches*

Introduction

Nowadays, the urgent need to learn a foreign language is growing rapidly all over the world, and in accordance with this, English language teachers have become a highly demanded profession. Teaching foreign languages launched during 17th and the beginning of 19th centuries mostly at European schools and universities. The teaching methodology was largely based on the experience of teaching “dead languages” (mainly Latin and ancient Greek) and was mainly built on reading and translation. As time passed, the popularity of foreign languages changed one after another, but the method remained the same. Throughout the evolution, a vast number of methods and approaches appeared in the stock of teachers being rich and successful in quality. However, not all of them are considered to be effective.

An important role in the professional practice of an English language teacher plays teaching principles and techniques. If we look at the definition of *principle*, Cambridge English dictionary defines “Principle” as a fundamental concept that describes how something functions [2]. While, technique is the implementation of classroom activities as the foundation for teaching and learning during lessons. [1]. There are plenty of principles and all of them have an equal importance, but there will be highlighted TESOL’s 6 Principles for Teaching English Learners. TESOL International Association has selected essential recommendations for English language teachers who want to prosper in teaching [4]. They are as followings:

1. *Know Your Learners*
2. *Create Conditions for Language Learning*
3. *Design High-Quality Lessons for Language Development*
4. *Adapt Lesson Delivery as Needed*
5. *Monitor and Assess Student Language Development*
6. *Engage and Collaborate within a Community of Practice*

Additionally, the most necessary techniques will be suggested by the author among the huge number for teachers to use in ESL classes.

- *Constant review technique*
- *Homework on a regular basis*

- *Group Work*
- *Reading out loud* [5]

This paper mainly aims at contrasting a teacher applying above mentioned techniques and TESOL's 6 Principles, and a teacher who still follows traditional approaches.

Literature review

According to Myrna Jacobs, director of publishing and product development at TESOL, the six principles' fundamental objective is to identify what is necessary to produce crystally good English language instruction globally. TESOL has taken this significant strategic endeavor with great care and attention to identify and characterize the conditions, frameworks, and evaluations necessary for high-quality English language instruction. Regardless of the subject matter to be taught, the six principles offer TESOL professionals practical, evidence-based advice for building a global learning environment where all English language learners can succeed. The six principles, in my opinion, really bring to life and emphasize the connections between TESOL's fundamental values because they stand for and provide for teachers.... [6].

According to Christopher Powers, executive director of TESOL, the initiative had started because there should have been effective principles that, regardless of the topic presented, help and guide ESL teachers [6].

There are several reasons why Deborah J. Short, lead writer of The 6 Principles, believes that principles are necessary to establish "TESOL aim is the amelioration of the teaching quality around the world. The six TESOL principles provide teachers with basic instructions to teach English as a foreign language in an excellent way. TESOL considers the importance of being tolerant towards students' mother tongue, recognizing their multilingualism, and demonstrating how to use their diversity as an advantage in the classroom." [6]

Some scholars discuss the reasons for the endless training of teachers themselves. The work of teachers is so complex and they go through a lot of difficulties despite of this, "Each teacher has a different background in language acquisition. Usually teachers form their own approach in the way they have been taught" (Lortie 1975). "When language teaching is the focus, the complexity is even greater because teachers' perspectives on language, language teaching, and language learning in general, as well as their familiarity with the specific sociocultural context in which the teaching and learning take place, all influence the complexity." (Adamson 2004) [7].

After all, "There would presumably be a little need for other than a technical approach to language teaching, if it could be believed that students were "simply" students, teachers were "simply" teachers, and one classroom was as the same as the others." In fact, "It is vice versa; the way teachers teach vary from one another differently. Therefore, we cannot assume that the technology of language education will result in a clean, deterministic manner that will lead to a predictable set of learning outcomes. In other words, language teaching is much more difficult than manufacturing cars. (Tudor 2003: 3) [7]

Techniques, methods and principles are the foundation for succeeding in teaching, application and setting real goals. This idea was perfectly mentioned by following scholars: "Making the impossible possible is the main aim of education" (Shulman 1987). "Teacher educators can assist teachers in clarifying why they do what they do by introducing them to various ways, asking them to think on the underlying principles of those methods, and having them actively interact with the strategies. They become conscious of their own underlying presumptions, principles, and convictions." (Clarke 2007; Akbari 2007) [7].

Research Methodology

Taking a close look at the 6 principles of TESOL, each of them is explained as follows:

1. Know your learners.

To better engage students in the classroom and better plan and conduct lessons, teachers find out about families, languages, cultures, and educational backgrounds of their students.

2. Create conditions for language learning.

Teachers provide an environment in the classroom that encourages pupils to feel comfortable. To support language acquisition they consider the physical setting, the resources, and the social integration of students.

3. Design high-quality language lessons.

Teachers design lesson plan taking into consideration its usefulness which aims at developing students' learning skills and critical thinking. The learning objectives influence and develop these lessons.

4. Adapt lesson delivery as needed.

Teachers regularly evaluate the lesson, monitoring the students' responses and thinking about how well they met the learning goals. Teachers analyze the potential causes and modify their classes if pupils have difficulties or if the material presented is too easy for them.

5. Monitor and assess student language development.

Language learners' academic performance varies, therefore in order to promote their learning effectively, teachers frequently check and assess their language growth. Teachers also collect information on assessing students' overall learning progress.

6. Engage and collaborate within a community of practice.

In order to provide their students with the greatest possible programming, instruction, and advocacy, teachers work together with colleagues from their professional field. Additionally, they keep up their own professional learning. [6]

Here will be presented techniques recommended for ESL teachers to follow in the classroom.

- *Constant review technique*

The technique can be applied for any age learners. Its purpose is to spend some time each lesson for reviewing previously acquired material in order to maintain received knowledge and keep it in long-term memory.

- *Homework on a regular basis*

It is essential to provide learners with homework to make students remain in the English atmosphere and permit them to produce the language as much as possible, even if they are out of the classroom.

- *Group Work*

It is better to learn a foreign language with peers helping students interact with others and changing ideas. This technique creates an enjoyable and natural learning environment. On the other hand, individual learners can encounter some difficulties and find the process uninteresting.

- *Reading out loud*

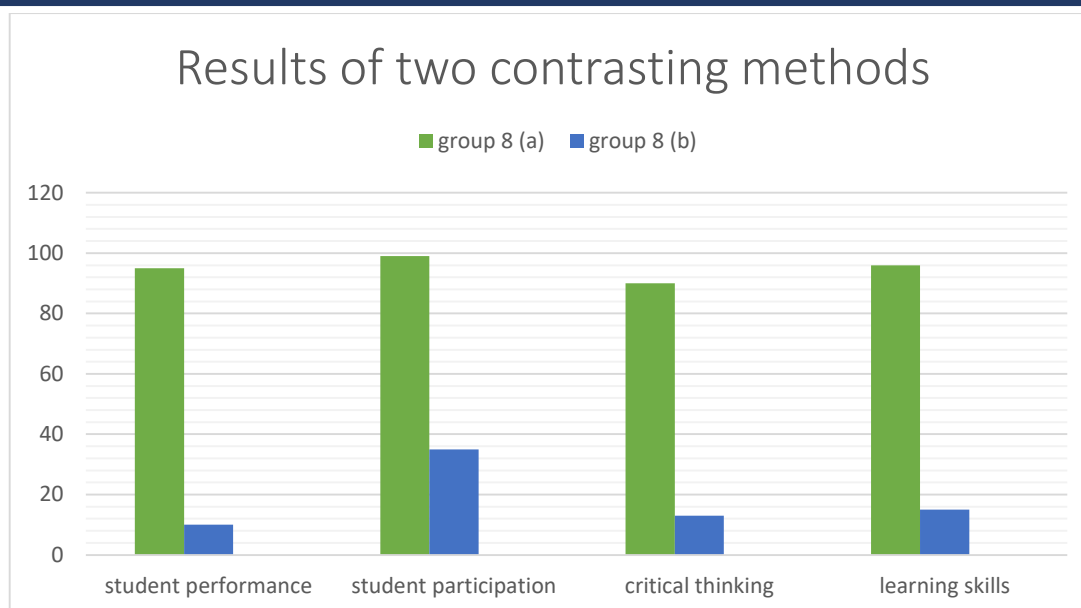
The best way to integrate reading, speaking, and auditory skills will be to give a chance to learners to read texts aloud which contributes to their speaking skills and confidence in front of the class. [8]

The 8th grade of a secondary specialized school № 3 of Urgench city was selected to present the whole process and test the effectiveness of these techniques and principles. The school was founded in 1929, and it focuses on English language. Currently, the school has a prestigious reputation and has about 1000 pupils. The class is of an elementary level and pupils are at the age of 14. As English classes have been conducted since their 1st grade, they have excellent foundation on the language. There are 30 students in each class and they are divided into two groups in every English lessons. The two groups would be named as 8 (a) and 8 (b) during the research. The former group`s teacher was of a young age with experience of 5 years named Yelena Aleksandrovna and the latter`s group teacher was much older and had about 15 years of experience in the field of education named Natalya Rashidovna.

There were observed two lesson of each groups by the writer and was made necessary notes and analyzes. Yelena Aleksandrovna used mostly student – centered method, rising the lesson involvement of pupils. During the lessons she wisely used all the school material to improve listening and speaking skills also she promoted the lessons with technology tools such as television screen by playing video related to the topic “Environment”. Comprehension of the video material was considerably good as pupils could answer the questions of the teacher. She also gave questions connecting them with their real world such as, “What can you do to save the planet?”, “Do you throw garbage in places where it is prohibited?” and etc. At the end of the lesson the teacher organized a group work dividing the pupils into 3 groups, handed out papers with problem-solutions tasks on them. One of them was “Your city has a very dry climate and too much dust. People suffer a lot from this situation, especially in summer. What can be done in this situation?”. Students were highly motivated and had very hot discussions among themselves. After the time was up, students came up with very sensible solutions to the given problems which in result improved their critical thinking.

In contrast, taking look at the group 8 (b), Natalya Rashidovna used teacher – centered way of teaching, which considerably decreased overall student participation in class. The same topic was taught in that lesson, but the method was applied traditional one, showing a big difference between the two teachers. The teacher was in the main role there while pupils were passive learners. She presented new vocabulary and explained the topic and directly began to give tasks from the book, including translating the text related to the topic and searching for answers to the questions. In result, the whole lesson was dedicated to above mentioned tasks without integration of other skills like writing, speaking or listening. No clear objective and aim of the lesson which affects the learning comprehension of students in a negative way.

Below there can be observed a bar chart clearly showing the consequences of applying different kind of methods and following principles, techniques or ignorance of modern approaches in teaching. Students of group (a) actively participate in the lesson, use their critical thinking widely, learn in a modern environment with the help of technologies, engaged in group works and produce the language. As for group (b) who falls behind innovations in learning English, do not use their learning skill as actively as group (a), they are not involved in group works or peer ones and less overall production of English language.



Conclusion

To conclude, it is vitally important for teachers to be always in search of novelty, to apply fundamental techniques and TESOL 6 principles mentioned earlier in the article. In the research, students significantly better acquire English language in a student – centered environment, rather than with traditional teacher preserving old methods in the classroom and who does not meet standards and objectives of modern education. The more teachers realize and begin to apply all these methodological theories in practice, the more students and teachers will make the learning process easy and effective.

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