



# **Approaches to English Language Teaching**

**The Nature of  
Approaches and Methods  
in Language Teaching**

# The relationship between approach and method

## Approach, Method and Technique

- Three levels of conceptualization and organization: approach, method and technique

(Edward Anthony, 1963).

- **Approach:** A set of specific **theories** about the nature of language and language learning.
- **Method:** An orderly plan for the presentation of language material based on the selected approach.
- **Technique:** An implementational strategy or trick used to accomplish an immediate objective. It actually takes place in the classroom.
- **Richards and Rodgers:** Refer to approach at the same level of 'Design' and 'Procedure', all of which constitute a method.

# Structure of a Language Teaching Method

## Approach, Design, and Procedure

(Adapted from Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 33)

<b>Approach</b>	<b>Design</b>	<b>Procedure</b>
Theory of Language	Objectives	Techniques
Theory of Learning	Syllabus Model	Practices
	Types of Activities	Behaviours
	Learner roles	Interactional patterns
	Teacher roles	
	The role of instructional materials	

# Theories of Language and Learning



- **Theory of language**
  - **Structural view**
  - **Functional view**
  - **Interactional view**
- **Theory of Language Learning**
  - **Process-oriented theories**
    - What are the psychological and cognitive processes involved (habit formation, induction, inferencing, generalization)
  - **Condition-oriented theories**
    - What are the conditions that need to be met for these learning processes to be activated?



# **Approach: Theoretical Views of the Nature of Language**

- **Structural view**
- **Functional view**
- **Interactional view**

# Structural view

- **The most traditional view.**
- **Language as a structural system that consists of related elements that work as codes of meaning.**
- **Phonological and grammatical units, such as phonemes, phrases, sentences, etc.**
- **Used in**
  - **The Audio-lingual Method,**
  - **Total Physical Response, and**
  - **The Silent Way.**

# Functional view



- **Language as a means for the expression of functional meaning.**
- **Specifically on the organization and meaning of the content, which has to be understandable.**
- **Employed in**
  - **Communicative Language Teaching and**
  - **Notional/Functional Approach.**

# Interactional view

- Language as a tool for interpersonal and social interactions between individuals.
- Emphasizes interactive and conversational exchanges, which are constantly employed in social relations
- Used in
  - *Task-Based Language Teaching,*
  - *Whole Language Learning,*
  - *Neurolinguistic Programming,*
  - *Cooperative Language Learning, and*
  - *Content-Based Instruction.*



# **Approach:**

## **Theoretical Views of Language Learning**

- **A learning theory should answer:**
  - **What are the psycholinguistic and cognitive processes involved in LT?**
  - **What are the conditions that need to be met in order for these learning processes to be activated?**

## Psycholinguistic and cognitive processes in LT

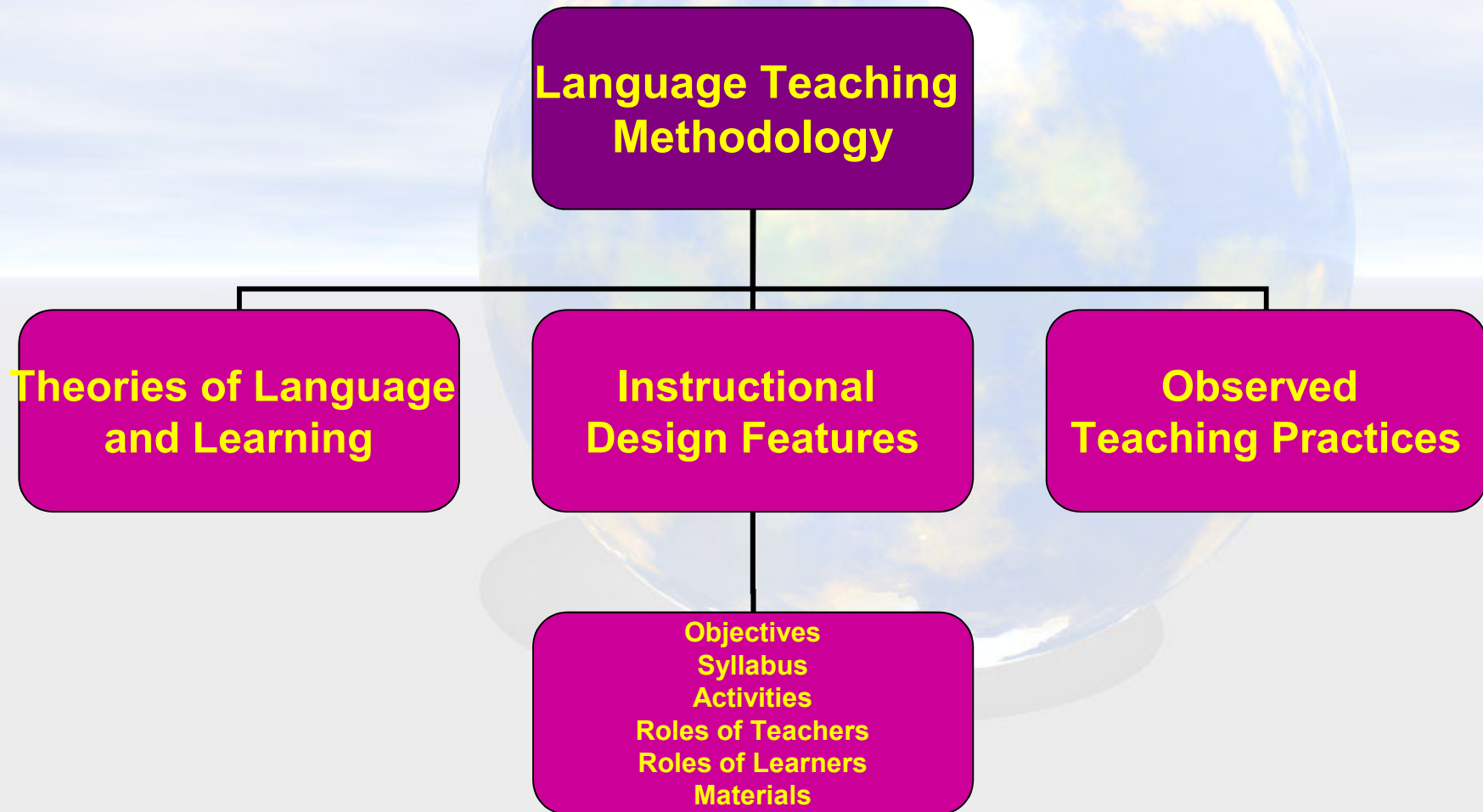
### Conditions to be met to activate learning processes

- **Monitor Theory** (*Stephen Krashen*): based on **The Natural Approach**, answers both questions by distinguishing between the 'acquisition' and 'learning' processes, and by describing the type of input the learners receive, which should be at their level, interest, of sufficient quantity, and in low-anxiety contexts, and these are the conditions.
- **Natural Approach** (*Tracy D. Terrell*) and **Total Physical Response** (*James Asher*) are examples of methods based on this learning theory.
- **Counseling Learning** (*Charles A. Curran*) and **Silent Way** (*Caleb Gattegno*) also focus on this learning theory, but they focus primarily on the conditions more than in the processes. Their concern is directed to the atmosphere of the classroom, and they seek for motivation, confidence and security within the students.

# Language and Language Learning theories

- The theoretical views discussed are complementally linked one to the other.
- **Audiolingualism:** Produced by linking *structuralism* (linguistic theory) to *behaviourism* (learning theory).
- Theories do not lead to a specific method, nor do they dictate a particular set of teaching techniques.

# Language Teaching Methodology



# Design



- **The level of method analysis in which we consider the following:**
  - ***Objectives***
  - ***Syllabus model (the selection and organization of its language content)***
  - ***Learning tasks and teaching activities***
  - ***Learner roles***
  - ***Teacher roles***
  - ***The role of instructional materials***

# Objectives

- **The main focus of the method.**
  - **Process-oriented objectives:** Based on learning behaviors (processes and abilities acquired from the instruction).
    - “Learning is not seen as the means of accumulating knowledge but as the means of becoming a more proficient learner in whatever one is engaged in”  
(Gattegno, 1972: p. 89).
  - **Product-oriented objectives:** Based on linguistic traditional methods that emphasize primarily on vocabulary acquisition and grammatical proficiency.

# Content Choice and Organization: The Syllabus

- **Syllabus:** Specifies the linguistic content in a course or method (Structures, topics, notion, functions, learning tasks).
- **Proposed syllabus types in language teaching**  
(Brown, 1995):
  1. *Structural*
  2. *Situational*
  3. *Notional*
  4. *Functional*
  5. *Skills-Based*
  6. *Task-Based*
  7. *Topical*
- **Posteriori syllabus approach:** Designed syllabus based on recorded lessons from which the covered items are determined.(Counseling-learning)

# Types of Learning and Teaching Activities

- The choice of learning and teaching activities will depend on the differences among methods at the level of approach.
  - *Audiolingualism:*  
*dialogue and pattern practice*
  - *The Silent Way:*  
*charts and colored rods which require problem solving activities*
  - *Communicative language theoreticians:*  
*information gap (each learner has different information to complete task)*
- The diversity of activity types may require different arrangements and groupings: Depending if it is an individual activity, pair work or group work.
  - Some activity types:
    - *dialogue*
    - *question and answer*
    - *group problem solving*
    - *responding to commands*
    - *drills*
    - *information-exchange*



# Learner Roles

- **Methods reflect explicit or implicit influences from the learners to the learning process, which can be seen through the following:**
  - *Types of activities carried out by learners*
  - *Learners' control over the content*
  - *Patterns of learner groupings*
  - *Learner's influence over others' learning*
- **View of learner as processor, performer, initiator and problem solver**
- **Recent methodologies are more concerned for learner roles.**

# Teacher Roles

- **Learner and teacher roles are closely related to each other. They define the type of interaction in the classroom within the method being used.**
- **Teacher roles:**
  - *The primary source of knowledge and direction*
  - *A guide, consultant and model*
  - *Limited by imposed contents and directions on texts and lessons plans*
- **Teaching role issues involved in methods:**
  - *Types of functions the teacher should fulfill*
  - *Teacher's control over how learning takes place*
  - *Teacher's responsibility over determining the content of what is being taught*
  - *Interactional patterns between teacher and learners*

# The Role of Instructional Materials

- Instructional materials specify subject-matter content, its degree of coverage (amount of time, attention, and details of particular items), and its continuity over the following days.
- The role of instructional materials:
  - *Present content*
  - *Practise content*
  - *Facilitate communication between learners*
  - *Enable them to practise the content without teacher's help*
- They depend on the selected method:
  - *Teacher-instruction*
  - *Self-instruction*
  - *Peer tutoring*
- The form of materials:
  - *Textbooks,*
  - *Audiovisuals, and*
  - *Softwares*

# Procedure

- Involves a set of techniques, practices and behaviors within the teaching process in a particular method.
- Dimensions of Procedure:
  - *The use of teaching activities (drills, dialogues, info-gap activities) to **present** a new language*
  - *How the activities are used to **practice** language*
  - *The procedures and techniques used to **provide** feedback to learners concerning the form or content of their utterances or sentences*

# Elements and Subelements of Method



- **Approach**

- Assumptions and beliefs about language teaching and learning

- **Design**

- Objectives
- Syllabus
- Activities
- Roles of Teachers
- Roles of Learners
- Materials

- **Procedure**

- Implementational Phase

- A method is theoretically related to an approach, is organizationally determined by a design, and is practically realized in procedure



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