Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English Language and Literature

Master 2 TEFL Lectures

Academic Year, 2022-2023

Dr. BOUKHENTACHE SLIMANE

Lecture 1

Objective-based pedagogy

1. Introduction/Background

Objective-based pedagogy has grown in the systems approach to education. The earliest advocates of this approach to education are Taylor (1911) and Bobbitt (1918); they established task analysis as the starting point of syllabus design. Tasks carried out in the world of industry and machinery was analysed, sub-divided, and presented in the form of intermediary objectives and specific objectives to be studied one after the other, and then reassembled. These objectives are described in terms of measurable and behavioral terms. Only observable and assessable items of teaching were considered as worthwhile. Thus, contents which could not be demonstrated visibly are not considered within this teaching framework.

Example of task analysis How do I change the font color, size, or type in Word?
Changing font type To change the font type within a Microsoft Word document, follow the steps below. 1. Highlight the text you want to change. 2. Click the down arrow next to the font field on the format bar. (If you want to change the font to bold, italic, or underlined, **click** on the B, I, or U on the format bar.) 3. After clicking the down arrow for the font, you should be able to **select** from each of the installed fonts on your computer. Click the font you want to use and the highlighted text will change.

In the example provided above, the teacher teaches each of the three objectives (1,2,3) above separately until they are mastered, then it is supposed that the student could relate between them and do them harmoniously whenever required.

Tyler's (1949) book *Achievement Testing and Curriculum Construction* gave a powerful impetus for the promotion of this behavioural pedagogy. Basically, Tyler states that the educational objectives should first be identified in precise and measurable terms, then

learning experiences are designed to achieve these objectives, and finally the initial objectives are used to assess learning outcomes. This system proved to be very effective, scientific, and rational. But, we shall see later that it is very simplistic.

Another strong impetus that speeded up the popularity of behavioral objectives is Bloom et al.'s (1956) taxonomy of cognitive educational objectives, which set up a definite hierarchy of cognitive objectives that should shape any educational curriculum.

The 1960s witnessed the heydays of the objectives movement. The work of Mager (1962) and Gagné (1965) popularized this pedagogy. Mager (1962), in Nunan's (2007) words, adheres to the systems approach championed by Tyler (1949), but Mager has always rejected the label of behaviourism; for him, what matters is making educational goals more precise and achievable (p. 422). Gagné (1965) further develops and sharpens the work of Skinner (1957) by supplementing instructional conceptualization with the analysis of terminal tasks, but at this point Mager has moved on to a superior level in the pursuit of behavioural and normative instruction. Terminal tasks are divided into sub-tasks which are prerequisite for the achievement of this task. This constitutes the frontiers between objectives pedagogy and competency-based instruction.

2. The components of behavioural objectives

Behavioural objectives should fulfill at least three characteristics, which are the use of behavioural verb, the conditions of execution, and the standards.

2.1. Behavioural verb

The first component of behavioural objectives is the use of a performance/action/behavioural verb in the statement of the objective. An objective verb should not be ambiguous as to describe mental states or cognitive processes. Verbs such as 'to know', 'to understand', and 'to appreciate' are not exploitable since they are not amenable to observation or measurement. Instead, such behavioural verbs like to list, write, and construct are more appropriate.

This component is the strong point of systems objectives; in fact, it moves the focus from knowing to doing. It is so crucial to devise educational objectives in terms of what people could do as a result of instruction. Knowing is then demonstrated through doing.

2.2. Conditions

The second characteristic of a well-defined objective is the condition of performance. This variable contributes effectively to the formulation of precise and reliable objectives; without specifying the conditions of execution of a task or behavior such as the use of dictionary, texts, or any electronic device, the objective would be open to various interpretations and standards. Consequently, a well-designed objective specifies time, materials, and the difficulties that constrain the learners' performance.

2.3. Standards

The third characteristic of performance objectives is standards of the expected performance; that is, how-well the student should perform. This quality specifies the assessment criteria or at least serves as a benchmark for operationalizing the measured behavior.

The following is one of examples EFL classroom performance-based objectives:

> In an authentic interaction (condition), the student will request prices of shopping items (task). Utterances will be comprehensible to a sympathetic native speaker (standard). (Nuna, 2007, p. 423).

3. Advantages of the dogma

- They form the only well-worked-out method of rational planning in education.
- They encourage educators to think and plan in detailed, specific terms.
- They encourage educators to make explicit previously concealed values.
- They provide a rational basis for the evaluation.
- They prescribe the choice of instructional means.
- They form the basis of a self-improving system.
- The system eventually achieves internal consistency.
- .And the system eventually realises in practice the aims set in theory.
- Objectives serve as a medium of communication.
- Objectives can be made the basis of individualised instruction.

4. Why have they been cticized?

- Use of behaviourism in education and particularly in language teaching
- Does not include learning items that are not easy to operationalize

- Content specification in priori is dehumanizing and stiflying to creativity and to the learning opportunties that arise in the classroom
- It can be conceded that not all human knowledge could be described in terms of skill
- Over and detailed specification does not work in a classroom. Only when the teacher is confronted with the realities of the classroom that he/she manages to see his/her objectives clearly and modify them consequently
- The normative nature of instruction in objectives movement

Lecture 2

Competency-based teaching

1. Introduction

Chief amongst the main contents of teaching are knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Knowledge is known as the exact reproduction of a fact, concept, or information through remembering; skills are applications of rules principles and rules to a novel content or data; attitudes are politeness rules and manners of positive behaviours. Surveying foreign language teaching method,would show that at each stage in the history of language teaching there is a focus either on knowledge or skills, while attitudes are considered less important or simply hard to teach or assess. It could be said that content-based teaching models such grammar-translation method focused more on content, this without denying the fact that skills were used for applications of grammar rule, and probably teachers were concerned with imparting positive attitudes to their learners. The biggest merit of objective-based pedagogy is its focus on the teaching of skills (bahaviours) or what is supposed to be visible for assessment. Knowledge was supposedly exhibited through carrying out skills. Competency-based approach, however, tries to combine these fundamental components of teaching/learning in a special way.

2. Background of competency-based Education

Competency-based approach whether in Europe or in the United States came as a reaction to the shortcomings of the objective-based pedagogy that analysed tasks into discrete objectives without making a link between them or showing to the learner how each objective relates to the other.Moreover, it neglected the role of attitudes or the affective domain in general. In response to these shortcomings, CBE, which originated in the US in the late 1960s, suggests integrating knowledge, skills, and attitudes to solve a real world problem. Thus, the role of these components of knowledge is relegated to a secondary position; what matters more is the application of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to a novel situation to find a solution or simply to get tasks done. Learners then are equipped with a capacity to solve tasks that they need to do outside school.

3. Definition of a competency

It is the capacity to integrate (mobilize/combine) knowledge, skills, and attitudes to solve a given tasks.

4. **Example of competencies**
   - Driving a car
   - Making a phone call
   - Writing a letter
   - Accessing internet
   - Sending e-mails
   - Make a doctor's appointment
   - Complete a medical form
   - Converse about daily and leisure activities and personal interests
   - Interpret recipes
   - Interpret advertisements, labels, charts, and price tags in selecting goods and services
5. **Illustration of the competency of taking/making a phone call.**

Knowledge:

- Learning words and phrases related to telephoning(e.g., cell/cellular/mobile phone, caller, take a phone call, getting the caller through, hold on,
- Phone formal and informal language
- Language phrases related to telephoning

Skills: (Savoir-faire)

- Giving information
- Starting a conversation
- Taking/receiving a call
- Asking for more information/making a request
-Asking for the caller to wait
- Giving negative information
- Telephone problems
-Leaving/taking messages
- Saying goodbye
- Introducing oneself

Attitudes:

- Answering after few rings
- If you are busy and cannot take the call, make sure that you could take it as soon as possible or somebody else is going to field it.
- Use standardized greetings
- Give welcoming greeting
- Having a polite tone
- Introduce yourself
- Thank the caller
- Put the person on hold for no more than a minute
- Ask them whether there is anything else you can do

- Use the caller/receiver name politely
- The caller ends up the conversation
- Wishing a nice day/part of the day/vacations…

6. The three basic competencies targeted in the Algerian English language syllabuses (1st year)

6.1. Interaction

To produce an oral statement that is appropriate to communicative situation using appropriate pronunciation and tenses.

6.2. Interpretation

To deal with and interpret the essential information contained in a message in order to get informed, answer questions, and justify answers**.**

6.3. Production

To produce a message to inform, describe, narrate, argument using appropriate writing genres and resources.

7. Fundamental concepts in integration pedagogy

7.1. Resources

Resources is a term introduced by Le Boterf (1985) to refer to the element of the competency-namely knowledge, skills, and attitudes**.**

7.2. Family of Situations

A family of situations is a set of tasks that are sufficiently distanced from each other, but belonging or representing one single competency. These tasks should not be too close to display the same characteristics and not very distanced to belong to different competencies.

E.g. for the competency of telephoning, these following competencies could constitute a family of situations.

- making a business call

- Making an informal call (family and friend)

- Making a call to a foreign company

- Taking a phone call

- Transferring a call

7.3. Terminal Objective of integration (OTI)

Integration pedagogy supplies various occasions for different types of knowledge integration. Integration situations are the primary and unique tools for knowledge and skill integration or simply the integration of learning targets. They are mainly used at meso-level (at the end of a term) for summative evaluation during integration module, or alternatively at a micro-level (each three weeks) as leaning task for formative purposes. Additionally, these complex tasks could be used at a macro-level also for certification. In the latter case, they are called Intermediary Integration Objective (IIO). Here is an example of an intermediary integration objective set up for the Algerian English language secondary school, year 1:

By the end of first year, on the basis of an oral or written text, the learner will be able to produce an oral or written message of 12 lines in order to inform another party (person) of an event that is closely linked to the given oral or written text.

SE1, Syllabus, 2005, p6

7.4. Didactic Situations

In these learning/teaching situations the teacher attempts to equip the learner with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes that constitute the core of learning. All types of learning are covered systematically in a well-planned sequence. Probably, the added elements in a competency-based curriculum are attitudes, skills of integration, and interdisciplinary skills such as pertinence and research skills. At this stage, the teacher could rely even on the teacher-fronted model of teaching or the existing norms of teaching relative to the teaching/learning context, except for inculcating interdisciplinary skills which inherently require problem-solving tasks (Roegiers, 2010, p.270).

7.5. Problem-Solving Tasks (Integration Situations)

Integration situations constitute the core of integration pedagogy in that learning is made more efficient and permanent through the act of integration. They are situations set up by the teacher to lead learners combine reflectively and integrate meaningfully some of the learning items they have covered in a course of study.

<u>Illustration of situations</u>

An illustrative example adapted from Roegiers (2010a, pp.271-272) is provided below.

Table 2.1:

Examples of Situations

Example of Didactic Situations	Example of Situations of Integration
Identifying collaboratively the characteristics of an argumentative text	An individual production of a meaningful argumentative text of a given length and on the basis of a given support documents.

8. **Characteristics of integration situations:** integration situations should display the following attributes:

8.1. Complexity

Integration pedagogy as its name suggests relies on integration (harmonious combination) of the already learned items (resources). In Roegiers (2001) view, it requires the use of cognitive, gestural, and socio-affective facts that have been previously covered in an instructional course (p. 127), that is, not a simple reply to a display question. It should be pointed out here that the term complexity does not refer to difficulty; rather, it suggests the use of a significant number of learned items to complete the task at hand.

8.2. Originality

Another fundamental principle in today's teaching teaching/learning approaches is the focus on originality of the learner productions rather than reproductions.

8.3. Meaningfulness

According to Roegiers (2010a) an integration situation is meaningful in the sense that it incites the learner to take part actively in learning tasks and it gives sense for his/her learning. Integration situation have many advantages from a pedagogical point of view. Roegiers underscored among many other benefits of integration situations the following:

- It leads the student to act because it involves him personally;
- it is challenging,
- it shows the usefulness of the student pedagogical endeavour,

- it bridges the gap between theory and practice,
- and , it shows the contribution of other disciplines in to solving complex tasks

9. Conceptualization of Learning in Integration Pedagogy

In integration pedagogy learning is organized in the following way: First, resources are taught to students using learning tasks even in the most traditional way, then students are led to integration what has been covered in an integration situation (a new context or task). These assessment tasks serve for gathering information on the degree of attainment or mastery of a competency; in fact, they inform the teacher on the weaknesses of the students and areas that need more work. By the end of the course and after teaching of resources and regular integration occasions, the learners are provided with summative integration situation that they should solve individually.

10. Components of integration situations

Integration situations must display the following characteristics

1. **Task:** description of the work to be done and the different steps.
2. **Instruction:** A set of directions give to the learner.
3. **Support documents:** A set of materials given to the learner to solve the task (pictures, texts, adds …)

<u>Examples of integration situations</u>

Situation: Suppose that you are a new graduate and a job-seeker. You found the adbelow in a newspaper and you want to enquire more about the job.

- Write the first dialogue in which you call the secretary of the institution who takes your the call and puts you through to the head of recruitment.

- Write the second conversation in which you talk to the head of recruitment.

- Write the third dialogue in which you call your mother to inform her about the possibility of taking on that job.

Task: design a situation of integration of yours on the topic of letter writing

Lecture 3:

Post Method Era

Introduction

After parading up different methods for approaching foreign and second language teaching, researchers in second and foreign language teaching/learning seem to have reached a point in which they no longer look for the best method (the magic formula); rather, as Kumaravadivelu puts it, the search is not for the "an alternative method, but for an alternative to method" (1994). In other words, now specialists of the profession have entirely lost lost faith in the concept of the method and are looking for new ways to approach teaching/learning foreign languages.

Background

There is this dichotomy of teacher and researcher. During the era of the method, linguist was conceptualizing and theorizing while teachers sat at his foot waiting for insights and guidance to implement in his/her class. The teacher was then simply a practitioner. Now, insights from research have shown that those theories which were mainly based on knowledge transmission are not applicable everywhere. Each time the teacher is called to change his/her approach to teaching depending on locally relevant factors. Teachers have to change up and to be dynamic. For instance, teaching English for a group of young students who are demotivated cannot proceed in a similar way as teaching adults motivated by job opportunities. According to van Lier (1994), the primary three attributes of a good teacher in the post method era are: theorizing, researching, and practicing. This means that the teacher should search for classroom insights while practicing his/her teaching, build up contextually relevant theories, and experience with them in class. However, it should be pointed out here that the teacher is not required to theorize 'out of the blue'; rather he/she is supposed to familiarize himself/herself with current research finding in the field and work out his/her own theory in accordance to the peculiarities of his/her classroom.

The three major characteristics of the postmethod condition

The biggest limitation of a method is that it is based on a **single set of principles** and techniques. There are language-centered methods (e.g. audiolingualism) that seek to provide opportunities for learners to practice preselected, pre-sequenced linguistic structures through form-focused exercises, assuming that a preoccupation with form will ultimately lead to L2 mastery. The teacher's task is to introduce grammatical structures and vocabulary items one at a time and help learners practice them until they internalize the L2 system. Then, there are learner-centered methods (e.g., communicative methods) that seek to provide opportunities for learners to practice preselected, presequenced linguistic structures and communicative notions through function-focused activities, assuming that a preoccupation with form and function will ultimately lead to L2 mastery. The teacher's task is to introduce formal and functional items one at a time and help learners practice them until they internalize the L2 system. Finally, there are learning-centered methods (e.g., "the natural approach") that seek to provide opportunities for learners to participate in open-ended meaningful interaction through language learning tasks, assuming that a preoccupation with meaning making will ultimately lead to L2 mastery. The teacher's responsibility is to create conditions in which learners engage in meaningful problem-posing/solving activities.

Postmethod era is not based on a single principle.

Secondly, the postmethod condition signifies teacher **autonomy**. The conventional concept of method "overlooks the fund of experience and tacit knowledge about teaching which the teachers

already have by virtue of their lives as students" (Freeman, 1991, pp. 34-35). The postmethod condition, however, recognizes the teachers' potential to know not only how to teach but also know how to act autonomously within the academic and administrative constraints imposed by institutions, curricula, and textbooks.

The third characteristic feature of the postmethod condition is **principled pragmatism**. Principled pragmatism is different from eclecticism which has long been advocated to overcome the limitations of any given method (see Hammerly, 1991,). The proponents of eclecticism aim to promote "the careful, principled combination of sound ideas from sound sources into a harmonious whole that yields the best results" (Hammerly, 1991, p. 18). In spite of such good intentions, eclecticism at the classroom level invariably degenerates into an unsystematic, unprincipled, and uncritical pedagogy because teachers with very little professional preparation to be eclectic in a principled way have little option but to randomly put together a package of techniques from various methods and label it eclectic. As Stern (1992) rightly points out, the "weakness of the eclectic position is that it offers no criteria according to which we can determine which is the best theory, nor does it provide any principles by which to include or exclude features which form part of existing theories or practices" (p. 11).

Unlike eclecticism, which is constrained by the conventional concept of method, principled pragmatism is based on the pragmatics of pedagogy (Widdowson, 1990), in which "the relationship between theory and practice, ideas and their actualization, can only be realized within the domain of application, that is, through the immediate activity of teaching" (p. 30). Principled pragmatism thus focuses on how classroom learning can be shaped and managed by teachers as a result of informed teaching and critical appraisal. One of the ways in which teachers can follow principled pragmatism is by developing what Prabhu (1990) calls, a sense of plausibility. Teachers' sense of plausibility is their "subjective understanding of the teaching they do. Teachers need to operate with some personal conceptualization of how their teaching leads to desired learning-with a notion of causation that has a measure of credibility for them" (p. 172). This subjective understanding may arise from their own experience as learners and teachers and through professional education and peer consultation. Because teachers' sense of plausibility is not linked to the concept of method, an important concern is "not whether it implies a good or bad method, but more basically, whether it is active, alive, or operational enough to create a sense of involvement for both the teacher and the student"(p. 173).

A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR L2 TEACHING

Kumaravadivelu (1994) suggested ten macro strategies for approaching foreign and second language teaching in the postmethod era. These ten principles are the underlying principles for a principled approach that does not obey to any particular method. From these macro strategies micro strategies can be derived to guide classroom practices.

1. Maximize learning opportunities

Teaching should be viewed as an act for creating opportunities for learning. According to Breen (1985), language classroom activity is a social event jointly constructed by learners and teachers. All parties bear the responsibility for creating learning opportunities. The teacher can prepare a pre-syllabus which will serve as a springboard for interaction, and he/she should be ready to change it depending on students' wants and needs.

2. Facilitate negotiated interaction

A language classroom should be a place for student-student interaction and teacher-students interaction. Students should be engaged in using confirmation checks, clarifications checks, comprehension checks, reformulation, repairing, and turn taking.

3. Minimize perceptual mismatch

This macro strategy refers to the importance of matching teachers' intentions with students' interpretations. If students perceive games as a means of having fun rather than learning through interaction, the learning process will naturally be jeopardized.

4. **Activate intuitive heuristics**

This takes us to the way grammar should be taught. Many researchers (Krashen , Pabhu, and Chomsky) doubt on the possibility of internalizing grammar rules through formal instruction and explicit explanation of the rules. It is then suggested for the learner to discover rules through exposure to a wider variety of input through texts and examples. This means that learners should learn grammar through discovery learning strategy.

5. **Foster language awareness**

This means drawing learners' attention to the formal system of a language as a whole by increasing students noticing of how the language system works. It has been found that increasing students' awareness of the rules governing language system speeds up L2 acquisition, while the lack of awareness leads to fossilization.

6. Contextualize linguistic input

A sentence is a linguistic unit that signals meanings governed by the rules of syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and discourse. Exposing students to contextualized-based teaching enables them understanding meanings of most sentences. It follows then, that language should be contextualized when presented to learners. The latter must be aware of the semantic ties of a sentences as well as the cohesive devices that tie them to what has come before or what will come later in a discoursal piece of writing or speech.

7. Integrate language skills

Language knowledge and language ability are better learnt when presented holistically. Each language skill reinforces the other. When we read, we also learn how to write. The separation between language skills is a remnant of structuralism. Today, many textbooks present language skills in order for logistic not logic reasons. When it comes to teaching they are integrated and recycled all the time. Besides, even if the textbooks promote a linear approach, research shows that students find a way to integrate them.

8. Promote learner autonomy

It involves helping learners to learn how to learn, reflect on their learning, evaluate their process of learning, and acquire effective learning strategies. The latter should be made explicit to all learners so that students can benefit from the cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective strategies used by their peers.

9. Raise cultural awareness

According to Stern (1992), cultural awareness includes cognitive component in terms of knowledge about geography and the contribution of the target culture to human civilization; an affective component in terms of interest, empathy, and curiosity; and a behavioural component in

terms of interpreting culturally relevant behavior and to behave in culturally appropriate ways. Accordingly, the teacher should create an environment in which the cultural aspects of the target cultural are made explicit and compared to the student's native culture.

10. Ensure social relevance

Social relevance refers to the need for the teacher to be sensitive to the social, political, economical, and educational environment. The social context is an important variable. It shapes motivation for learning, availability of language input, and norms of proficiency expected in the community. The challenges for the teacher then is whether to pursue realistic goals of producing competent speakers or unrealistic goals of producing imitation of native speakers.

Lecture 4:

Natural Approach

The natural approach is a foreign/second language teaching method outlined by Tracy Terrell in 1977. Sometime later, Terrell joined forces with Stephen Krashen, an applied linguist. In collaboration, they elaborated the theoretical foundation of the approach, drawing on Krashen's research in second language acquisition (SLA). The theoretical rationale and practice was illustrated in their book, The Natural Approach, published in 1983. The theoretical foundation of the approach was outlined by Krashen and the classroom techniques and the procedures were explained by Terrell. According to Krashen and Terrel, the natural approach teaches language in communicative situations without the use of native language and grammar. At the first the reader might confuse between the Natural Approach and the Direct Method, which also approaches language teaching in a naturalistic way. Hence, it is worth drawing the major differences between the two approaches/methods.

Direct Method	Natural Approach
-Based on 19th C Reform Movement -Language is presented in monologues by the teacher, followed by questions - Uses repetitions to memorize language sounds - Focus on accurate production of the target language - Focus on practice and repetition - Printed material is only introduced at later stages	-Based on SLA research -Language is presented in communicative situations - No repetition and no need for conscious mastery of the formal system of language - No need for focus on accuracy - Focus on exposure (input) - Printed material can be presented as long as it is comprehensible for the learner

1. Approach

1.1. Theory of learning: The Natural Approach is largely built around the theory of language learning. It rejects language structure as the common core for language teaching. Rather, communication in the target language should be taught. Unlike other communicative language teaching approaches, Krashen's approach has no language theory. Terrell and Krashen's approach focuses on meaning and downplays the importance of grammar. Also, vocabulary is considered more important than grammar.

Language is viewed as a means for communicating meanings. Acquisition can take place only when people can understand messages in the target language. Yet, despite their rejection of the structural view, they hold that language is acquired by stages. This means language acquisition is graded structurally in what they referred to as i + 1.

In brief, despite their dogmatic rejection of the theory of language, they view language as structure, lexis, and meaning. The novelty is the primacy of meaning over structure.

1.2. Learning theory: The learning theory of the Natural Approach is based on Krashen's second language acquisition hypotheses, which will be outlined below.

a) Acquisition Learning Hypothesis: We have two very different ways we go about the job of getting a language: *acquisition* and *learning*. *Acquisition* is a sub-conscious process, which means while we acquire language we do not know it. It goes below our conscious. For instance, when reading a book, listening to conversation, and listening to a presentation, without realization, we might be acquiring language. Once, we finished acquiring, we are not aware that we have learnt something. Also, when someone makes a mistake in his/her language, we do not know where the mistake is (what rule is broken). We have the feeling that something went wrong, but we cannot determine exactly what went wrong. That feeling for correctness is what is called language acquisition. Everyone can pick up language sub-consciously; children acquire the first language and adults acquire second language subconsciously. It does not disappear when we end school and it is with us forever. LAD never shuts up. Very different is *learning*, that is, what we do in school. *Learning* is knowing about language, i.e., conscious knowledge. In schools, we learn that the subject and the verb must agree. This is conscious language learning. These two psychological processes are interrelated in the sense that when we say something the utterance pops from subconscious and conscious examines its correctness. One might think that *acquisition* relates to fluency, and *learning* relates to accuracy. According to Krashen, that is not the case. In fact, both fluency and accuracy when producing input are realized through acquired linguistic system.

b) Monitor hypothesis: When we communicate we draw on the acquired linguistic system (sub-conscious knowledge), that is, spoken utterance are initiated by acquired linguistic system. The Monitor model scans the output for correctness. It can check, it edit it, and correct it providing that it disposes sufficient time, providing that it focuses on form, and providing that the learner knows the rule.

c) *Natural order hypothesis*: According to this hypothesis, learning proceeds in a natural way following a natural order. This order is not to be determined through an external syllabus (linguistic grading and complexity). It is a hidden agenda (in-built syllabus). Morpheme studies have shown that certain morphemes are acquired before others in L1 acquisition, so is in second language acquisition. All learners acquire language in a similar way, following a natural route. For instance, structural grading of syllabus can rank the study of the third person 's' at the beginning of a course, while the student's in-built syllabus shows that this structure is among the late structures that a student can acquire.

d) *Input Hypothesis*: Input relates to acquisition, not learning. And, we acquire language when input (texts, conversations, lectures…) is slightly above the learner's level. Clues, images, extra-linguistic elements make input comprehensible. Once, input is comprehensible LAD unavoidably goes to work

(we can't help it). The ability to speak is acquired after a silent period in which the learner internalizes language. Input cannot be finely tuned to students' current level of competence because each learner can be at a different level of competence. In fact, input should only be roughly tuned. Just as a care-taker roughly tunes input, second language learners should be provided with roughly tuned input through foreign talk (the speech native speakers use to simplify communication with foreigners).

e) *Affective filter*: Research has shown, with no great surprise, that affective variables have their bearing on language acquisition. Better motivated students and students who have high level of self-esteem do better in language acquisition. There is also relationship between anxiety and language acquisition. The lower is the anxiety the better is language acquisition. It is a negative correlation. For learning to proceed optimally, anxiety should be zero . In language teaching anxiety has to be off entirely. When the learner is focused on meaning, anxiety is zero, and thereby acquisition is taking place.

If the student is not motivated, if his self-esteem is low, if he is at the defensive and views language classroom as a place where his/her weaknesses are to be revealed, a block goes up. Krahen calls this block the affective filter. When the block is up, the student may understand input, but input will not reach the LAD (the part of the brain that does language acquisition). Comprehensible input must enter the LAD so that acquisition happens. Hence, in a language classroom we can have a student open to input and another blocked. The superiority of schools over outside world is that schools provide comprehensible input. What the outside native context can provide in terms of language acquisition in two weeks can be supplied in two days at school, because there is much more comprehensible input at school with less and less anxiety.

2. Implications for pedagogy

1. As much comprehensible input as possible

2. Speaking is the result of language acquisition rather than the cause. Hence, the focus should be on listening and reading, while speaking and writing emerge naturally.

3. The use of visual and extra- linguistic materials to make input comprehensible

4. In order to lower the affective filter the focus should be on meaning, than on form. Besides, a re-assuring and friendly atmosphere should be guaranteed for the learner.

3. Design:

3.1. Objectives: the Natural Approach focuses on communication; hence, its aim can be determined through needs analysis. Also, a statement of goal should be made. Students should be informed on what they will be able to do, and what they will not be able to do.

3.2. Syllabus: The content of the Natural Approach is broadly defined in terms of communicative goals; then, it is related to language functions, situations, and topics. In this way, it is much like the syllabus of the Council of Europe. Also, topics should be motivating and interesting to ensure a convivial and friendly atmosphere.

2.3. Types of teaching and learning activities: Students need to be exposed to comprehensible input through listening and reading. Learners are not supposed to talk at early stages. They can start answering first yes/no questions and using words used by the teacher frequently. Pictures and realia form the focus of meaning. Pair work followed by discussions is also used at later stages. Classroom activities are borrowed from TPR, Direct Method, and Suggestepodia.

3.4 Role of learners: Learners are processors of comprehensible input. The input they take will depend on their current language developmental stage (their hidden syllabus).

3.5. Teacher's role: The teacher should be the source of comprehensible input. He should provide comprehensible linguistic content through a multiplicity of extra-linguistic clues (gestures, images, mimes).

3.6. The role of instructional material: the role of instructional materials is to make input as comprehensible as possible. They provide context and help the learner understand, and thereby to acquire. Any materials that can make input clear for learners are exploitable and usable. Also, since Krashen and Terrell specify topics, published materials can be used (textbooks). They can provide support for communication and comprehensible input.

4. Procedure: The procedure followed in Natural Approach is much like that of communicative language teaching and TPR.

Conclusion

Innovations in Natural Approach are in terms of its theoretical tenets (rejection of formal study of language and emphasis on comprehensible input), rather than in terms of classroom procedures, which are mostly borrowed from other language teaching approaches and methods.

Lecture 5

Teaching the four skills

1. Receptive Skills

Receptive language skills are processes though which we attempt to interpret and comprehend written and spoken texts. There are generalities of this kind of processing which apply to both reading and listening, but there are differences between them.

1.1. Pre-existing knowledge

In order to make sense of a text, we need more than linguistic knowledge. Our interpretation and comprehension of a text depends largely on our prior knowledge about the topic of the piece of discourse. Such knowledge is usually referred as schema (plural schemata). For instance, if we are to listen or read a letter by virtue of knowing that it is a letter we can better understand the message

because we already have some expectations about this writing genre. We can also recognize the type of letter just by reading the first line. For instance, if it starts saying 'We are awfully sorry', we instantly know that it is a letter of rejection. Such schemata arouse the expectations of the listeners and readers.

1.2. Top-down and bottom-up

We can approach texts analysis in two different ways, either using top-down or bottom-up processing**.** Top-down refers to having a general idea of what a listening/reading text is about. Top-down processing occurs when the listener/reader background knowledge is activated; this greatly helps them to have appropriate and relevant expectations. In bottom-down, on the other hand, the reader/listener focuses on individual words and phrases, and stringing detailed elements to construct a whole.

1.3. Reading and listening strategies: Readers/listeners usually use different strategies to comprehend texts.

- **Identifying the topic:** Good listeners/readers identify the topic very quickly.
- **Predicting and guessing:** Both readers and listeners sometimes look forward, trying to predict what is coming. They make guesses though their first glance or half hearing of what to expect. Their subsequent reading confirms what have been expected or they readjust their guesses.
- **Reading and listening for a general understanding (skimming):** Good readers and listeners take a stream of discourse looking for the main topic (general idea) without worrying about details. It means running your ideas quickly over the text to get the gist. By encouraging students to get a general idea of what a listening/reading text is all about, we help them understand later details easily.
- **Reading and listening for specific information (specifics/scanning):** Contrary to reading/listening for a gist, we sometimes listen/read for specifics. In this process, we almost ignore details till we come up to the specific information we want, then we stop.
- **Reading and listening for detailed information:** In this case all details are important. It happens for instance when someone is reading instructions or listening to an important announcement in which all details are to be noted.
- **Interpreting texts:** Listeners and readers are able to understand beyond the literal meaning conveyed in the text; we fill in the gaps left by the writer/speaker by using our schemata and knowledge of the world.

1.4. Problems with reading and listening: What makes a text difficult?

Texts with **longer words and sentences** are more difficult to understand than shorter ones (Wallace, 1992). Others claim that the problem is the **number of unfamiliar words**. If the readers/listeners do not know half the words of the text, they will not be able to understand the whole text. The problem is more acute in listening where students cannot go back to understand what is missing; listening, then, will gradually degrade. Ultimately students will disengage from processing the listening text. Forcing students to read and listen to difficult texts will only de-motivate them.

Solutions: Pre-teaching vocabulary. One way to overcome the problem discussed above is to teach key vocabulary words that are in the target text. Also, students should be trained to overlook difficult words.

1.5. Types of readings: A distinction is usually made between **intensive** and **extensive** reading/listening. Whereas the latter refers to reading/listening at length, often for pleasure like reading a novel; the former tends to be more concentrated, less relaxed, and dedicated not so much to pleasure as to the study goals. Extensive reading takes place when students work on their own, while intensive listening/reading often takes place under the teacher's supervision.

1.5. Strategies for teaching receptive skills

- **Choose the right topic:** choose a topic of interest to students.
- **Create interest:** If we can get students hooked to the task, there are more chances that will be committed to the text. The teacher should make them want to discover what in the text
- **Activate schemata:** We should activate students' schemata before they plunge into the text through predictive tasks.
- **Vary genres:** A way to solve students' unfamiliarity with some text genres is to cover as many genres as possible from radio talks to weather broadcasting from storytelling to spontaneous talks.
- **Purposeful reading:** Reading with a purpose
- **Appropriate challenge:** when asking students to read or listen we should avoid tasks and texts which are too easy or too difficult. Tasks should be challenging, but achievable.

Lecture 6

Productive skills

Like receptive skills, productive skills also have some common features. Hence, again these language competencies will be presented together for logistic not for logic.

1. **Structuring discourse**

In order for communication to be meaningful, it has to be structured. In speech this involves the use of conversational patterns and some pre-fixed and semi fixed language strings (also called chunks, formulaic expressions). Formulaic expressions are less common in writing. Instead of language chunks, writing employs cohesion and coherence. The former refers to the fact of sequencing ideas and points in a logical way while the latter is more technical, it refers to various linguistic means to connecting ideas such 'moreover/ further' for addition and 'although/however/still' for opposition. Speech is also an orderly act, rather than chaotic. The work of Harvey Sacks in conversational analysis reveals that speech obeys to certain rules established by people.

2. Following the rules

Both speech and writing follow some well-established rules.

2.1. Socio-cultural rules

Speakers of one language share a common knowledge on how to address each other in terms of how formal to be, how loud they can be, and close to stand to each other. Such socio-cultural rules guide the way we speak.

2.2. Turn taking rules

Also speech is governed by turn taking norms. Such rules refer to the way speakers get the chance to speak by signaling verbally or visually. For instance, a speaker can take a turn by saying 'excuse me for interrupting, but…'. These rules include turn-taking, turn yielding, turn giving, and even turn stealing!

2.3. Rules for writing

Writing has also rules, which we should follow. Each writing genre is subject to specific rules and patterns. Such rules range from the regulations of netiquette when chatting on the internet to the rules for writing an application letter, and to norms for fiction writing.

3. Interacting with the audience

Interaction with the audience is more obvious and conspicuous in productive skills rather than in receptive language skills. The speaker is constantly considering his audience accommodating and adjusting his/her speech in accordance to the effect his/her words have on the listener. Even in writing, the writer bears in his/her subconscious his/her audience, and thereby deciding how much to be informative and which stance to take.

4. Productive skills in the classroom

Not all activities produced in written or spoken form are considered productive activities. For instance, rehearing or drilling a language pattern even orally does not belong to the field of productive speaking. Likewise, writing sentences to display a language structure is excluded from productive writing. Productive skills involve using language at our disposal to achieve a communicative aim.

However skill training is not always communicative. Teaching learners to pronounce words correctly enhances and contributes to productive speaking skill. So, before inviting students to produce orally or in written mode, some preliminary non-communicative and controlled activities are usually involved.

4.1. Teaching speaking

Speaking involves being able to use the sound system of English. Naturally enough, we should train learners to work on the sound system of English modeled by a good speaker or an audio aid.

4.1.1. Types of activities (preliminary work)

Minimal pairs: such as bin and pin or live and leave.

Intonation, rhythm and tune: It involves exposing students to models and helping them to produce their own speech. Intonation counters can be shown on the blackboard, showing rising and falling intonation.

Stress: stress can be indicated by vertical lines above the stressed word or syllabuses. It is to be noted here that the marking system of intonation and phonetic transcription should be simplified.

Linking intonation with language function: In English rising intonation, for instance, is an information question whereas a falling intonation is a statement.

4.1.2. Teaching procedure

Stage 1: ask students to repeat a scripted dialogue**.** The dialogue can be presented by the teacher or by a recording of it. The teacher asks a student to take part B while he/she takes part A. Next, the teacher acts part B while another student acts part A. Finally, the students repeat and act out both parts in pairs.

Stage 2: Making substitutions. Some substitutions can be made to the dialogue. For instance instead of going to the cinema, we can substitute it with theater. Language exponents related to the target language functions can be used. For instance, in case of the function of suggesting,' let's go …' can be replaced with 'shall we go …'

Stage 3: Instead of giving language, students can be given functions in cards and prompted to produce appropriate language relative to those language functions.

E.g., **Speaker A**: greets B	Speaker A: makes a suggestions
Speaker B: Greets A	Speaker B: accepts the suggestion

4.1.3. More communicative activities

- Debates (open discussions)
- Problem-solving activities
- Information-gap activities

5. Preliminary writing activities

These types of activities have the function of assessing the student mastery of a target language rule. Actually, they do not assess students' writing as much as students' themselves. Such types of activities include converting sentences from active to passives, putting verbs in their correct tense, and writing sentences displaying a particular language structure.

6. Teaching functional/communicative writing

Communicative writing involves paragraph writing. The following stages can be followed to accomplish communicative writing. Below, we trace different stages of text-based writing, which is widely used in textbooks.

A Model: Students need to read a model as part of a reading assignment. The model text will familiarize students with rhetoric models, writing techniques, and language. Student can be encouraged to read the model text, take down notes, and reconstruct it.

A Parallel Composition: We provide students new informal and we ask them to write a parallel composition. For instance, if the model text was an application letter, we ask students to write an enquiry letter. Expectantly, students will use the same rhetorical features with slight variations.

Free production: students will be asked to write in a freer way. For instance, if it is a story, they can be asked to tell any story they want. Then, they can be asked to exchange production in pairs; each student tries to communicate the content of the composition by summing up in writing the content of his/her partner's production. By so doing, student can develop the sense of writing for an audience.

7. Approaches to student's writing

Our approach to writing depends on whether the focus is on process or product. Product approach is interested in the production of an end-product; usually that type of writing is a solitary act. In product-driven writing no attention is given the different processes through which the learner goes to produce a piece of discourse. Process writing focuses, on the other hand, on the different stages for producing a good piece of writing. It involves cooperative work, drafting, redrafting, polishing, editing and publishing.

One of the biggest problems of process writing is that it takes too much time to brainstorm the topic, to have students reading each other's drafts, to conduct peer assessment, and so on.

Lecture 7:
Classroom input and student participation

We have seen that most of classroom input is generated by teacher talk. teacher discourse is so different from social talk; it is characterized by **slow speech rate**, **use of less reduced vowels**, **fewer contractions**, **more standard pronunciation**, **well-formed and shorter sentences**, **less subordinate and conditional clauses**, **and basic vocabulary**.

Modification of input: It is so common among teachers to simply repeat the question when they fail to get a response. While verbatim repetition is good for students, especially for students with low English proficiency, to process the question; it is important for the teacher to modify the question when a response is not forthcoming. Basically, there are two possible modifications; one is comprehension-oriented and the other is response-oriented. The former makes it easier for the student to understand, while the latter makes it easier for the student to respond to.

a) Comprehension-oriented modifications

Teacher comprehension-oriented modification can be syntactic or semantic. The former refers to act of making the teacher's question easier syntactically by avoiding embedding questions, that is, questions containing relative clauses; the latter, on the other hand, refers to the use of easier words which can facilitate and speed up comprehension.

b) Response-oriented comprehension

This is concerned with the modification of a question to make the expected kind of response easier; for example, instead of a wh-question, the teacher can use a yes-no question. Also, another possible modification is giving clues. The teacher for instance gives part of the answer and asks students to provide the rest. Furthermore, the teacher can give one possible answer so that students

can generate more responses. Last but not least, the teacher asks a series of questions to lead students to give the desired answer, this type is referred to as Socratic questioning.

Modifications devices in interaction

Studies of native speakers' conversations have shown that a number of devices are used to avoid and repair communications breakdowns. Among these devices we have

Confirmation checks

Confirmation check is used to ensure that the speaker has correctly understood what the previous speaker said. It can be realized by paraphrasing or repeating what the previous speaker said. For examples, if speaker A is instructing speaker B to find the way. Speaker B can respond by saying 'so, I turn left and walk along the buildings, and then I turn right'. Here speaker B is checking with speaker A whether he has correctly understood what Speaker A said.

Clarification request

Another important device is clarification, which is used when the speaker needs help for understanding what the previous speaker has said. A very common of asking for clarifications is 'What do you mean?'

Comprehension checks

This happens when the speaker asks another speaker whether what he has sais is understood. A commonly used expression is 'Is it clear?' 'Right?', 'Ok?', or 'Do you understand?'

Turn-taking

Students' involvement in negotiating comprehensible input depends on the teacher behavior in managing classroom turn-taking. The teacher can either nominate or specify who is to take the turn or throw it open to the whole class. Allwright and Bailey (1991), refer to the first turn allocation as 'personal solicit' and the second one as 'general solicit'. A common pattern found in classrooms is that the teacher starts with a general solicit; but when no answer is forthcoming, he/she resorts to personal solicit to sustain interaction and move the lesson forward.

Motivation for turn-taking

It is a must that teachers allocate turns to all students, not only few students that he/she knows. However, teachers have some subconscious motivations for allocating turns to students. Most teachers, for instance, tend to allocate turns to students who are active and ready to volunteer. By allocating turns to them, teachers are sure to get correct answers. Some teachers tend to allocate turns for students who bid for turns in order not to discourage them. Other teachers allocate turns to brighter students, from whom they are sure of getting good answers, in order to feel themselves good about their teaching. Also, some teachers allocate turns for students who are likely to give a correct answer to move the lesson forward and cover more and more materials.

While it is impossible to allocate evenly turns, an uneven allocation of turns for a long time may affect students' involvement in classroom activities; it can make shy students shier and neglected.

Turn-taking behavior

Generally speaking, students' turn-taking can be divided into **solicited** turns and **unsolicited** turns**.** An example of the former is when a student answers a question when he/she is specifically nominated**.** An unsolicited turn is one in which a student initiates the turn.

A turn-taking behavior that most teachers are unaware of or attach little importance is is private turn-taking' by students. According to Allwright (1980) some students who seem uninterested and indifferent are sometimes taking **private** turns, which were unnoticed by the teacher. If these private turns are unnoticed by the teacher, the level of participation would be very low. Therefore, it is important for the teacher to look out for students taking private turns , and if it is agreeable for them, to make their turns public.

Turn-taking behavior and language learning

According to Seliger (1977), students who usually take turns generate more input and have more opportunities for practicing language (high input generators), and those who participate minimally in the classroom (low input generators) get less input directed to them.

Student talk

While we have stressed the importance of students' involvement and participation in a language classroom, it is worth noting that it is difficult to get students to talk in a language classroom.

Student participation in classrooms

The problem of participation is more acute in EFL classrooms. It is difficult to get student respond to teacher's questions, let alone asking questions or making comments.

Contributing factors in student reticence

There are many factors that can contribute to students' reticence in a language classroom. Amongst these factors we can list low English proficiency, losing face, lack of confidence, and fear of mistakes**.** Actually, the problem of students in a language classroom is double-fold: they have to give the correct answer and to say correctly. Added to the pressure of correctness imposed by the nature of the classroom, and sometimes, imposed by students on themselves, teacher intolerance of silence resulting in a sequence of successive questions, does not allow enough time for students to process and think about the question being asked.

Language learning anxiety

Research shows that there are two types of anxiety: trait anxiety and state anxiety. Trait anxiety refers to a personality characteristic, for example a person he is always tense and nervous. State anxiety is specific to a situation. Foreign language classroom is a kind of state anxiety. A distinction is also made between facilitating and debilitating anxiety. The former refers to the type

of anxiety that helps a person to try harder and thus perform better; the latter , refers to the king of anxiety that hinders good performance.

Horwitz and Horwitz developed a Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale to identify students who are highly anxious. His studies in Texas university showed that students start to panic when they answer questions for which they have not been prepared, they get nervous when they had to speak in front of the class, and they felt very-self-conscious when they had to converse in a target language.

Horwitz studies show that anxiety is a discernable factor which has adverse effects on language learning. The factors contributing to students' reticence are precisely those that underlie anxiety. Students with low English proficiency are bound to feel their self-esteem is being undermined when they are asked to talk in front of their peers. Thus the avoidance to participate is an attempt to preserve ones's self-image. Teachers should recognize the extent to which students participation in affected by these factors and the extent to which the teacher's behavior can exacerbate it. It follows then that the teacher should establish a good relationship with students, allowing students to discuss their answers (in groups or pairs) before giving it in open class.

Cultural factor in student participation

Allwright and Bailey (1991) cautioned that students should not be forced to participate before they feel ready. Teachers have to be sensitive to the cultural factor. Sometimes more able students are unwilling to stand out of the rest of the class and make the same mistakes as their peers for fear of criticism. This phenomenon is common in Chinese classrooms because modesty is highly valued.

Lecture 8

Large and heterogeneous classes

1. Large class

Actually the concept of large class varies from one context to another. For instance, in India a large class can be above 50, whereas in Europe it can be just above 20. Nevertheless, a large class according to Penny Ur is a class where it is difficult to tend for individual learners.

1. Heterogeneous class

A heterogeneous class is a class that is varied along different parameters (different level, different learning styles, different abilities). The problem for a teacher in these classes is how to provide learning opportunities for each individual learner to progress at his own pace/ level/ learning style. Basically, a heterogeneous class is a class of more than one, while a homogeneous class is a class of one. As soon as you get more than two persons, you are into a mixed class with varied learning styles and abilities, let alone a class of thirty or fifty.

3. Problems of large heterogeneous classes

- Finding heterogeneous materials: a lot of materials are homogeneous

- Discipline: Some students get bored and start talking to their neighbours. Something that is too difficult is boring, something that is too easy is boring, and something that is not suitable to learning style is boring
- How can I reach each individual learner
- Assessment

4. Advantages: It is not always bad news. In large heterogeneous classes we might have the following advantages.

- Exploiting teaching personnel: too many students for one teacher.
- Educational aspect: when different people are working together, they are like a microcosm society where people can help, respect and tolerate each other.
- Richer personal resources: If I have a discussion in a mixed class and I want ideas and experiences, the data that will be coming up in a heterogeneous class will be richer than in a homogeneous class.
- Teacher development: If I am teaching a large heterogeneous class, I am stretched to the limits of my teaching ability. I have to be creative, inventive, and thoughtful of what kind of procedures I am using, and this will help me to develop as a professional. Research says that teachers teaching these kinds of classes actually develop more than those teaching small classes.

5. Techniques for addressing the problem of heterogeneous classes

In what follows, we try to outline some of basic solutions, which require a minimum effort without spending too much money, just a little twist.

5.1. Variation

We can teach some of the students all of the time and all the students some of the time, but we cannot teach all of the students all of the time. That is, we cannot reach all the students all of the time. For instance, when I try to explain to some students a language item that is not understood, I am going to neglect more able students who have already understood that point., Conversely, I might be giving something challenging which answers the needs of some students, but does not cater for the needs of others. Therefore, I should make sure that not always the same students are neglected and not always the same students are taken care of.

5.2. Varying topics

One way to do this is through varying my topics: there are times when I choose a topic that is interesting to this set of student and times when I choose another topic to another set of students. Also, sometimes we deal with easier topics and at other times with challenging topics. But, we should never address the same level, or what is called average non-existent level.

5.3.Classroom organization

Some learners like learning alone and others like collaborative work with their mates, yet others like sitting quietly and have their teacher run the classroom. There is no good value to this or that, rather it happens that certain classroom organization suits some students not others. It is perfectly legitimate to prefer to work in a certain way. Consequently, the teacher needs to be aware that students have different learning styles, and thereby use group work sometimes, individual work sometimes, and teacher-fronted work sometimes. By mixing teaching styles, the teacher can cover all learning styles.

5.4. Materials

Some students are turned on by using electronic stuff like smart phones and laptops; others prefer paper-and-pencil materials (i.e., working with handouts and books).

5.5. Interest

Teaching has to be interesting no matter how large the class is. However, it is particularly interesting in large heterogeneous classes. Activities have to be made worthwhile and interesting, that is, I have to design my activities not only with difficulty parameter in mind, but also the interest value. In order to do so classroom activities have to be competitive. This element has to be instilled to any activity to make it interesting. Students can compete with each other or with themselves.

5.6. Timing

Timing is one factor that adds excitement and contributes to the rise of adrenalin when performing a game or a task. Even if you have to do a very easy task when you know that you have to do it in one minute you are competing against time. Thus any language task has to be easily achievable by adding the constraints of time. Also visual activities are so important to raise students' interest. Using pictures engage the visual channel and avoids it being distracted by other sensory factors.

5.7. Full participation

It is so crucial that everybody should be involved; even if you are not saying something, you are listening to your neighbours who are saying something. Every single student should be activated as opposed to teacher student ping pong, i.e., teacher asks and one student replies, where only one student is activated at a time.

5.8. Open-ended question

In such pattern of questions not only one answer is possible, but maybe infinite possible answers, that is, there is no one right answer. For instance, the following question is a close ended question.

Jenny the small baby can/can't ride a bicycle

There is only one possible answer to this question. In order to make the above example open-ended question, we can reformulate the question in the following way:

Jenny the small baby can't ride a bicycle, but they can smile, what else can or can't Jenny do?

Other examples:

Supply a past regular verb

She…… a cake

How many adjectives can be used to describe a road?

How many endings you can have for a sentence "if I have a million dollars…."

Put ten questions to which the answer is 'tomorrow', 'twelve'

List six negative things about a friend

5.9. Individualization

Individualization means adapting activities so that they accord with different levels or speed of work of different students. There are some basic techniques that can be applied even to the most standardized grammar activities. For instance, instead of saying here is a grammar exercise who could do number one, who could do number two? Instead of that you say I am going to give a couple of minutes to read through the questions, raise your hands if you want to answer any of the questions. Students can start answering any question regardless of chronological numbering; that is, they can start from question one or two, or three. This gives learners an extra choice that slowest students or less able students can go straight to the easiest question. This technique allows a high level of individualization.

5.10. Giving a time limit rather a quantity of work limit

Instead of saying for a homework, do exercise six on page 32, I say do as much as you can an exercise A, B, C on page 32 in twenty minutes. The same thing can applied during class time. Students can be asked to do as much as they can about any activity. It means the student will compete against speed.

5.10. Personalization

It means providing students with opportunities to express their own experience, preferences, opinions, and ideas.

Example: imagine you were seven and your parents told you that you could have a pet which might be a cat, a dog or a pony, black or white, small or large, what you would choose?

5.11. Core task and optional task

The teacher sets a task that is virtually doable by all students and an optional task for faster working students.

Example:

Homogeneous	Heterogeneous
Complete the column with three words	Complete the column with a least three words

5.12. Assessment and core/optional task dichotomy

The problem in assessment is that faster learning and advanced students finish quickly while other still do the tasks. The solution is to devise a test in which all the tasks can be done by all students and an optional task. Students who answer correctly the core questions can get a full grade and the students who can have a go at the optional and more challenging task will get a bonus.

Example: finish up a story not the way usually it finishes up

5.14. Collaboration

Learners work together in order to get better results than they can get on their own. For instance, in a task where we ask students to remember as much as possible of ten words displayed on a screen then hidden from their view, individual students cannot remember all the words, but in collaboration they can work out the full list of words. Usually, collaboration and brainstorming work well in memory and brainstorming activities.

Lecture 9:

Teacher talk

Teacher talk refers to the type of discourse used by the teacher to run his/her class and practise his/her teaching activity. This type of language has many aspects depending on the nature of the undertaking implemented at each stage of the lesson or teaching process. This lecture will focus on the following aspects of teacher talk: **questioning**, **explanation**, **feedback and error treatment**.

1. Questions

In most EFL and ESL classes the major part of classroom talk is generated by the teacher. In a study of Hong Kong 70% of classroom talk was found generated by the teacher asking questions, nominating the students the questions, and giving feedback.

Questions are used to:

a). check learners' comprehension
b). focus student attention (involving students)
c). move the lesson forward
d). to some teachers to exercise disciplinary control
e). to practice language and communicate

1.1. Types of questions: The types of questions used by the teacher affect the nature of response and the kind of interaction being generated. There are different types of questions:

1.1.1. Open and closed questions: According to Barns (1969), there are two types of questions: open and closed questions. The type of question can be identified by simply looking at the question word. Questions starting with 'who', 'when', 'what', 'where', and 'when' are **factual questions** and questions starting with 'why' are **reasoning questions**. A lose ended question are those questions that have only one acceptable answer like yes/no and filling blanks, whereas open questions have a wide range of answers. Moreover, close questions are questions for which the teacher knows the answer; they are used to check whether the student knows the answer.

1.1.2. Display questions and referential questions: while close and open questions produce different types of responses, display and referential questions produce different types of interaction. Long and Sato (1983) refer to knowledge checking questions as **display questions** and those which the teacher does not have the answer as **referential questions**. In display questions the teacher has the answer, while in referential questions the teacher does not have the answer.

Display questions	**Referential question**
T. What did john do yesterday? **S**. John skied **T**.Well done	**T**. What does the dog do when he is happy? **S**. He sticks out his tongue, wags his tale… **T**. what else?

In Display questions the questioner genuinely wants the answer in a social communication; they generate meaning negotiation; and there is no evaluation of the answer as good or bad.

In brief, display questions generate interactions that are typical of classroom discourse, whereas referential questions generate interactions typical of social interaction.

2. Explanation

Explanation takes up a very significant amount of teacher talk. There are two types of teacher talk:

2.1. Procedural explanation: it the explanation regarding the organization aspect of the lesson, for example when the teacher explains how an activity should be conducted or gives instructions about a homework.

2.2. Content explanation: it refers to the explanation of the subject content of the lesson, for example explaining vocabulary, texts, and grammar rules, and so on.

2.3. Effective explanation: Brown and Armstrong provide a working definition of explanation as "an attempt to provide understanding of a problem to others (1984, p.122)". But, what constitutes good explanation?

- Effective explanation is not one way process, involving the teacher imparting knowledge to students; it involves the active investment of learners in processing knowledge.

- Relating new information to old information
- The teacher should have a good grasp of the nature of the problem to be explained
- Eliciting answers from learners
- Highlighting essential features
-gauging the existence knowledge of students to determine the amount of information to be delivered and the way to sequence it (avoiding over-explanation and under-explanation).

- Teacher needs to organize content in clear sequences and signpost new sequences.

3. Feedback and error treatment

3.1. Teacher feedback: Another aspect of teacher talk is providing feedback to student responses. It is in the feedback that the teacher evaluates responses and gives comments on student performance. And, it is part of classroom routine.

3.1.1. Effective aspects of teacher feedback: The kind of feedback that the teacher provides affects learning. A teacher who constantly provides negative feedback is bound to create a sense of failure and frustration among students, and will inhibit students' contribution to classroom talk. On the other hand, a teacher who values every contribution and provides encouraging feedback is much more likely to get students motivated to learn and practice language, and will help to learn and create a social climate in the classroom. As Krashen (1982, 1983) points out, students must be favorably disposed towards language learning before language acquisition takes place.

3.1.2. What is an error? : An error in the classroom is commonly understood as something rejected by the teacher; however, what the teacher considers to be an error may not be wrong at all (it might be something that the teacher might not want.

T. *now, can you make another sentence with another verb?*
S. *I am not swimming*
T. *I don't want swimming ! I want swim*

They can be caused by:

- not following the rules that the teacher lays down
- not following classroom protocol (not putting up the hand**)**
- Not following the teacher idiosyncratic perception of how the target language works

3.1.2.1. Errors and language development: While errors in language classrooms are frowned upon by the teacher and corrected, parents and caretakers attend to the message that the child wants to get across rather than its form. If the child utters the words "Mummy Sock", asking his mummy to give him his socks, the mother will expand "Yes, mummy will give you sock", rather than telling the child that there is an error in the form made by the child. Studies of L1 have often pointed out that errors made by children are manifestations of hypotheses that they are constantly testing out about the language they are to master. One often quoted example is the overgeneralization of the acquisition of the past form, giving rise to forms like *goed, i.e., applying the rule of regular verbs to regular verbs. This should be seen as indicative of the stage of language development that the child is in.

Similarly, EFL and ESL students go through the stage of hypothesis testing. Errors made these learners are called developmental errors. A developmental view of errors sees them not as something undesirable, but as something that informs the teacher about students' stage of development.

3.1.2.2 Should errors be corrected? To most teachers the question is quite obvious: yes**.** Errors should be corrected or else students will think that what they produced is correct and will carry on using those erroneous forms. Besides, erroneous output may also cause other students to internalize

these errors or readjust their correct hypotheses about the target language to accommodate these errors.

Cathart and Olsen's (1976) survey shows that students have a strong preference for the correction of errors, but when learners are corrected intensively they did not like it. The consequence of correcting every single error is that students will have no sense of achievement. Despite the fact that the student knows the answer, he is likely to be discouraged from answering in the future.

But, when not to correct?

- Circumstances where students do not have reached the stage of interlanguage (ignoring errors is better)
- Students who are reticent and shy
-Whether the focus is on form or fluency

3.1.2.3. Treatment and delayed treatment:

- The problem of correcting errors in the middle of the sentence is disruptive (frustrating and inhibiting). Alternatively errors can be corrected when the student finishes the sentence or at the end of the lesson.

- If error treatment if delayed, it becomes less effective

3.1.2.4. How errors should be corrected?

- Teacher repeating the student response with correction
- Teacher can deal with errors directly with explanation
-Self correct: the student is led to correct his error.
-Get other students to correct the error.

Lecture 10

The role and design of instructional materials

The role and design of instructional materials

Teaching materials are key component in most language programmes. Whether the teacher uses a textbook, institutionally prepared material, or his or her own materials, instructional material serve as the basis for classroom input learners receive and the language practice that occurs in the classroom. In case of inexperienced teachers, materials can also serve as a form of teacher training-they provide ideas on how to plan and teach lessons.

Instructional materials are of different kinds: There are two kinds: printed and non-print materials.

a) Printed materials

i) Textbooks

ii) Workbooks

iii) Work sheets

iv) Readers

b) Nonprint:

i) CDs or audio materials

ii) Videos and visual materials

iii) Computer-based

c) Both printed and nonprint

i) Self-access materials

ii) the Internet

d): non designed for instruction

i) magazinze

ii) Newpapers

iii) TV

Cunnigsworth (1995) summarises the role of the textbook in language teaching as:

- A resource for the presentation of materials (spoken and written)
- A source of activities for learners practice and communicative interaction
- A reference source for learners on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and so on.
- A source of stimulation of ideas for classroom activities
- A syllabus (where they reflect the learning objectives that have already been determined)
- A support for less experienced teachers who have yet to gain confidence

Disadvantages

- *They can deskill teachers:* if teachers rely on the textbook package as their primary source of their teaching, leaving the textbook and teacher's manual to make major instructional decisions for them. The teacher's role can reduced to that of a technician.
- *They are expensive*

Authentic versus created materials

Authentic materials refer to the use of text, videos, photographs and other teaching resources that were not specifically prepared for pedagogical purposes. Created materials refer to textbooks and others specifically developed instructional resources. Some writers argue that authentic materials are by far superior to contrived materials because they contain authentic

materials that reflect real life language use. Nevertheless, authentic materials are sometimes difficult because they have not been sequenced are graded to fit students' level of proficiency.

Advantages of authentic materials

- *They provide authentic cultural information about the target cultural*
- *Exposure to real language than artificial texts*
- *Relate more closely to learners' needs*

Disadvantages

- *Often contain difficult words and unneeded vocabulary items*
- *Contain language beyond learner's level of proficiency*

Evaluating textbooks

Criteria for textbook evaluation

Cunningsworth (1995) presents a checklist for textbook evaluation organized under the following headings.

- Aims : (e.g. communication)

  a) The textbook promotes interaction
  b) The objectives of the course are clearly stated in the textbook

- Design and organization

  a) The textbook is organized around instructional units
  b) The textbook uses colourful illustrations
  c) The textbook is user's friendly
  d) Each sequence is clearly signaled
  e) The textbook recycles grammatical items
  f) The textbook includes extra materials

- Language content

  a) The content of the textbook uses idioms to enhance fluency
  b) The textbook incorporates formulaic expression
  c) The textbook uses authentic texts
  d) Content is graded from the easiest to the most difficult
  e) Vocabulary is explained in contexts

- Skills

  a) Language skills are taught in an integrative way
  b) Writing focuses on the process approach

- Methodology

  a) The textbook uses pair work
  b) The textbook uses group work

c) The textbook uses information-gap activities

- Topics

  a) The themes of the textbook are topical

  b) The topics of the textbook elate to students' lives

- Teacher's book

  a) The teacher's book provides enough guidance
  b) The teacher's book includes keys for tasks

- Practical considerations

  a) The textbook is cheap
  b) The textbook is thick
  c) The textbook is easily adaptable

Adapting textbook

The teacher should not be the slave of the textbook. Actually, the textbook is not the syllabus. The teacher can alter content, tasks, and topics providing that they keep them in harmony with the assigned objectives.

Modifying content:

Content maybe modified because it does not suit learners age, interest, religion, culture, social class, and cultural background.

Adding and deleting content

The course book may contain too much or too little for the programme. Whole units may have to be deleted. If for instance, little practice is provided for a particular skill, the teacher can amend the textbook and add more practice activities.

Reorganizing content

The teacher may choose not to follow the order units are presented in the course book. Or, within an instructional unit the teacher may change the order of the activities in the way it suits him/her.

Addressing omissions

The teacher may add items which he feels have been omitted or neglected in the textbook. For instance, the teacher may add grammar or vocabulary activities.

Modifying tasks

The teacher may alter certain tasks to suit his/her style of teaching

Lecture 11:

Project work

1. 1. Theoretical foundation for project-based learning

Project-based learning is not a new approach to teaching and learning. This approach to education that is based on experiential and action-based learning can be traced back to Dewey and Kilpatrick (1916, 1918, respectively in Legutke & Thomas, 1991, p.157). The reform movement initiated by Dewey and Kilpatrick in the United States laid the theoretical foundation of project learning, particularly through Kilpatrick's 1918 pamphlet, *'The Project Method'* (Ibid.). Both educationists called for the importance of democratic and cooperative learning within a social environment and argued that the process of learning should prepare young citizens in a democratic way through learning by doing (Ibid.).

It is also influenced by Piaget's (1927) constructivist and Vygotsky's (1986) socio-constructivist movements. These educationists and thinkers hold that knowledge is constructed through experience. According to Piaget, "*it is the "collision" of our thought with the thought of others that engenders doubt and calls for verification…"* (in Vygotsky, 1986, p.48). This means individuals reframe their mental representation of the external world to fit new experiences. As for Vygotsky (1986), he considers learning as a social activity. Indeed, he holds that when an individual is assisted he can achieve more than he can do individually and that in cooperation learners can solve problems that are beyond their mental state of development. Obviously, these insights cannot be put into practice within the confines of direct knowledge transmission.

However, since the inception of project method, its application has not always been consistent and successful. Its use has waned because of some early concerns which have been raised about it and which are still expressed. Among the many concerns expressed by some educationists (e.g., Bode ,1922; Dewey, 1931 ;Gramsci, 1971; Hirsch, 1996; Jones , 1922; and Marrison , 1931 in Beckett, 1999, p. 38) are its child-centred nature, its viability, its value, its process-orientation, and its lack of accountability. Indeed, these challenges have always hampered the use of project based learning as an autonomous *"philosophy of education"* (Dewey, 1938 in Beckett, 1999, p.61). For instance, whenever standardized testing is at stake, "*PBL tends to take place on the fringes of the educational landscape*" (Beckett & Miller, 2006, p.xiii). Consequently, a 'more serious' or 'apt' approach (e.g., structural approach) to teaching is adopted. In fact, in spite of successive education reforms that took place in Europe and America in the 1950's and 1760's, project work had failed to gain respectability in educational programmes.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, project work has known rapid resurgence thanks to influential works of interactionist research in SLA. According to Eyring (1989), project work is mainly espoused *"to provide opportunities for language learners to receive comprehensible input and produce comprehensible output"* (in Beckett & Miller, 2006, p.4). Hence, creating opportunities for learners to achieve

comprehensible input/output by means of interaction is one of the major goals of project work in SLA.

1. 2. Project work: towards a working definition

One of the defining features of project work is its task-based orientation. According to Hedge (1993), it is *"an extended task" (*p.276); Legutke & Thomas (1991) define it as "*a theme and task-centred mode of teaching and learning…"* (p. 160); Nunan (2004) considers it as a 'maxi-task'; and Ribé & Vidal (1993) regard it as simply a more elaborated task (in Nunan, 2004, p. 133). All these definitions suggest that project work is a task or a series of tasks. Other key characteristics of project work that are generally agreed upon by many researchers are summarized by Legutke & Thomas (1991) in the following definition:

> *a theme and task-centred mode of teaching and learning which results from a joint process of negotiation between all participants. It allows for a wide scope of self–determined action for both the individual and the small group of learners within a general framework of a plan which defines goals and procedures.* (p.160)

Besides the task-based orientation of project work discussed above, this definition suggests its theme-based and process nature. That is, projects are organized around topics selected by students along with their supervisors. This also implies that interaction or negotiation is another key component of project work; as a matter of fact, most of its topics rest on a joint negotiation between learners and their teacher. Additionally, the definition further shows that interaction, action, and cooperation occur within an organizational framework. This plan that determines project goals, tasks, and outcomes is jointly constructed by project participants.

Legutke & Thomas further elaborate that "*Project learning realizes a dynamic balance between a process and a product orientation*" (p. 160). Indeed, many writers have stressed the importance of striking a balance between process and product (Wilhelm, 1999; Fried-Booth, 2002; Stoller, 2002; and Nunan, 2004). Although project work focuses on process, product is also important. According to Legutke & Thomas, it is one of the components of the process. Specifically, learners' products serve as input for further learning. Similarly, while Fried-Booth underscores the importance of process for providing learners with opportunities to practise skills other than language ones, she points out that project learning "*is driven by the need to create an end-product*" (p.6). Also, Nunan argues that project work should culminate in a tangible outcome.

Learner-centeredness is another crucial feature of projects. According to Hedge
(1993), project work is the realisation of the principles of learner-centred teaching. As for Legutke & Thomas, project work not only provides learners with opportunities to make their contributions to the learning process, but also allows them to discover their

own strengths, interests, and talents.

Last but not least, project work leads to language, knowledge, and skills integration (Stoller, 2002; Beckett & Slater, 2005). Rather than teaching language componentsseparately (i.e., grammar and vocabulary), learners are taught language, content, and skills simultaneously. When learners are involved in projects, they use language as a medium to practise practical skills (e.g. researching, problem-solving, and interviewing) and to acquire knowledge. And in the process of doing projects, students can listen, write, read, and speak, and hopefully acquire language.

1.3. Project steps

The literature of project work provides a wide range of project plans (e.g., Legutke & Thomas, 1991; Sheppard & Stoller, 1995; Stoller, 2002; and Fried-Booth, 2002). Despite the slight differences between them, most of them agree on the three fundamental stages of planning, implementation, and presentation.

(i) Planning stage

Initially, a theme of general interest should be introduced by the teacher. After this, some kind of brainstorming about the topic should follow so as "*to sensitize learners towards the theme*", "*to mobilize existing knowledge*", and "*to arouse curiosity*" (Legutke & Thomas, 1991, p.172). This stage is referred to by Fried-Booth (1986) as "*stimulus"* or "*the jumping-off point*" (p.28). After these thought-provoking tasks, which serve to enlarge learners' perceptions, students should organise themselves into groups. In the latter, they will be assigned the task of discussing and negotiating to come up with a topic of common interest. Finally, the kind of language, skills, and curriculum objectives expected from the project should be illustrated explicitly in a concept map or table (Phillips, 1999). These representations also can include the resources to be consulted, the role of each
learner, and the tasks to be accomplished..

(ii) Implementation stage

At this stage, students undertake tasks of data collection, compiling, and analysis. First, they should design research instruments such as interviews or questionnaires (Fried-Booth, 1986; Stoller & Sheppard, 1995). This stage is referred to by Fried- Booth (1986) as "design *of material*" (p.10). Then, they collect data individually, in pairs, or in groups inside or outside the classroom. After that, working in groups, learners present, compare, and analyse their data to refine it. The most relevant pieces of information are selected and the irrelevant ones are discarded. These classroom project lessons are important for providing learners with feedback and practice in self-and peer-assessment (Fried-Booth, 1986).

(iii) Presentation stage

Before handing in projects, learners must be sure that they meet the standards (correct use of grammar and visual supports). Team work is also needed for writing drafts, editing, and polishing the final product. The manner of presentation depends on the nature of the product. It can be an article to submit to the school magazine, a play to stage, or just a written production to submit to the teacher.

1.4. Teachers' and learners' perceptions of project work

The application of project work has not always been evaluated positively. Despite the fact that some early large and small scale projects (e.g., '*Wheelchair Guide'*, Fried-Booth, 1982; '*Dear Brown Eyes'*, Carter & Thomas, 1986; and '*Animals in Danger*', Hutchinson, 1991) were conducted successfully and met students' and teachers' expectations, other project experiences showed negative and mixed evaluations. Specifically, whereas both teachers and students in *'Dear Brown Eyes'* and *'Animals in Danger'* reported having learnt both language and culture and expressed their satisfaction with these project experiences, their counterparts in other studies (e.g., Eyring, 1989 in Beckett, 1999,p.50; Moulton & Holmes, 2000; and Wilhelm, 1999) showed negative or mixed feelings. In Eyring's study, for instance, both students' and teachers' evaluations of the activity turned out to be negative than expected. Although the students in the study acknowledged having acquired other skills than the basic ones, " *they did not seem to think that these tasks were worthwhile pursuits in ESL classes*" (Eyring, 1989 in Beckett & Slater, 2005,p. 109). As for the teacherparticipant in this study, she showed her frustration with this activity and clearly expressed her preference for traditional structural teaching (Eyring, 1997).

According to Beckett (1999), one of the major reasons for learners' negative evaluations of project work can be accounted for by learners' perceptions of language teaching / learning. Project work might not be appropriate for learners expecting to learn language and content separately, learn and practise the use of grammar rules and vocabulary items, and learn from the teacher or the textbook (Ibid.). Indeed, Beckett (2002) points out that in general education Western students (e.g., Canadians) evaluated project work positively because they had been used to more progressive teaching, while their ESL counterparts (e.g., Chinese) who had been used to structural teaching/learning expressed their frustration with this approach.

1.5. Evaluation of project work

Project work lends itself to alternative methods of assessment, that is, for example, it cannot be assessed through standardized tests. Rather, both process and product should be evaluated through alternative assessment methods. Process can be evaluated through learner diaries, journals, portfolios, self-assessment grids, and

peer-assessment. Product, on the other hand, can be evaluated through grids (for the written artecrafts or oral performance). Also, performance assessment of presentations, acting, and so on can be evaluated by peers using evaluative grids that turn learning objectives into assessable items.

Lecture 12

Task-based learning

Task-based learning is another way of looking at communicative language teaching; actually, it is the realization of communicative language teaching precepts. Rather than using language structures and vocabulary lists as the core content of language teaching, it employs tasks as the organizing unit of its syllabus. A typical task-based learning material (textbook) includes a set of tasks that the learner should complete individually or in groups under the supervision of a teacher. Examples of tasks would be writing an application letter, using a map to find the way, devising a time-table for the teacher and so on.

1. Background of Task-based learning (TBL)

Task-based learning was first applied in the south of India in what was called the Bangalore project. Prabhu, the head of the project, explicated the meaning of tasks and their applications in his seminal work Second Language Pedagogy (1987). However, the project did not have a long shelf life.

TBL gained popularity because of the support it received from SLA researchers such Long and Brookes (1993) who hold that form focused language learning does not assist learners in acquiring language and communicating in the target language. Rather, SLA research affirms that language is better internalized when taught through tasks that bear resemblance to everyday life task. Assumingly, cognitive processes are activated when the learner undertakes the performance of a task than when the learner embarks in the study of formal properties of language (grammar). Besides, providing the learner with comprehensible input is not sufficient, the learner needs to interact in the target language to facilitate second language acquisition.

The key characteristics of TBL are:

- The focus is on process rather than product
- Language is better learnt when learners interact meaningfully
- Activities can be authentic (like real life) or pedagogical
- Activities are selected according to the difficulty
- The difficulty of the task depends on the level of complexity, the learner's previous experience and the degree of support

2. Definition of Tasks

There are some variations in the definitions of tasks, but there is a common agreement that a task involves a goal to be achieved using language as a means. Nunan (1989) defines tasks as follows:

> the communicative task is a piece of classroom work which involves learners in **comprehending**, **manipulating**, **producing** or **interacting** in the target language while the focus is on **meaning** rather than form. A task should also have a sense of **completeness**, being capable to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right.

3. Approach: TBL is mainly based on the theory of learning, however, it can be said that it is underpinned by certain views about the nature of language.

3.1. Theory of Language: Language is a means for the **expression of meaning**; hence, TBL is not concerned with language display as much as it is concerned with the completion of the task. TBL draws on structural view in determining the linguistic complexity of the task, on functional view in focusing on meaning (social dimension of language), and on interactional view in its focus on the interactional dimension of the task.

3.2. Theory of learning: TBL shares much of the principles of communicative language teaching and much more.

Comprehensible input, *Comprehensible output*, and *Negotiation of Meaning*: TBL uses Krahen's hypothesis of comprehensible input (language slightly above the learner's level [i + 1]); however, according to Swain (1985), exposure to comprehensible input alone is not sufficient to acquire language proficiency. In her study of a Canadian immersion programme, she noticed that despite intensive exposure (listening) to the target language, students failed to reach native like proficiency when conversing in target language. Hence, she claimed that foreign language students need equally Comprehensible Output (using language in interaction and meaning negotiation). This occurs when students strive to explain to each other meanings through reformulations, paraphrasing, clarification checks, confirmation checks, and so on. It is at these particular instances that students pay attention to the use of linguistic forms. Indeed, SLA research affirms that language learning mechanisms are activated during the process of negotiation in the target language. The use of tasks permits the use of both comprehensible input and output.

4. Design

4.1. Objectives: They are identified on the basis of the real world needs of the learner. When applied at a national scale as it was the case in Malaysia in 1986, educational authorities conducts a survey to identify the most likely needs of the learners in a form of general goals, then these linguistic functions are embedded in both vocational (workplace tasks such as

cashing a check) and recreational tasks (leisure activities such as listening and comprehending a sport broadcast).

4.2. Syllabus: TBLT specifies the tasks that should be learnt (to make a phone call, and not to study the imperative). Nunan (1989) makes a distinction between two types of tasks:

a) *Real-world tasks*: to practise tasks that arise from needs analysis or that turn out to be useful in real life. An example of this task would be to make a phone call.

a) *Pedagogical tasks*: activities that promote language learning like information-gap activities. They are applied for their psycholinguistic potential to trigger the process of language acquisition. These types of tasks do not reflect real world tasks.

4.3. Types of activities: In the literature of TBL, there are various taxonomies and classifications of tasks. They range from listing, comparing, creative, puzzle work, and jigsaw to information-gap.

4.4. The role of the learner: the most typical tasked-based roles of the learner are:

Group participant: the learner works in collaboration with other students.

Monitor: the student is led to notice how language is used in communication.

Risk-taker: the student should take the risk to communicate meanings for which he lacks means of conveyance through consultation and clarifications with his partners.

4.5. The teacher's role: Additional roles are assigned to the teacher in TBL.

Selector and sequencer of tasks

Preparing learners for the task: learners should not dive into the task cold. They need some pre-task work such as activating their background knowledge, providing them with key linguistic features of the task (e.g., key words), topic introduction, and explanation of the task procedure.

Consciousness-raising: to raise students' attention to the linguistic items they will need in task performance, but this should not be conducted in a form of direct grammar lesson.

4.6. Role of instructional materials: Realia, newspapers, internet, television, and so on.

5. Procedure: Students do not go straight to solve tasks; they are given a framework through which they progress. The following task-based framework is based on Willis' (1996) model.

Pre-task: is used to build schemata of different kinds. The expectations of learners are raised and the topic is brainstormed through preliminary activities such as classifications, eliciting questions, ranking exercises, and so on.

Task proper: The students do the target task.

Post task: This in turn includes planning and reporting.

Planning: students prepare a report on how they proceeded to accomplish the task

Reporting: students report in open class how they performed the task.

Post-listening: students listen to a parallel task performed by native speakers and compare it to their performance in the target task.

Focus on form: students receive some instruction and practice on linguistic forms portrayed in the task proper.

Lecture 13

Mastery learning

Mastery learning is both a philosophy of education and a teaching procedure. It is based on two main philosophical principles:

1) Virtually all students can learn all important academic content to a level of excellence.
2) The primary function of schools is to define learning objectives, and to help all students to achieve them.

These postulations entail that an instructor will not generate a few excellent students, many middling ones, and a significant percentage of failures. Instead, the role of the teacher is to produce an amount of 95 % successful students. The chief advocate of this theory is the educator Benjamin Bloom. Before, explaining the procedures involved in implementing in practice this philosophy, it seems worthwhile to provide an account on its origins.

In his book *Human Characteristics and School Learning* (1976), Bloom reveals his experience and how he has come to the idea of mastery learning. He has noticed in the same way as any teacher that students do not learn in the same way. There are more able students, who understand quickly, can cover more materials fast, understand easily, and retain more permanently, and there are less able student who learn slowly in terms of quality and quantity. The result of this and in the absence of a convenient teacher intervention is the division of the class into good and poor students. The discrepancies

in the levels of educational attainment become worse a year after a year, and then the weak students become demotivated and frustrated because of lack of understanding. The teacher's usual reaction is teaching the average-middle, which does not exist because every student is somewhere in his/her expedition.

Bloom has come to a brilliant idea that virtually all students could learn complex materials and retain more if they are given enough time required by each of them. But, most importantly, later research has discovered that if learners are given the time and the favorable conditions for learning, even the differences in learning rate and retention will disappear. Bloom states it in this way:"**most students become very similar with regards to learning ability, rate of learning, and motivation for further learning -- when provided with the favorable learning conditions**."

Organization of learning

It would be right to think that individualization of learning is the key technique to realize such philosophical stance. However, Bloom suggests group instruction (moving the whole class at the next level the same time) rather than individual learning. Obviously, group learning would be more practical, but how to make it efficient?

The cornerstone of this teaching procedure is to shift the traditional principles of time-based to mastery-based or outcome-based, that is, the whole class moves to the next level upon mastery, not time spent on a particular course. This model is inclusionary in that all students will succeed, not only those who reach the predefined standards as in traditional teaching organization.

Group-based instruction

Group-based instruction means moving the whole class together upon mastering the core content of the subject matter. This implies that the students will not learn to the same degree, but all of them must master the essentials to be able to continue their expeditions without big difficulties. Since the students will be working on the same content, the teacher has the advantage of

explaining and giving instructions in open class with little efforts. Subsequently to this teacher-led phase, the students work in small groups. Consequently, those students who master content quickly are given enrichment activities and work on more challenging tasks. This technique is called group pacing; each individual students works according to his level of understanding. Naturally more able students will be assisting the less able ones to master the core body of knowledge.

Elements of mastery learning

It seems worthwhile to outline the elements of mastery learning that are used to realize the above instructional model

1. **Content**

Mastery learning does not pre-specify any type of learning; it fits in existing schema using available textbooks or curricular guidelines, but the objectives should be defined clearly and stated explicitly.

2. **Instructional material**

Input could be imparted through various means such as class presentation, discussion, videos, or whatever approach the teacher finds appropriate. But, the teacher should impart in the students the feeling that they could master the new material with no exception.

3. **First formative assessment**

Once the material has been covered, the teacher implements a formative test (i.e., does not account for grades) to diagnose what has not been mastered.

4. **Learning alternatives**

Next, the students who have not fulfilled the standards set up for the test will be re-taught using another method to correct the errors of the previous group work. As for those who have completed the standards of the core content, they are presented with enrichment activities to further their understanding of the body of

knowledge. It is worth pointing out here that corrective activities should be different from the initial ones in order to cater for different learning styles.

5. Second formative test

After the students have been taught for the second time on the same content, they are given a second formative test, the aim of which to diagnose further learning difficulties. If a student fails to master the core content again, he/she is required to achieve mastery individually, through peer tutoring, the teacher, a resource teacher, or a parent. Then the student is tested for the third or fourth time.

6. Summative test

The students are finally given a summative test after the end of each unit or course of study to determine how much the students have retained.

factors that determine the quality of instruction

(1) cues about what is to be learned;
2) encouragement of student participation
3) reinforcement of learning,
; and 4) feedback about correct and incorrect responses

Advantages of mastery learning

Research on mastery learning has shown positive achievements especially for less able students.

First, it has been documented that the students who reach minimum standards could display high level of retention and apply the skills acquired in the real world.

Second, these studies have shown that the investment of extra time early in the sequence is balanced by a payoff of more effective use of time at the later stages of learning. Moreover, this higher degree of active learning time is due to the student's internalization of instructional processing skills, such as ability to evaluate, correct, and reward one's own learning. The student tends to have more control over his/her learning and becomes more self-reliant in the processing of instruction.

Finally, there are important affective consequences. Using mastery learning techniques, the learner tends to become more

interested in the content being learned and feels more competent as a learner.

References

Bloom, B. S. (1976). Human characteristics and school learning. McGraw-Hill.