TESOL Methodologies: Preparing for Today's

Diverse Classroom

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As educators, we are responsible for developing plans to address the needs of every student we service. Since each student we work with has unique cognitive, linguistic, emotional, and developmental skills and issues at various levels, we need to equip ourselves with an array of pedagogical tools and delivery methods.

English Language Learners often present unique academic challenges for a variety of reasons. They are struggling not only with the same academic issues of their fluent English speaking peers, but they often face additional challenges such as cultural differences, language barriers, racial prejudices and more.

There are a number of methods designed to aid educators in effectively teaching English Language Learners. As educators, it is important to be familiar with as many techniques as possible so that as we work with this diverse population, we can incorporate these methods or any part of them in to our lesson plans. This paper will highlight some of the methods currently being used in classrooms around the world.

Methodologies

Direct Method

The Direct method is also known as the Reform Method, Natural Method, Phonetical Method, and the Anti-grammatical Method. This method is based on several beliefs. Proponents of the Direct Method believe that to know a language, individuals must be able to speak it. There is great importance placed on the spoken word. This method stresses correct pronunciation and focus on the target language from outset. The emphasis is on the oral skills as opposed to traditional language instruction that emphasizes memorizing the written word. Another characteristic is the belief that L2 learning must be an imitation of L1 learning. Proponents of Direct Method would say that this is the natural way humans learn language. The printed word and grammar translation skills should be introduced after a strong oral proficiency is demonstrated.

There are some that would say the Direct Method would not be as affective as posited. Some would say that L1 learning is an integral part of a child's natural growth and consciousness of the world around him. They would say that for the L1 learner life begins as a blank sheet. The child begins gathering, selecting and organizing the experiences of his new world, through his senses and perceptions. He then begins formulating a variety of pre-verbal concepts. The learning process focuses on the acquisition of tools to verbalize his needs, wants and fears and labeling these concepts to cope with life. The child's efficiency of using these verbalizing skills depends on his maturity level, intelligence, and a multitude of other social, physical and cognitive skills (MFL Second Language Acquisition). Those opposing the use of the Direct Method

would argue that since the L2 learner does not begin learning the target language with a

"blank sheet," many of the parallels between L1 and L2 acquisition do not apply.

Activity #1

Introduce simple nursery rhymes or poems.

Model speaking them being sure to enunciate

Have the students repeat each line one at a time

After there is demonstrable success for the students orally, introduce the text

Have them write the sentences 3 times each

Activity #2

Introduce a simple repetitive song.

Practice singing it focusing on enunciation

Introduce key words in the song in text form

Write out all of the lyrics, have the students SPEAK the words of the song

Have students write simple sentences using the new vocabulary words.

Activity #3

Introduce the topic of the day

Show pictures that represent the words that will be introduced

Introduce the words representing each picture orally

Introduce the words representing each picture (text versions)

Ask the question that can be answered by filling in each of the new vocabulary words
(orally)

Give the students the template (sheet with simple sentences with blanks where the new
words will be written) for answering the questions using the new words. Have

The students plug in the new words to the sentence. Do not translate.

Activity #4

Read a short paragraph about clothing that we wear.

Have the students read the paragraph out loud one sentence at a time

Lead a discussion about clothing asking them to answer questions (orally) in which they fill in the blanks by referring to information in the paragraph.

Follow up by having them write 2 or 3 sentences about their clothing.

Do not translate

Activity #5

Read a short story about pets

Have the students read the story out loud 2 times. Each student reading one sentence.

Show pictures of the animals in the story and introduce their names.

Lead a discussion about their pets.

Incorporate animal noises for fun.

Neurolinguistic Programming

This theory/method as applied to teaching language is not strictly defined by the scientific approach of neurolinguistics or behaviorism. According to Revell and Norman neurolinguistic programming is defined by breaking the term in to three unique parts. They are neuro, linguistic and programming. Neuro refers to "how we experience the world through our five senses and represent it in our minds through our neurological processes." Linguistics is defined as "the way the language we use shapes, as well as reflects our experience of the world". This includes both verbal and non-verbal communication. Programming is "concerned with training ourselves to think speak and

act in new and positive ways in order to reach our potential and reach those heights of

achievement of which we previously only dreamt of" (as cited in Richards, J., & Rogers,

T. 2001). NLP seeks to discover the attributes of successful communicators and helping

others acquire and apply those attributes to their life situations.

NLP and those advocating its use would say that our words are the reflection of

our subconscious perception of the world. If our perceptions and the words we choose to

reflect our thoughts are incorrect, our "miscommunications" will cause problems

internally and externally. We can create our world by the words we use and attitudes we

convey (Holistic Online.com).

Revell and Norman (as cited in Richards, J., & Rogers, T., 2001) said "NLP is a

collection of techniques, patterns and strategies to assist in effective communication,

personal growth and change, and learning. It is based on a series of underlying

assumptions about how the mind works and how people act and interact."

NLP is not a method or pedagogy specifically for teaching language. It is more of

a philosophy about maximizing individual growth and potential. It is intended to be used

as a way to structure classroom, student and teacher methods of thought and to shape

attitudes about ones' self. It encourages individuals to emulate successful behavior of

those successful in whatever field they find themselves. If you teach language, analyze

and emulate successful language teachers. Teach your students to emulate the behaviors

of successful language learners. NLP would say that applying these root philosophies will

make you more likely to succeed in any endeavor.

NLP requires rapport building and structuring the class to think in a positive success oriented fashion. The following activities will aid the instructor in building that rapport. The first 5 are for adults and professionals, 6 and 7 are geared toward the regular classroom with ELLs.

Activity #1

Learn to respond to negative comments.

Practice responding in such a way that shows you are concerned about addressing and resolving the issue that is being raised.

Show empathy for the person and their concern.

Respond in a way that seeks clarification.

Activity #2

Look for positive intent in negative comments.

Example: *comment* I hate this food. *Response* Are you looking for something more nutritious?

Activity #3

Identify successful communicators in your workplace.

Set up an interview protocol that helps identify the behaviors you want to emulate

Conduct the interview and identify the attributes that are common to them. Develop a rubric to follow that teaches clients to emulate these behaviors

Activity #4

Develop a tool to measure clients' communication skills.

Measure your clients' skills and build a profile of their attributes

Design a plan to build the clients' communication skills

Activity #5

In relation to language acquisition, NLP can be used to build a profile of the client's professional needs as well as their personal needs.

Create a tool to evaluate the professional goals of the client

Do the evaluation and needs assessment

Create a linguistic program to meet the specific personal and professional needs of the client

Activity #6

Drama with Poetry - students act out with teacher guidance.

Help students find written material that communicates their interests and strengths

Help the students develop a piece to perform that showcases their talents

Use gestures, props, annotation.

Activity #7

Vocabulary – relate to the five sentences and feelings.

Stimulate sight – dressing up as characters

Use reader's theatre for reading aloud as a group activity

Use multimedia for the students to remember concepts through sight and hearing.

Teach math using manipulates – touch and sight. (adapted from Renee Bikas TESOL 5345 June 14, 2007)

Community Language Learning

The CLL method was developed by a professor from Loyola University named Charles A. Curran. The techniques used in CLL are rooted in other foreign language techniques known as humanistic techniques. These techniques engage the whole person (the affective realm), including emotions and feelings, linguistic, and behavioral skills.

This methodology is not based on traditional teaching methods. It is modeled on counseling techniques. It seeks to alleviate the stress associated with acquiring a new language. People are often anxious and feel threatened as they face personal and language challenges. The learner is treated more as a counseling client than a student. Instructors are considered counselors more than teachers. They are trained in counseling skills with an emphasis on being "language counselors." The language counselor's goal is to empathize with the client's situation and to teach him linguistically. The goal is to develop independent language adequacy. This is accomplished by the language counselor creating a comfortable environment in which to teach and learn the new language skills (Richards, J., & Rogers, T. 2001).

CLL is interested in teaching the "whole person". Whole-person learning is concerned not only with the student's intellect, but also with his motivation to learn, emotions, instinctive protective reactions, physical reactions, etc. (Larson-Freeman, D., 2000).

Activity #1

Students record their conversation in the target language. They will listen to the recording and transcribe what they have said. The text will be used for future reference.

Activity #2

Teacher models an aspect of sentence structure. The students work in groups to create sentences using the transcription as a model.

Activity #3

The teacher stands behind the student. The student says a word in L1 that he wants to hear pronounced. The teacher responds with the proper pronunciation in L2 and the student repeats. The teacher does not interrupt or correct.

Activity #4

Students create a paper drama for a presentation to the class. The instructor pre-screens before presentation to make correction suggest improvements, etc. The students then create illustration for the text. The students rehearse and then present to the class.

Activity #5

The students and teacher engage in free dialog as part of the lesson. The topics can range from content to personal feelings and issues. (Elena Webb, Melissa Ingui TESOL 5345 June 13, 2007).

Suggestopedia (Desuggestopedia)

This is a teaching method that relates to the modern understanding of brain functions and how it processes information for learning. Suggestopedia was developed by George Lozanov. He is a Bulgarian doctor and psychotherapist. The term 'Suggestopedia' is a combination of the terms suggestion and pedagogy. It is sometimes referred to as accelerated learning approaches. This method was originally used to teach foreign language. Proponents claim it can teach languages approximately three times faster than conventional methods (BrainWareMap for Creative Learning).

Suggestopedia derives a set of learning recommendations from Suggestology. Lozanov describes these processes as a "science…..concerned with the systematic study of the nonrational and/or nonconscious influences" that human beings are constantly responding to. Suggestopedia attempts to utilize these influences and redirect them so as to optimize learning. This method is unique in its use and emphasis on using music, furniture, decoration, arrangement of the classroom and the authoritative behavior of the instructor (Richards, J., & Rogers, T., 2001).

Activity #1

The teacher meets the students at the door

They are greeted in the target language

The students are given choices of a new identity/name indicative of the target language

Music from the country or culture of origin is playing

This is designed to set the tone for each class

Activity #2 Classroom design

Classroom is bright and colorful

Posters on the walls of scenes from the country being studied

Posters of grammatical information

Other "props" scattered around (hats, musical instruments, masks)

Activity #3

After introduction of the students' "new" identities, a handout is given with a story.
On the handout, there are two columns, in both native language and translation
The teacher and class comment on vocabulary and grammatical structures in the story
Partly through pantomime, teacher outlines the story

Activity #4 Passive listening

As a follow-up to the previous lesson the teacher reads the story (calming and soothing)
set to music that sets tone and mood. Students follow along reading the text.

Activity #5 Active

First concert (active). Using more stimulating music, the teacher reads the dialogue
matching her voice to the rhythm and pitch of the music. Students follow along reading
the text. This is to engage the "whole brain." (Erin Heyward, TESOL 5345 June 13,
2007).

Multiple Intelligences

Dr. Howard Gardner (1983), a professor of education at Harvard University

developed the theory of multiple intelligences. He theorized that the traditional notion of

intelligence, based on I.Q. testing was limited in its ability to give a complete picture of individuals. Dr. Gardner proposed that there are a number of different intelligences to account for a broader range of human potential in children and adults. These intelligences are:

Verbal/Linguistic intelligence ("word smart")

The ability to use language effectively and creatively

Logical-mathematical intelligence ("number/reasoning smart")

The ability to use numbers effectively, to see abstract patterns, and to reason well

Visual/Spatial intelligence ("picture smart")

The ability to orient one's self in the environment, to create mental images, and a sensitivity to shape size and color

Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligence ("body smart")

The ability to use one's body to express one's self and solve problems

Musical rhythmic intelligence ("music smart")

An ability to recognize tonal patterns and sensitivity to rhythm, pitch, and melody

Interpersonal intelligence ("people smart")

The ability to understand another person's moods, feelings, motivations, and intentions

Intrapersonal Intelligence

The ability to understand oneself and to practice self-discipline. (infed.org).

Dr. Gardner believed that these intelligences could be enhanced through training and practice. This is quite a departure from other psychological theories that believe that intelligence (I.Q.) is set and fixed.

A very important element of the theory of multiple intelligences (when applied to assessment) is that it helps mitigate cultural and other biases inherent in many standardized tests. This aspect is particularly important to the discussion of multiculturalism and the pedagogy of teaching English Language Learners (Richards, J., & Rogers, T., 2001).

Activity #1 (Verbal/Linguistic)
Read the book One Frog, One Fly aloud to the class.
Point out the pictures, Ask what they see, what do they think? Make predictions
Create a storyboard with the pictures deleting the text
Have students create their own text (rewrite the story)

EXTENSION Activity: Create a motion video with the illustrations. Have the students do a voiceover adding their voices to the video using their rewritten text

Activity #2 (Musical rhythmic)
Review the definitions of the science vocabulary for the week
Model writing context sentences to exhibit grammar usage and science content knowledge
Have students write sentences using the vocabulary words
Create a moderate tempo rap beat
Have students read their sentences to the rap beat
Have the students type their sentences leaving out key words and leaving spaces where the words should be
Make copies of the sentences with the blank spaces, pass out copies to the class
Have students perform the "rap" sentences
Have the class listen and fill in the key missing words

Activity #3 (Bodily-Kinesthetic)
Review the rotation of the earth on its axis
Review the revolution of the earth around the sun
Have a student stand in an open area waving their arms to simulate emitting the sun's rays
Have another student slowly spin in a circle to illustrate the earth rotating on its axis
Have the "earth" student rotate and then start revolving around the "sun" student
This will illustrate revolution and rotation
EXTENSION Activity: Add more students to simulate other planets and moons

Activity #4 Interpersonal
Read a novel of the appropriate level (shared reading as a class read-aloud) or short story

Write a profile of each of the main characters (teacher transcribes the students' thoughts on chart paper, especially at the beginning of the process)
Discuss the feelings of each of the characters
Describe the reactions of each character in the various situations that arise in the book
Ask students to share how they might feel or react in similar circumstances.

Activity #5 Logical-mathematical
Create an opinion based question regarding a topic from Social Studies
(example: Political party preference, opinion on current issue, etc.)
Take a poll of fellow students for their opinions
Plot the data on a bar graph
Plot the data in a pie graph
Present the data to the class.

Sheltered instruction

Sheltered instruction includes a variety of methods and techniques when used separately or in combination can assist teachers in the instruction ELL students. These methods and strategies are delivered to ELLs in classrooms that follow specific design plans. These strategies and well designed classroom environments can increase the speed of the students' acquisition of both English and all of the academic areas.

Some of the attributes of the Sheltered Instruction philosophy would include hands on tasks and activities (tactile stimulation), multimedia presentations, comprehensible lessons, cooperative learning groups, a student-centric environment, warm, affective environment, and an emphasis on student interaction and involvement.

Activity #1

Math:

Introduce the vocabulary with associated graphics (cube for example)
Say the words and refer to the pictures
Have students repeat the word
Discuss the meaning
Create related hands-on activity constructing a cube

Activity #2

Science: Solar energy project

Introduce the vocabulary. Discuss the meaning
Show the simple solar energy ovens used around the world
Have students estimate cooking time for a hot d og
Construct a solar stove
Cook a hotdog using the solar stove, note the time it takes to cook

Activity #3

Reading: Fluency

Introduce a common fable
Model reading the fable
Have students take turns reading one line from the story each
When they are ready, have the students perform readers' theatre

Activity #4

Social Studies: Map skills/ states

Model proper letter writing formatting
Show the map of the U.S. Have the students pick 2 states
Find resources with information about the states.
Have the students write a letter to the governor of each state.
Ask the governor some questions the students are curious about based on the information
obtained from their research
Let the students tell a bit about themselves and their class
If there is a reply, send a follow-up

Activity #5

Writing: Punctuation

Pass out different musical instruments that make sounds to groups of 4
Assign a grammatical meaning to each instrument (question mark, period, etc.)
Pass out a copy of a paragraph to each group
As it is read aloud by the teacher, each group will sound their instrument when they get to
the corresponding sentence component (TESOL 5345 June 14, 2007)

Audiolingual method

The audiolingual method is rooted in the principles of behavioral psychology. It modified much of the ideology and actions of the Direct Method. This was a reaction to the lack of verbal communication skills of the Reading Approach.

Content is presented as dialogue. The philosophy of this method is that language learning is rooted in forming natural linguistic habits. The method is dependent on mimicry, memorization of set phrases and emphasis on repetition and word substitutions within sentences. Sentence structures are sequenced and taught individually. Structural patterns are taught using repetitive drills. Minimal grammatical explanations are provided. The strategy is for grammar to be taught inductively.

There is a sequencing of skills that are taught. Listening, speaking, reading and writing are developed in order. Vocabulary is learned in context. Lessons are developed using contrastive analysis between L1 and L2. This method makes great use of language labs, audio-visual material, and other multimedia. Pre-reading is done extensively at the beginning of the course. Pronunciation of the acquired language is stressed. Use of L1 is permissible but discouraged except at a minimum. Positive feedback is essential. Error prevention is stressed. Focusing on target language manipulation is encouraged while disregarding content and meaning (Larson-Freeman, D., 2000).

Activity #1

Introduce nouns and define what they are.

Create a word bank of nouns

Have a wealth of magazines. Pass them out with scissors. Have the students find and cut out pictures of objects that represent those nouns

Activity #2

Introduce a phrase such as I have a "ball."

Model plugging in nouns from the word bank using the phrase (I have a dog, I have a doll, etc.)

Have students plug in and say the nouns only the first time around the room

The next time around the room, the students will say the entire phrase

Activity #3

The teacher models a statement with a response. Ex. Student 1- I like your pencil. Student 2 - Would you like my pencil?

Repeat the statement and question using the nouns in the word bank to replace the nouns

Activity #4

Create a vocabulary list or use an existing one

The teacher models proper pronunciation

Students repeat each word multiple times

The teacher again models pronunciation this time over-enunciating

Students repeat with over-enunciation

Teacher models again over-enunciating but this time, touching the part of the face that that is used to form the sound. The students repeat the actions

Repeat the words again, this time in a more conversational way

Activity #5

Introduce clothing vocabulary (shoes , pants, shirt, etc.) Post in the class.

Have the class form a circle. Student 1 says to the person on the right, "I like your shoes"

Student 2 says to the person on his right, "He likes my shoes." Student 3 says to the person on his right, "he likes his shoes.. Student 4 says, "I like your shirt." This works around the class a few times.

The Silent Way

This method was developed by Caleb Gattegno. The "silence" refers to the teacher not the students. This method relies heavily on speaking and using the language as a tool for conversational communication. The students are encouraged to speak and interact as much as possible.

The strategies include the use of graphics, manipulatives, and other media. The designer of this method has a background in teaching math using hands-on material and incorporated their use in to this method.

The basic philosophies include:

1. Learning is facilitated if the learner discovers or creates rather than remembers and repeats what is being learned.

2. Learning is facilitated by accompanying (mediating) physical objects.

3. Learning is facilitated by problem solving involving the material to be learned (Richards, J. & Rogers, T., 2001).

Languages contain two kinds of words; those that can easily be substituted for one another from L1 to L2, and those that cannot. Group 1 usually consists of nouns and proper nouns from the speaker's environment. This one-to-one correspondence allows the language learner to simply use recall or consult a vocabulary list. The other grouping of words is more problematic in learning a language. These words have no one-to-one correspondence from L1 to L2. These words usually denote experiences, items,

expressions or implied meanings and may not exist or have the same connotations in the target language. Understanding and using these words or expressions requires more than a morphological knowledge of the language or a set of equivalent words or terms. This problem is greatly heightened by cultural differences in history, geography, topography, infrastructure and many other physical and sociological differences between peoples (Cuisinare.com).

Gattegno expresses the importance of grasping the "spirit" of the language. He feels that each language has its own phonological and suprasegmental elements that combine to give the language its own unique sound system and melody. The learner must gain a "feel" for this aspect of the target language as soon as possible (Richards, J., & Rogers, T., 2001).

Activity #1

Preschool through primary levels

Introduce words orally (only initially)

Add pictures as the words are spoken by the students

Add text to the pictures and have the students say the words

Activity #2

Review the previous simple word list

Point out the spelling of the words

Have students spell the words aloud

Put simple puzzle pieces (letters) together to form the new words

Activity #3

Students refer to previous list

Go around the room having each student say a word. They then pick another

student to go point to the word and say it.

That student says a word and picks someone to point to that word

Repeat several times

Activity #4

Each student creates the words from the list using modeling clay

Each student then goes to the other desks pointing to and saying each word

Activity #5

Use the pictures that accompany each word.

Hold up the picture without the text

Have the students say the word

Use only the text, hold up the word and have them say the word

Post the text, hand the students the picture (one at a time) have them pin it next to the
word and then say the word

Whole Language vs. Phonics

The whole language method of reading instruction (also known as "look-say" or "sight"

reading) continues to be the predominant reading instruction strategy in the U.S. and

around the world. It was developed in the early 1900's. Some Researchers believe in

developing the meaning of entire words not breaking them into segments or syllables.

This is referred to as the "analytic" phonics (implicit) approach. There is another phonics

approach called the "synthetic" (explicit) approach that emphasizes teaching individual

sounds often in isolation. This is followed by instruction teaching children to blend these

sounds to form words. This is also known as the part-to-whole approach (Baer, T. & Dow, R. 2007).

These approaches are in contrast to the Whole language approach. Whole language proponents would say that people speak and use complete words. We do not consciously focus on the individual components of words or the sounds that form them. Whole language advocates would question the effectiveness of teaching reading by focusing on one word at a time or their components. This method would suggest that children be taught to read using whole words in the context of literature.

Whole language is literature-based. Students learn words by reading them as their teachers model them. Teachers read text aloud. The repetition is not "drill" oriented. The students hear and see them in context of literature thus learning them with context and meaning not in isolation. Phonics instruction requires more drill and repetition. Some would say that learning to read using literature develops a greater appreciation for literature. There are many scholars, educators, curriculum specialists and others that feel strongly that phonics instruction is superior to whole language or vice versa. There are others that advocate for a blend of the two methods. Readers do recognize familiar words as a whole. Many students learn to read by using the words they have learned. How would a student read unfamiliar words? Readers need strategies for deconstructing written words. We can learn to break them down into their component parts and sounds and then reconstruct them. When learning L1, children are not fully aware of the individual sounds of words. Our first years are spent imitating sounds from their environment. This happens long before the ability to speak is developed.

Phonics instruction is criticized for being boring. Children seem to be more tolerant of repetition than are adults. Children often beg to hear the same song or story over and over. Though drills may be boring, they may be effective when used in proper context. The phonics and whole language advocates will continue to debate which method is the most effective method of teaching reading.

Activity #1 Phonics

The teacher will write the following words on the board: mope, cope, rope, hope. The teacher will think aloud and model as she demonstrates how the letters in the phonograms are the same. She will say, "What letters are the same in all these words? The letters which are the same are ope. I am going to underline the o and cross out the e because I learned that the letter e at the end of the word is usually silent." The teacher will underline the o and cross out the e. (eg. mope, cope, rope, hope)

Activity #2 Phonics

Given a list of words containing vowel sounds and four sets of phonograms depicting the /o/, the pupil will auditorily discriminate /o/ in the initial and medial positions of paired words by saying a key word and telling whether the beginning and medial sounds in the words sound the same or different for four out of four sets.

Activity #3 Phonics

Given a set of phonograms and a different initial consonant for each word, the pupil will orally blend the words by substituting the first letter for four out of four sets using a different phonogram for each set (Technology Tutorials).

Activity #4 Whole Language

Introduce the book *Cookie's Week*

Introduction of the book:
Explain what a consequence is by talking about the consequences in the classroom.
Ask the students what they do at home or in school that results in a consequence.
Introduce Cookie the cat and explain that his week contains many consequences.
Refer to the calendar and have the students say aloud the days of the week while the teacher points to them on the calendar. Read the book.

Concluding Activity*:*
Each student will make a page of the class book. To do this, each student will draw a picture of what he/she predicts Cookie will do on Sunday and another picture of what the consequence would be. Each child will write sentences explaining the pictures either by using invented spelling or by having the teacher dictate. After the teacher binds the book, each student will share his/her page with the class during circle time.

Activity #5 Whole Language

Day 1:
Briefly discuss the holiday season.
Read The Gingerbread Boy .
Discuss story elements as you go along.
Teacher solicits responses from students as s/he writes a retelling of the story on chart paper.
Students design their own paper gingerbread man for a bulletin board.

Day 2:
Read Gingerbread Boy (or Baby - your choice).
Introduce or review what a Venn Diagram is with the students. Discuss the differences and similarities between the two stories.
Put students into cooperative groups, and allow them to choose a particular character from the story (for example, one student would be the gingerbread man, another the cow, etc...).
Show students how to create a puppet from felt and yarn. (This part requires a little pre-planning, but it is worth the effort). Trace a larger version of the outside of your hand and cut out. Punch holes around the edges of the felt puppet, and "sew" with yarn - or Wonder Under. You may need a little assistance from a volunteer, depending on the ability of your class.
Students write or plan their own version of the play to perform (The Educator's Reference Desk).

The Lexical Approach

The Lexical approach to language learning and teaching is founded on the belief that the building blocks of communication and language are not functions, grammar or other forms of curricula. This approach says that the building blocks are lexis or words and word combinations. The Lexical approach reflects a belief in the focus on lexicon to

language structure in L1 and L2 acquisition. It stresses the importance of multi-word

lexical units, phrases or "chunks" and they are used as whole entities unto themselves.

Formal transformational/generative linguistics no longer views syntax as the

primary focus of language teaching but now gives credence to lexicon and how lexicon is

coded and organized. Memorized patterns play a major role in language development and

acquisition. These multi-word "chunks" are a very high percentage of all every day

communication.

Collocation is defined as the regular occurrence of words used in grouping

patterns (lexical units). Examples of collocations of nouns and verbs would include:

Take me home/ my temperature / a shower

Do your homework/ the dishes / the typing

Other examples of lexical units include:

Binomials   *rough and ready, top and bottom*

Trinomials   *cool, calm and collected*

Idioms   *stone cold sober*

Similes   *like cats and dogs*

Connectives   *additionally, in summation*

Conversational gambits   *you don't say!*

These and many other lexical units play a key roll in language learning and use. (Richards, J., & Rogers, T., 2001).

Michael Lewis coined the term lexical approach. He says that lexis is the foundation of language. He believes that lexis is mischaracterized in language teaching because it is assumed that grammar is the basis of language. Traditional language teaching believes that the mastery grammatical rules is a essential to language acquisition. The foundation of the lexical approach is that "language consists of grammaticalized lexis, not lexicalized grammar" (Walailak University, Thailand).

Activity #1

Teacher provides a wide range of reading materials at varying levels.

Perform intensive and extensive listening and reading in the target language

Modeled (by teacher) oral reading

Independent reading.

Activity #2

First and second language comparisons and translation—carried out chunk-for-chunk, rather than word-for-word—aimed at raising language awareness.

Activity # 3

Repetition and recycling of activities, such as summarizing a text orally one day and again a few days later to keep words and expressions that have been learned active.

Activity #4

Guessing the meaning of vocabulary items from context. As an introduction to new vocabulary words, read several sentences using the new word. Ask for guesses as to the meaning. After the definition is established, have the students create their own sentences or phrases using the word.

Activity # 5

Create a bank of verbs and nouns. Put them on cards. Have the students create their own "chunks" or phrases pairing nouns and verbs

(adapted from Walailak University, Thailand)

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