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IJIEMR Transactions, online available on 17th March 2021. Link <a href="https://ijiemr.org/downloads/Volume-10/ISSUE-3">https://ijiemr.org/downloads/Volume-10/ISSUE-3</a>

DOI: 10.48047/IJIEMR/V10/I03/65

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Volume 10, Issue 03, Pages: 339-343.

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# ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF SOME METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH AT EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

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**Abstract:** This article deals with deep understanding of advantages and disadvantages of some methods of teaching English at educational institutions.

**Keywords**: teaching, learning, traditional, progressive, advantages, disadvantages, direct teaching, cooperative learning, brainstorming, lecture, lecture with discussion, multimedia (computer, Internet, CD, DVD, film) role playing, games

#### Introduction

The relationship between teaching and learning, what and how teachers teach and how and what learners learn. The two positions adopted by those who engage in it can be loosely described as "traditional" and "progressive."

Teaching and learning also advatage from well designed syllabuses and prescribed curriculum content. Furthermore, as what has to be learned can be set out in full, stage by stage, from the start of the educational process to its conclusion, it follows that what is taught can be regularly tested and that each stage of teaching and learning can best be seen as a preparation for the next. It also follows that, as individual learners learn at different speeds and are capable of reaching different levels of achievement, it seems sensible to arrange learners in groups of similar abilities, either at different schools or in graduated classes within schools.

The opposed concepts implicit in "traditional" and "progressive" attitudes to teaching and learning reflect approaches regarded by those holding one or other of them as self-evident: that it must be right to start from what needs to be taught or, conversely, that it must be right to start from the learner whose success in learning it is the purpose of teaching to ensure.

The need to develop systems which incorporate the best of traditional and progressive approaches to teaching and learning has long been evident. Fortunately,

what good schools and good teachers actually do has suggested ways forward. Increasingly, the approach adopted places the teacher in authority, as traditionally has been the position, but the absolute necessity of engaging learners in their own learning, as progressive educators have argued, is seen as equally important. Teaching, on this view, requires skillful questioning of pupils by the teacher, rather than undue reliance on direct instruction. The purpose of that questioning is to encourage the minds of the learners to understand, to arrange, and to act on the material with which they are required to engage. In this sense, learning is active; indeed it is interactive, with the teacher responsible for ensuring the direction that this learning takes but with the learner consistently being challenged to shape it to his or her needs. Education of this kind has increasingly become a feature of effective schools and school systems worldwide. In the process, the longstanding conflict between traditional progressive approaches to teaching and with time-consuming learning, the controversies to which this gives rise, has a real prospect of being resolved.

An efficient working level of teaching is ensured by systematic and careful planning. The foreign language teacher plans all the kinds of work he is to do: he plans the essential course, the optional course and the extracurricular work.

The first step in planning is to determine where each of his classes is in respect to



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achievements. It is easy for the teacher to start planning when he receives beginners.

Instructional methods and teaching methods mean the same thing. Teaching strategies, for all practical purposes, means the same thing. Regardless of what we call such processes, they are primarily descriptions of the learning objective-oriented activities and flow of information between teachers and students. Although some may argue otherwise, to split hairs over whether such methods are meaningfully different adds nothing to the process of learning to be a teacher.

Direct and indirect instruction are two main categories that many educators find useful for classifying teaching methods, but it is, as you will see, a bit more complicated than placing all instruction into two categories. Any instructional method a teacher uses has advantages, disadvantages, and requires some preliminary preparation. Often times, a particular teaching method will naturally flow into another, all within the same lesson, and excellent teachers have developed the skills to make the process seamless to the students. Which instructional method is "right" for a particular lesson depends on many things, and among them are the age and developmental level of the students, what the students already know, and what they need to know to succeed with the lesson, the subject-matter content, the objective of the lesson, the available people, time, space and material resources, and the physical setting. Another, more difficult problem is to select an instructional method that best fits one's particular teaching style and the lesson-situation. There is no one "right" method for teaching a particular lesson, but there are some criteria that pertain to each that can help a teacher make the best decision possible. Instructional methods and teaching methods mean the same thing. Teaching strategies, for all practical purposes, means the same thing. Regardless of what we call such processes, they are primarily descriptions of the learning objective-oriented activities and flow of information between teachers and students. Although some may argue otherwise, to split hairs over whether such methods are meaningfully different adds nothing to the process of learning to be a teacher.

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#### 1. Direct Teaching

#### Advantages

- 1) Very specific learning a goal to be achieved
- 2) Students are told reasons why content is significant helps to clarify lesson objective
- 3) Relatively easy to measure student gains
- 4) It is a widely accepted instructional method
- 5) Good for teaching specific facts and basic skills

#### Disadvantages

- 1) Can stifle teacher creativity
- 2) Requires well-organized content preparation and good oral communication skills
- 3) Steps must be followed in prescribed order



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- 4) May not be effective for higher-order thinking skills, depending on the knowledge base and skill of the teacher
- 5) Preparation
- 6) Content must be organized in advance
- 7) Teacher should have information about student prerequisites for the lesson

### 2. Cooperative Learning

#### Advantages

- 1) Helps foster mutual responsibility
- 2) Supported by research as an effective technique
- 3) Students learn to be patient, less critical and more compassionate

#### Disadvantages

- 1) Some students don't work well in this way
- 2) Learners find it hard to share answers
- 3) Aggressive students try to take over
- 4) Bright students tend to act better
- 5) Preparation
- 6) Decide what skills or knowledge are to be learned
- 7) Requires some time to prepare students to learn how to work in groups

#### 3. Brainstorming

#### Advantages

- 1) Listening exercise that allows creative thinking for new ideas
- 2) Encourages full participation because all ideas are equally recorded
- 3) Draws on group's knowledge and experience
- 4) Spirit of cooperation is created
- 5) One idea can spark off other ideas

## **Disadvantages**

- 1) Can be unfocused
- 2) Needs to be limited to 5 7 minutes

- 3) Students may have difficulty getting away from known reality
- 4) If not managed well, criticism and negative evaluation may occur
- 5) Value to students depends in part on their maturity
- 6) Preparation
- 7) Teacher selects issue
- 8) Teacher must be ready to intervene when the process is hopelessly bogged down

#### 4. Lecture

#### Advantages

- 1) Factual material is presented in a direct, logical manner
- 2) May provide experiences that inspire useful for large groups
- 3) Most efficient way to convey teacher spoken information

#### Disadvantages

- 1) Proficient oral skill is necessary
- 2) Audience is often passive
- 3) Learning is difficult to determine as the lecture progresses
- 4) Communication is one-way
- 5) Not appropriate for children below grade 4
- 6) Preparation
- 7) There should be a clear introduction and summary
- 8) Effectiveness is related to time and scope of content
- 9) Is always audience specific; often includes examples, anecdotes

#### 5. Lecture with Discussion

#### Advantages

- 1) Involves students, at least after the lecture
- 2) Students can question, clarify and challenge



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3) Lecture can be interspersed with discussion or breaks as the content and time permit

### **Disadvantages**

- 1) Time constraints may affect discussion opportunities
- 2) Effectiveness is connected to appropriate questions and discussion; often requires teacher to "shift gears" quickly
- 3) Preparation
- 4) Teacher should be prepared to allow questions during lecture, as appropriate
- 5) Teacher should also anticipate difficult questions and prepare appropriate responses in advance

# 6. Multimedia (computer, Internet, CD, DVD, film)

## **Advantages**

- 1) Entertaining way of introducing content and raising issues
- 2) Internet content easily updated
- 3) Usually keeps group's attention
- 4) Cost effective way to obtain and disseminate content
- 5) May provide opportunities for independent student investigation in a wide range of topics

### Disadvantages

- 1) Can raise too many issues to have a focused discussion
- 2) Distractions happen all too easily
- 3) Students working independently can easily lose focus of lesson topic
- 4) Most effective when followed by discussion
- 5) Discussion may not have full participation
- 6) Preparation
- 7) Teacher must formulate rules and communicate them to students
- 8) Need to obtain and set up equipment
- 9) Computing skills required for some applications

10) Most effective when teacher prepares for discussion after the presentation or activity

### 7. Role Playing

### **Advantages**

- 1) Introduces problem situation dramatically
- 2) Provides opportunity for students to assume roles of others and thus appreciate another point of view
- 3) Allows for exploration of solutions
- 4) Provides opportunity to practice skills

#### Disadvantages

- 1) Some students may be too self-conscious
- 2) Not appropriate for large groups
- 3) Can be time consuming to set up and execute
- 4) Preparation
- 5) Teacher has to define problem situation and roles clearly
- 6) Teacher must give very clear instructions
- 7) Teacher must have back up activities in case of problems

#### 8. Games

#### Advantages

- 1) Students are usually interested in and challenged by games
- 2) Can provide opportunities for team member building skills
- 3) Feedback is usually easy to provide and is quick
- 4) When used in direct relationship to a lesson objective, can provide a stimulating experience for all

#### **Disadvantages**

- 1) Can create in-group/out-group feelings
- 2) Can demotivate those who are not competitive by nature
- 3) Can create feelings of inadequacy in those not as skilled or forceful



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- 4) Can discourage creativity if the format is very rigid and the focus is strongly on winning
- 5) Preparation
- 6) Choose relevant games at an appropriate level that can be reasonably expected to achieve the learning objectives
- 7) Introduce the game and make the objectives clear
- 8) Give clear and thorough directions
- 9) Create a friendly versus cut-throat mentality; do not put down losers or allow others to do so
- 10) Do not take sides or show partiality
- 11) Keep a handle on thing

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