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**TEFL:** *A 2nd Semester Course Outline*

**1/ The Teaching/Learning Process**

**2/ Teaching Approaches and Methodologies**

**3/ Approach, Method and Technique**

**4/ Learning Styles and Strategies**

**--------------------------------------------------**

(Revision of the end of the 1ST Semester)

***Activity (Home Assignment):***

In an academic essay, elucidate how a systematic understanding and analysis to language can lead to a better language teaching performance.

**The Teaching/Learning Process/Variables**

“Language teachers need not be master linguists but they cannot hope to teach a part (the particular language) of the reality without knowing how that part fits into the whole (language in general)” D. Brown, 1994

***Introduction:***

Because of the complexity of language, specialists have invented a framework. For linguists, the fundamental emphasis is language itself to know the conceptual aspects of a given language: language as human-specific; language as a means of expression; language as a social phenomenon; and language as a means of instruction as well.

Thus, as linguists or teachers, or even as learners, we have to be enough aware of what is the nature of language in general, and more precisely, the one I am concerned with? What it entails? How it works? How it functions? How it is used?

As it is commonly agreed that language sometimes is used for describing; advising; inviting; requesting; commenting; ordering; criticizing; maybe even for blaming or insulting...all these are linguistically known as *language functions*.

So, as a teacher, for instance, if I think of the way to teach my mother tongue (1st language), is it like to teach a second or foreign language? Obviously, NO! Hence, starting to be aware of the social psychological; academic and socio-professional functions and purposes of language, let us progressively find out the importance of teaching/learning a foreign language and thus, what it involves cognitively and pedagogically.

***Language: A Means of Instruction***

Language is the central core of all life activities, which among them *teaching* and *learning*. Such a task requires, of course, mental activities and individual skills. That’s why, psycholinguistically speaking, language is also conceived as a “thought process”, i.e., it reflects our ideas, way of thinking and reflection.

Therefore, either as a language teacher or learner, the top priority is to know and experience language as a *communicative instrument*. For instance, even for an autodidact (teaching himself), he is, in fact, fully engaged in a communication process through a self-talk (self-questioning/self-answering, then maybe checking and confirming).

It is commonly agreed among language researchers and educationalists that the intricacy of the teaching/learning process requires continuously a deeper examination of the different factors. These factors are believed to help the teacher to know the confines of the class. The teacher must take into account the variables shaping such an operation.

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**The “What” Question:**

One should consider, first of all, the idea that reveals and explains the nature of the teaching/learning process. This might be undertaken through a series of questions and inquiries which may better highlight the idea of what it entails.

The first fundamental question that may be raised, at this level, might be related to the *“what”* questions. For instance, *what* does it mean to teach? *What* does it mean to learn? *What* is a learner? *What* is a teacher? *What* to teach? *What* to learn? *What* is language? *What* language teaching involves? and so on...

As language teachers or learners, questioning himself “what is language?” one should be enough aware of the two facets (oral & written), and also the two broad levels (formal & informal); in addition, to being aware of language as a system of sub-systems (See lecture 3) to know how to use and work on the different aspects in/outside class. More interestingly, would be to know that language in this context serves better as a *means of instruction*; and therefore, tries to make it as simple as possible to be grasped and understood.

For example, in terms of phonology, dealing with pupils at middle school, it would be quite important to let them be aware of the sound variation that may occur in English with some consonants or vowels, or even suffixes...

In terms of morphology, perhaps, it would be wiser to start with the idea of prefixes and suffixes to form words, and synonyms and antonyms, such as to start at first with something like /happy Vs unhappy/, then later /happy Vs sad/.

In terms of *Semantics*, generally we use words to express particular meanings (signified & signifier) such as: flower; table; apple...

Therefore, we teach and learn by continuously finding solutions to our learners’ or classmates’ difficulties and problems.

So, still within the idea of the “what” questions, if I believe that teaching/learning is undergone through a communicative process, I am, in a way or in another, quite obliged to know what “communication” is, and what it involves in such a context; like to be aware of the parameters shaping such a performance (addresser; addressee, channel; code; topic; message...)

Furthermore, as language teachers or even learners, one has to ask himself is first language acquisition or second, or foreign language learning the same thing? What is the difference between first language, second language, and a foreign language? at all levels of analysis (See lecture 3).

**The “Who” Question:** from where also derives a number of sub-questions, such as *who* is the teacher who is going to teach? i.e., (professional background); w*ho* are the learner I am concerned with? i.e., (educational level); from where do they come? What is their native language? What are their socio-cultural traditions?

In this sense, the teacher is strongly requested to use an adequate language for each level of education he is supposed to deal with. Also not all learners have the same personality and the same attitude and the same aptitude. Generally, we have to deal with *heterogeneous* classes rather than *homogeneous* ones.

**The “Why” Question:**

Like to consider questions such as “Why teaching/learning a foriegn language?” or Why that course or item? Or Why using that approch and method? Or considering the different objectives as well, And the other related quations to various purposes, and the like ...

**The “Where & When” Question:**

This is mainly related to questions concerned with space and time like asking oneself where to teach/learn a foreign language and when would it be much more appropriate to deal with a particular course or aspect?

Try also to find other related questions to such an issue at this level of analysis (check Brown, 1994)

**Teaching Approaches and Methodologies**

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***Approach, Method and Technique***

It is preferable at this level to consider first what is the defference between concepts such as: Theory, Approach and Method. What each one may imply as a disctictive term.

It should be understood that the word theory implies an ***idea*** or an ***assumption***; however, the word approach refers rather to an ***overall plan***, while the word method refers to a ***procedure*** to undertake. Thus, in the following suctions we will try shed light on some of there specificities.

NB*: for further information check below the two attatched videos (Summary of ELT Methods & Theories- methods and techniques of Teaching English)*

Besides, teaching methods, among which fall the teaching methods of specific instructional areas broutgh lot of attention that has been paid lately to didactics of e-educationwhich relies on [application possibilities of internet technologies](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/discipline/sociol-anthrop/staff/kibbymarj/online/matrix.html) and suitable [models of instructional design](http://www.elearnspace.org/Articles/InstructionalDesign.htm). Earlier roots of e-education didactics have been [programmed learning](http://www.csd.uwa.edu.au/altmodes/of_delivery/programmed_learning.html) and [computer based instruction](http://www.ceap.wcu.edu/Houghton/Learner/Look/CAI.html).

In addition to this,tips & tricks for effective design of online education you should study different didactical concepts and choose the instructional design approach which is synchronized with:

**a/** educational organization goals, as well as the goals of instructor/teacher;

**b/** needs and characteristics of students;

**c/** available resources;

**d/** social environment and customs;

**e/** contemporary technological trends in distance education

**Learning Styles and Strategies**

This lecture has of purpose the following objectives:

* First of all, to help learners get familiar with the new educational terms.
* Defining the concepts and trying to understand the relationship existing between them.
* Listing the main characteristics as two distinctive areas of learning practices.
* Setting the relationship as two complementary aspects.

***Learning Styles***

The term *learning style* refers to the general approach preferred by the student when Learning style is an overall pattern that provides broad direction to learning and makes the same instructional method beloved by some students and hated by others.

Moreover, learning style is concieved as an overall pattern which may provide more or less a broad direction to learning and makes the same instructional method beloved by some students and hated by others.

Within the area of learning styles, each individual reflects sensory style dimensions (visual/auditory/hands-on) and social style dimensions (extroverted/ introverted). Every person also has preferences along cognitive style dimensions, among which are concrete-sequential/abstract-intuitive, closure-oriented/ open, detail-focused/holistic (sometimes called particular/global), and analyzing/synthesizing.

***Learning Strategies***

In broad modern usage, the term *strategy* is a plan that is consciously aiming at meeting a specific goal, i.e., goal-directedness remain essential criteria for a strategy.

In foreign language teaching/learning strategies are defined as any strategies related to this context or to L2 context, including strategies for learning or using a foreign or second language (Cohen 1998). Learning strategies are “specific actions, behaviors, steps, techniques [or thoughts] – such as seeking out conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task – used by students to enhance their own learning” (Scarcella and Oxford 1992: 63).

Learning strategies in FL or SL contexts may assist students to improve their own perception, reception, storage, retention, and retrieval of language information. For instance, in an FL or SL context learning strategies are planning for a language task, evaluating one’s own learning, employing analysis to find the meaning of a word or expression, and asking questions (Cohen 1998; O’Malley and Chamot 1990; Oxford 1990). Literally hundreds of L2 learning strategies exist.

NB: *For further information and ideas see the enclosed video bellow.*