

Employing alternative constructive methods of teaching English

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This paper zeros in on the use of effective teaching and learning strategies. Traditional forms of teaching are changing rapidly with the advancement of technology. Technological innovations have begun to play a more important role in language teaching and learning, changing the presentation and perception of educational material. Thanks to these trends, the teaching process is becoming more focused on the real needs of students. There are many qualitative methods of English language teaching, but it is important to use the ones that will act as a stimulus to students' lateral thinking development, encourage their creativity and improve their learning ability. The utilization of constructive methods of knowledge acquirement and sharing encourages students to collaborate, i.e., they study English with pleasure and maximum comfort, and make good progress. The article also mentions the role of the teacher in the educational process, which can be successful only if she/he appropriately understands the students' learning capacity and interests and utilizes a multimedia approach to teaching.

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1. Introduction

In modern society, foreign language proficiency is a necessity. The most important reasons why a person in the modern world should learn a foreign language are as follows:

- The process of learning a new language helps improve brain function and memory and develops problem-solving skills.
- A new language opens up the possibility of meeting new people in different cultures, thereby expanding a person's worldview, which is the path to interesting new prospects for personal development.
- Proficiency in a second language is an advantage in employment and increases the chances of career growth.

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Crystal (2004, viii) holds the opinion that:

[...] as the Internet comes increasingly to be viewed from a social perspective, so the role of language becomes central. Indeed, notwithstanding the remarkable technological achievements and the visual panache of screen presentation, what is immediately obvious when engaging in any of the Internet's functions is its linguistic character. If the Internet is a revolution, therefore, it is likely to be a linguistic revolution.

Over the last decades, learning has progressively been moving from a teacher-centred top-down approach to a student-centred, bottom-up approach. The tendency has increased rapidly in recent years with the increased quantity and improved quality of information on the Internet. In many respects, this phenomenon has had a great impact on the pedagogue's role in the educational process. Now a teacher is more a guide and/or facilitator than a transmitter of knowledge. Changing ideas about education and pedagogy have added new learning objectives. In contrast with the past, teachers now rejoice boundless opportunities and teach a language to all children, despite their culture, socio-economic status or ability. The curriculum has also been expanded to meet all learners' needs. On the other hand, Richards (2001, 28) avers, "Learners' roles in an instructional system are closely linked to the teacher's status and function." Professors Breen and Candlin (1980, 110) describe the learner's role as follows, "The role of learner as negotiator interacts with the role of joint negotiator within the group and within the classroom procedures and activities, which the group undertakes. The implication for the learner is that he should contribute as much as he gains, and thereby learn in an interdependent way." The academic researcher Beldarrain (2006, 140) concludes, "As new technologies emerge, instructional designers and educators have unique opportunities to foster interaction and collaboration among learners, thus creating a true learning community. "Events taking place in the world also affect the form of education. Online lectures, webinars, and even one-to-one Zoom sessions are becoming more and more used forms of learning, especially since most of the traditional methods used in the classroom can be applied equally effectively online. Using video conferencing tools, the educator can connect with students around the world to conduct lessons, communicate and give them advice. In order to keep students engaged throughout the online class, the pedagogue has to set clear guidelines for online class etiquette for students to maintain.

Since the goal of any teaching approach is to teach students to speak a foreign language with confidence, teachers should use a variety of teaching methods, while not forgetting the effective methods that are already being used. A good teacher knows which teaching strategies are successful and which areas of facilitation need

further development. He/she also has a constant desire to innovate and experiment to bring the course materials to life by adding pertinent contexts. Teachers must also permanently update the teaching aids and discover activities which are designed to be more entertaining and educational, i.e., which prevent boredom, engage the entire class, and encourage students to be more active in language learning. A second language is best acquired when the focus of instruction is on the meaning rather than on the form, and when there is sufficient opportunity to engage the learner in a meaningful use of the studied language in a relatively anxiety-free environment. Ideally, the curriculum, textbook, or teaching methods should be selected individually for each student. Of course, a lot depends not only on the teacher's level of proficiency, but also on the student's motivation and diligence. Motivation and self-confidence are personality traits, which help students in acquiring a language productively. Thus, educators should motivate students and provide the development of their self-confidence using different engaging activities, which would develop a positive attitude toward learning. When a pedagogue tries new teaching methods and adapts flexible and fresh approaches to teaching a language, every student benefits. In this case, students have the opportunity to appreciate different learning strategies and choose the ones, which are more suitable for them. Choosing the right methodology under present-day conditions may seem difficult, and in this case, the teacher should rely primarily on the following criteria: the purpose of the class, the students' level of training, motivation and psychological comfort. Ultimately, an expert in the field of foreign language methodology, psychology and pedagogy can easily identify the features of the students' perception and thinking, select necessary teaching methods and forms of work, thus keeping students highly motivated.

2. Teaching English effectively

2.1. Educating different age groups

Due to the fact that English has quickly gained the status of a world language, both teachers and students are aware of its importance on a global level. Nowadays, English is of a considerable degree of importance to a person, directly or indirectly, and the acquisition of English language speaking skills has become momentous. The modern method of teaching/learning English is based on classical methods, which, however, are constantly being modified and improved under the influence of information technology and the Internet. The ELT strategies used a couple of decades ago were mostly based on repetition of what was read or heard. The tasks and homework involved reading texts, learning words by heart, listening to audio

recording and writing essays. The modern approach to English teaching engages interactive strategies. Classic homework now includes watching movies or interactive videos, texting or talking with a native speaker etc., which not only help improve pronunciation, spelling and grammar, but also entertain, which, in turn, is of no small importance for the development of language skills. Such forms of organizing classes as round-table discussion, concerts and different kinds of contests are also very popular with students.

The curriculum has, first of all, an age-related structure, since when teaching different age groups of students, it is necessary to use different learning strategies.

Preschoolers. Many parents want their children to learn a foreign language from a very young age. However, a child under the age of five learns words automatically and does not understand the rules yet. The language teaching methodology for preschool children should be based on the principle 'it is more effective to interest than to teach'. Classes that involve learning of words (the alphabet, colors, names of toys, fruits, vegetables etc.) and short poems in a playful way are recommended for preschoolers. Teaching methodology for preschoolers should be based on games, cartoons, songs, dances, excursions, competitions and the like. A more thorough study is best left until school age. Play-based learning should be self-chosen and relatively unstructured to help build imagination and abstract thinking skills. Quite often, a teacher with a higher education does not know how to deal with a small child, and a person who has just graduated from a language school copes with this task perfectly. Therefore, when it comes to young children, it is not so much education that is important, but the flexible skills of the teacher. In other words, the educator for preschoolers should be chosen according to the personal qualities of the educator. The educator must first identify the child's personality traits and then gradually develop each of his/her important language skills.

Schoolchildren. An elementary school child differs little from a preschooler. Many techniques can be used to help children of this age to take pleasure in learning the language. Nevertheless, it is recommended to employ personalized learning as an educational approach for this age group, because it tailors learning around individual pupil's needs, interests and abilities. It helps the teacher differentiate instruction for each student and helps him or her achieve mastery. One of the methods which are actively used to work with primary school pupils is teaching through games. The teacher's role is to move pupils beyond mere curiosity and into critical thinking and understanding, encouraging them to ask questions and supporting them as they investigate. In the process of learning English in a playful way, puppet-shows, drawing, doll playing, plasticine molding and active outdoor games can also be used. However, it is worth paying attention

to how the above-mentioned activities are perceived by children. If the level of self-discipline allows not only to play, but also to learn a topic, then these techniques should be widely adopted and extensively used. As practice shows, traditional teaching methods are more suitable for high school students, that is, the study of lexical and grammatical material with the subsequent completion of tasks. An important factor in teaching junior and senior pupils is the development of not only language skills, but also the ability to communicate with peers, their own value system, and strict adherence to their chosen goals. Thus, the teacher must bring up an educated, honest and happy person at the same time.

Adults prefer the classic lesson. Traditional tasks are suitable for this age: doing exercises, reading texts, listening to recordings, watching videos and writing essays. With the help of all these techniques, students learn spelling and grammar, build and expand their active and passive vocabulary, thereby improving the speaking skills and developing the understanding of spoken language.

Some adults try to learn languages on their own without the help of a tutor. This method has been used for a long time, namely since self-instruction textbooks and phrasebooks appeared. Unfortunately, independent work is not just reading a textbook or listening to a sound record. Those who try to learn a language on their own often fail, because the computer program can only correct mistakes and develop skills, but is not able to direct the student on the right path, select tasks, or provide emotional and moral support. In addition, the student cannot be sure that she/he has understood the material correctly. This method is best used only as an additional language study under the guidance of a tutor.

1.2. Teaching strategies

Choosing the right ELT strategy can seem difficult. However, there are some general recommendations that will help educators make learning as effective as possible. Thus, a teacher should:

- focus on ensuring effective curriculum development using a scenario focused on learning rather than examining;
- conduct a needs analysis before tailoring a course and involve students in decisions about what to do during a class;
- employ both traditional and non-traditional teaching/learning strategies to empower students to face many real challenges and make them think and react proactively, innovatively and confidently. In this case, students get acquainted with all possible options and have the opportunity to choose a few that they especially like.

- deviate from the classical canons if he/she is sure that this will be beneficial. Even if a newly developed technique is against the methodology, it can be useful for students. During the teaching practice, a pedagogue should work out or try new teaching methods and find out what works best for his/her students in order to help them reach their full potential and build joyful, effective classrooms.
- not be limited to only one method during the class. A teacher should apply multiple methods of instruction, including media, role-playing situations, hands-on demonstrations etc.
- maintain a constant dialogue with the students, i.e., to encourage and welcome ideas from the students without any prejudice, thus giving them enough private space to think critically and develop their lateral thinking. At the beginning of a year or unit, it is helpful to ask students questions about their learning styles or what they would be interested in working on. It is also good to discuss the lesson plans with them during the school year and make changes according to their wishes. Parent-teacher conferences are also a great time to discuss specific learning needs and what is or is not working. When an educator believes that all his students are capable of great things, they will believe it too.
- get additional education. Life develops and changes, and so does the language teaching/learning methodology. A teacher can improve his/her pedagogical level by taking special courses. Thus, he/she gets acquainted with the latest trends in education and improves her/his teaching skills.

To make learning interesting and effective a teacher should:

- provide a congenial atmosphere for learning. The learning environment plays a primary role in the perception of educational material. A cheerful and cozy atmosphere in the classroom positively affects the mind of students and encourages them to study better.
- use various appropriate teaching aids;
- alternate independent and collaborative work;
- not ignore or make a big deal of incorrect answers, but address them and work together with the students to find the right solution;
- form school ESL clubs or groups. An educator may not get enough time to work on interesting topics that he/she is passionate about. In this case, she/he can share her/his views and learn more from others when running a club or a group.
- use diverse ways of checking and monitoring student progress. For example, short, regular formative assessments give students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and help the educator identify learning needs early. If a new unit is started, it is good to pre-teach foundational concepts, use a quick journal entry to gauge understanding, and then assess students throughout the unit with quick quizzes, presentations and assignments before a final test to

ensure every student achieves mastery. This way, the pedagogue will be able to see the students' progress, and the students will feel a sense of accomplishment as they grow their writing and comprehension skills.

3. Employing innovative techniques of ELT

3.1. Teaching methods

The spread of English as the language of international communication and the rapid development of digital technologies have led to the emergence of a number of innovative methods for effective language teaching in the classroom. The following ESL teaching techniques, which can be used to make classes more interesting and entertaining, therefore effectual, have had the biggest impact on the modern teaching and learning process.

1. **Direct instruction**, which has been the foundation of the traditional classroom instruction for many years, is the explicit convey of concepts and skills rather than letting the students learn on their own. Most modern classrooms prioritize collaboration, group work and student exploration. Independent learning can reach different learning styles and give students a sense of personal accomplishment and accountability. However, teacher-centered learning provides a foundation for the further development of language skills, and should be mandatory. This approach moves the focus off memorization and onto deep understanding. It goes hand in hand with personalized learning to promote fairness and equity in the classroom and help students learn better throughout their lives. This is why direct teaching, whether combined with modern learning strategies or not, greatly contributes to the development of students' knowledge level. All other methods only improve the already acquired skills, because whatever the student does – writes an essay, gives a talk, writes a letter to a pen friend, or chats on a forum –she/he must know how to pronounce words correctly, how to form a sentence correctly, and what words to use to convey a certain idea. Today, this technique can include anything from lectures and educational videos to tutorials and workshops. This method is good for all ages.
2. **Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)** is based on teaching school subjects in English. In this case, the language is not a goal, but an information acquisition tool. It is aimed at an all-round development of a student. The success of CLIL courses is achieved only when both the subject and the language are learnt. This method plays an increasingly significant role in language education. As students develop their language competencies, they learn more and more complex topics. If the course content and language aims are designed

taking into consideration the students' needs, there is no limit as to who can benefit from this teaching approach. As such, CLIL can work for students of all ages, from entry level to university and beyond. It is actively used in private English schools, colleges and kindergartens, where all subjects are taught in foreign languages. This approach is especially effective if the child is introduced to it from a very young age.

3. **Flipped classroom.** A flipped classroom has become one of the most popular teaching techniques in education during the last few years. It is a strategy opposite to the traditional class format. In flipped classrooms, students absorb information on their own time, and use in-class time for hands-on learning and problem solving. For example, students are asked to read an article or prepare a report at home. During the lesson, they make a presentation and then discuss it with the whole class. Alternatively, each student can prepare a separate topic and, after the presentation, answer the questions of the classmates. The educator observes them to spot learning gaps he/she can address in future lessons. Also known as blended learning, flipped classrooms comprise new edtech innovations and prioritize face-to-face learning activities in order to encourage the students' engagement. It helps students move at their own pace and gives the teacher more time to provide individual support where needed. When combined with other techniques, flipped classrooms can give students valuable hands-on experience. The flipped classroom style is suitable for highly motivated students whose language proficiency is above average, or for any student who can work independently.
4. **Doing translations** is a method, which is based on the translation of texts, during which a person builds and enlarges his/her vocabulary and learns grammatical rules. This method involves active reading both aloud and silently, working a lot with dictionaries. It is necessary that students keep a personal dictionary with its constant replenishment with new words on the topics studied. A teacher should supervise this type of training, because there is a risk of learning the wrong pronunciation of words and not understanding grammar rules.
5. **Direct conversational method.** When teaching, real-life situations (e.g. placing an order at a restaurant or having a job interview) are used that are performed by students. The teacher first presents information related to a specific situation to make it easier for students to understand the task and remember some words, grammatical structures and rules. Then, the students are asked to complete practical tasks, such as a role-playing game, to reinforce the material. The method also entails story telling. Students create stories with themselves as the main characters; for example, they may refer to themselves as residents of the UK. Using a variety of life situations, the students are taught to

communicate in clear and concise English, using basic vocabulary. The lesson is based only on live communication using important conversational topics that encourage students to use certain vocabulary and grammar rules. The lesson can be unpredictable, and learning topics usually come up during the course of the class. Grammar is taught, but not enough, which means that students do not use textbooks and notebooks much. The purpose of this method is to master colloquial speech and to actively use the language in everyday life. The direct conversational method, which is popular with both children and adults, deserves special attention, because it can provide fast results. The features of speech, pronunciation and vocabulary are acquired quickly, but there may be gaps in grammar. Such a study technique is often used by language schools and by those who want to grasp the rudiments of the English language because they are straitened for time.

6. **Task-based learning** is a relatively new method. It involves learning based on requests, namely the needs of students. This means that if it is important for students to learn business English, the teacher should focus on vocabulary relevant to this topic and simulate real life situations that are most common in the business community. The students learn colloquial clichés, basic sentence patterns and standard vocabulary, and are able to communicate with native speakers on elementary topics. During the learning process, a lot of time should be devoted to practical work in order to help students better remember the material being taught. Today, many language schools use this particular technique.
7. **Collaborative learning.** In collaborative learning, students work together on a common task. It is a coordinated effort to research or create a final product to which every group member contributes to the same degree. The teacher should present the project before the lesson and invite the students to review it. Then, they should submit their ideas anonymously or in-person. Everyone gets to know each other's ideas before class and use them as a starting point to carry out the project. Even the most timid student may feel empowered to express her/his opinions frankly. This method involves watching English movies, reading literature in the original, collecting information necessary for the project. This approach develops, inter alia, team-building and self-education skills, that will help them in the future. This is an interesting and promising option because it helps students to not only learn the language, but also develop feelings of friendship and comradely mutual assistance.
8. **Discussion-based learning** involves topic discussions in small groups. The teacher discusses a current piece of news, event or other lesson-related topic. He/she then guides the students if they cannot find an answer or give their opinion, but should not dominate the conversation. The teacher should model respectful discussion

skills and let students work through new ideas on their own. The first time it can be difficult to involve every student, but if the teacher is persistent, he will definitely succeed. It is a great way for the teacher to model open-minded and respectful listening, and to promote engagement without relying on classroom technology. This strategy helps develop critical thinking and independent learning, two basic skills vital to life in today's world.

9. **Game-based teaching/learning** is a fun way to learn and practice English. It is a contemporary strategy, which uses the excitement of games to define and support learning outcomes. Educational games promote engagement, provide immediate rewards and feedback, and employ the power of healthy competition to keep the students excited to learn, thus avoiding boredom and routine. By playing games, students get positive emotions that contribute to better memorization, especially when teaching complex concepts. It also prepares the ground for weaker students to improve their competences by interacting actively with their classmates. With the development of computer technologies, this technique has become more popular; now students can master spelling, grammar etc. by playing games on the computer or mobile devices. A teacher can use not only educational games, but also stories, amusement arcades, simulation video games, role-playing and other kinds of games, which facilitate the development and improvement of English literacy skills. Many of these games can be put up on interactive white boards to get full class participation. There are also many game-based learning platforms designed to help students love practicing English. Free teacher tools allow teachers to align them to whatever they are teaching in the classroom in just a few easy steps. In online teaching, it is important to induce students to discuss the games and their results using chat platforms such as WhatsApp, Skype, Slack, Facebook, Zoom breakout rooms etc. Game-based strategy is used to teach not only children, but also adults.
10. **Class blogs and forums** can be the right place for students to share what they have learned. The main difference between a blog and a forum is that a blog is a frequently updated web page or website the content of which is displayed in the reverse chronological order, while a forum is an online discussion site where users share ideas, thoughts, or help each other via messages. Blogs and forums are two online platforms that help students to access various types of information. Students can work on blog posts individually or in groups. The teacher can use these tools as a platform to share learning material for classes and get students to write about topics they study. Modern blogging platforms are engaging, interactive and adjustable. The reasons blogging and forums are beneficial to students are as follows:

- Students can continue an in-class discussion outside normal timetabled classes.
- Students who are not confident enough to speak face-to-face in class can do so in blogs and forums.
- Students have plenty of time to reflect on their thoughts, check grammar and spelling, and practice writing before posting a message.

In order to use discussion boards effectively a teacher should:

- put the first post up to encourage students to contribute. To model the language, style etc. that he/she would like the student to adopt;
- make expected results clear, i.e. let the students know how often they have to contribute;
- make it clear when the messages will be checked and answered;
- access the discussion forums every day in order to conduct the conversation;
- post frequently to suggest postings are being read, but avoid being sharp or highly critical;
- summarize, at regular intervals, what has to be done;
- not respond too quickly to a posting in order to provide the opportunity for students to respond first;
- ask thought-provoking questions that stimulate in-depth reflective discussions and hold students responsible for their thinking instead of mostly making statements or directly answering questions which can quickly end a productive dialogue;
- deal tactfully with the students who dominate discussions or who remain silent by phone conversation or e-mail in order to create a friendly and relaxed communication atmosphere;
- create diverse learning activities that would allow manifold opportunities for demonstrating knowledge and skill proficiencies designed to address the diverse range of learning preferences and communication patterns that students bring to the forum/blog;
- encourage and reward collective planning and discussion, group activities and collaborative efforts in order to equalize the students' status; discourage competition and comparisons because they can hurt feelings or alienate and silence sensitive students.
- commend the work students have done successfully paying special attention to low status learners by praising them, citing their contributions and assigning them significant roles in group projects.
- Since a wider audience has access to read published entries, students tend to put more effort into their blogs. Therefore, blogs and class forums are an excellent alternative strategy for improving students' intellectual abilities

and encouraging them to learn on their own. The more they practice their writing skills, the more proficient they become. Regular weekly or daily blogging is recommended.

11. **Spaced learning** is a technique that was developed by the neuroscientist R. Douglas Fields. The main topic is broken down into sub-parts, allowing the teacher to run the lecture intermittently, making it more effective in terms of keeping students focused and engaged. This strategy is a mixture of short grammar teaching and relaxation periods when students watch videos or play games not related to the taught topic. By using the right formula, a teacher can teach a student new words or grammar rules in an hour-long lesson and know that it will all be encoded in the student's long-term memory. Spaced learning can help teach material much more efficiently.
12. **Classes outside the classroom** are an integral part of learning and personal development, regardless of the student's age, abilities or circumstances. What we see, hear, taste, touch, smell and do gives us six main opportunities to learn. The potential for learning is maximised if the pedagogue uses the powerful combination of physical, visual and naturalistic ways of learning. There are many benefits of teaching a classroom in the open air. However, they can be narrowed down to a few key benefits. Many topics are best learnt, when they are introduced or discussed outside the classroom. Spending time outdoors has a positive effect on children's physical and mental health. Learners also have the opportunity to learn more about the world around them. They can observe natural phenomena and notice patterns and regularities that are usually overlooked during the game. Nature is beautiful and the educator should draw the attention of children to this so that students appreciate and take care of it. An outdoor lesson can happen at any time – in the normal school day, before and after school, during weekends and holidays. A wide range of locations such as a playground, park, riverbank or zoo can be used to teach an outside classroom. This technique makes learning more engaging and relevant. Learning outside the classroom builds bridges between theory and reality, schools and communities, children and their future.
13. **Pen friends.** It is useless to learn English for years and rarely speak it. Spoken English is not the same as written English. That is why, it is important to talk to native speakers, even if it is only for a short time. This can be done through the help of penpalling. It is an age-old practice that still has a place. Having a pen pal in the conventional sense may seem like an old-fashioned method of communication, but many people have used this strategy with great success as a way to learn a new language. The different ways in which it can benefit language learning and cultural understanding make it a very worthwhile practice. Penfriends can correct or explain errors in the letters, helping their

peer hone their understanding of the language and build vocabulary. Native speakers can develop the ability of their pen pals to explain things clearly, thereby strengthening the understanding of their own native language. Students cannot only get a good grasp of vocabulary and grammar, but also get a complete understanding of the culture of their pen friend's country. This method also improves the self-confidence of those students who are usually uncomfortable talking to someone face to face. Engaging in regular written exchanges over a long period can also have a positive impact on their cognitive and social skills. The way pen friends interact with each other has changed as technology has advanced. Standard pen friends typically communicate via letters through the mail, or e-mail. Receiving letters can be motivational and fun for children learning English. It may take longer to write and receive messages from one another, but this can help students become more patient.

In order for the ELL pen pal method to be successful, it is helpful to give students guidance on where to start. Otherwise, some pupils will simply not know what to write. For example, the framework for the first letter could be the student's pen-friend nickname, his/her favourite subject at school, and what he/she likes to do on the weekends. They also need to be taught that in order to maintain and cherish a friendship, they should:

- be a good listener; the more a person takes interest in other people, the more they will find him/her interesting;
- talk about what they love and be positive, because a strong feeling of interest and enjoyment about something and an eagerness to be involved in something is contagious;
- communicate on a regular basis, especially if the students want to practice and improve their English writing and reading comprehension skill.

A great book full of good advice about communication students can use is *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie. Apart from being a classic in the field of personal development, it is easy to read or listen to in English.

14. **Live chatting** is another great way to teach/learn English. The advent of the Internet and the growth of social media have certainly enabled teachers and ESL students all over the world to create online communities where members maintain close relationships with one another. One of the best parts of this method is that students can record all the events they take part in and then re-listen to the material to learn something specific and correct their mistakes. Members of these communities who generously share their time and ideas find that they get a lot in return. The ability to communicate online with people outside the classroom using platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Skype and similar tools motivates students to improve their English skills. Live

chatting is an excellent method, which gives students the opportunity to practice their speaking and listening skills.

3.2. Teaching aids

The effectiveness of teaching foreign languages largely depends on the provision of the educational process with high-quality teaching aids, since the use of a textbook alone cannot always provide complete information about the object being studied and reveal the entire content of the material being studied. Teaching aids are the means and equipment that teachers can use in the classroom, and which help them organize and conduct the educational process in accordance with the modern requirements of the individual, society and the state. Learning tools are an integral part of the learning process. The success in teaching a foreign language is also determined by the teacher's ability to correctly use them. The choice of the teaching aid depends on the teaching methodology. A well-chosen teaching aid helps not only the educator, but also the learner. Educational and methodological tools that help in the process of learning/teaching a foreign language in the classroom and at home can be divided into mandatory (basic) and auxiliary, focused on students and teachers, technical and non-technical. The basic learning tools today include a student book, audio cassettes for the student's book and a teacher's book. They can be supplemented by additional resources such as a workbook, a book for reading, a special set of cassettes only for the teacher, a book on cultural studies with audio cassettes, control and test tasks, a teacher's book on the use of video materials, vocabulary and grammar exercises and tasks (with and without keys), a manual for teaching writing. The auxiliary teaching aids can be both those that have been compiled by the relevant authorities, and those that have been drawn up by the teachers themselves. There are a lot of them: specially used methodological materials, books for reading, various video and audio materials, collections of language and speech games, computer programs, tables and diagrams, cards, pictures, music and songs, that is, everything that reasonably complements and compensates for the main educational materials.

Information technologies are actively used in the education system, developing the content of the concept of 'information teaching technologies'. Information technology tools determine the transition to a new qualitative level of development of educational processes. They have become an essential component of modern educational systems. New models of computer technology involve either additions to existing educational technologies, or the development of new educational technologies and their active introduction into the teaching process. Consequently, modern information technologies, complementing the structure of

educational technologies, open up new prospects for improving the quality of the learning process. Information technology enhances student motivation, allows the transition from passive to active learning, forms an information culture, especially in relation to the ability to use technology, ensures the quality of teaching, and provides students with flexible access to educational materials, both through sites (or telecommunications systems) and off sites. Advances in mobile technology, typified by Internet-enabled devices such as smartphones and tablets (the latest in a progression that includes two-way pagers, laptops, mobile phones, GPS navigation devices, and more), have enabled teachers and students to use a variety of teaching aids more effectively. All these devices have proved a great time-saving boon for English teaching/learning, offering interactive and impelling activities for students of all ages. They can be the best asset in the ESL classroom, offering endless resources for teaching grammar, vocabulary enrichment, and lesson planning, although the use of these devices requires a change in the approach to learning on the part of the students, as well as the revision and widening of syllabuses on the part of the teachers. Bax (2003, 27) states that "Computer Aided Language Learning (CALL) finally becomes invisible, serving the needs of learners and integrated into every teacher's everyday practice."

The utilization of different teaching tools could bring real benefits for both teachers and learners. Sometimes textbook content needs to be changed because it is not well suited to a particular group of students, because of their age, gender, or their religious, social, or cultural background. Teaching aids help to adapt the content of textbooks to the needs of specific students. Occasionally, it may be necessary to expand the course content, especially to provide additional grammar practice, vocabulary building, or to enable students to become more familiar with certain types of tests, such as multiple-choice questions. Teaching aids give the teacher the opportunity to reorganize the order in which the course is taught and arrange it in a more appropriate sequence to meet the specific needs of the students. They can also help modify some parts of the course content contained in traditional textbooks. A comprehensive and carefully thought-out use of a variety of teaching aids in English lessons helps to quickly and clearly explain new material, consolidate it and check the level of assimilation of the acquired knowledge. Teachers will also use some assessing tools to review and evaluate learning and provide feedback to the student. With such a large selection of study aids available, never before have there been so many opportunities for creative language teaching/learning. At the same time, the use of a large number of teaching aids within one lesson is undesirable, since it distracts and scatters the attention of students, the organizational process takes a lot of time, and the lesson does not always look like a holistic process. Therefore, it is important to rationally use these

tools in the pedagogical process. Teaching aids make lessons more compelling and encourage learners to be more active and engaged. Using various teaching aids, students are encouraged to become part of the language learning process, and not just consider the language as a subject of study.

2. Conclusion

Teaching methods continue to evolve thanks to countless edtech innovations, a better understanding of the process in which students pick up skills and knowledge as well as develop attitudes through study and/or experience, and new approaches to teaching strategies; however, it can hardly be said that currently there is a better way to teach or learn. Modern teaching methods have both advantages and disadvantages, and it is very important to choose and use those that would have a specific effect in a specific context and would form students into intelligent and well-educated persons. In the end, the best ELT strategies are those that generate interest in learning and produce the desired positive outcomes. This can happen only if a teacher has an excellent command of a foreign language, an open-minded attitude toward teaching, comes up with methods, which would suit each class and even each student, and, what is of great importance, has a high ability to teach somebody a language.

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