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PROGRESSIVE ENGLISH TEACHING METHODS IN CONTRAST TO TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM PEDAGOGY

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Annotation: *Over the past several decades, English language teaching (ELT) has undergone significant transformation. Modern, learner-oriented approaches—which prioritize communication, collaboration, and the use of digital tools—have increasingly replaced traditional methods such as grammar-translation and direct instruction. This paper explores the key differences between conventional and contemporary ELT frameworks by comparing their theoretical foundations, instructional practices, and overall effectiveness. It also discusses the strengths and limitations of both models, offering educators insights into effective teaching strategies for 21st-century learners in diverse fields including business, nursing, education, and secondary education.*

Keywords: *English language teaching, traditional methods, modern methods, communicative approach, technology in education*

INTRODUCTION

Progressive approaches to English language teaching have increasingly gained prominence as educators seek to meet the diverse needs of 21st-century learners. Unlike traditional classroom pedagogy—which typically relies on teacher-centered instruction, memorization, and a heavy focus on grammar rules progressive methods emphasize active learning, communication, and meaningful interaction.

In traditional settings, students often play a passive role, absorbing information presented by the teacher and demonstrating knowledge primarily through written exercises and formal assessments.

In contrast, progressive teaching methods position learners at the center of the educational process. Techniques such as communicative language teaching (CLT), task-based learning (TBL), and project-based learning (PBL) encourage students to use English authentically through collaboration, problem-solving, and real-world tasks. These methods aim to build practical language skills, promote critical thinking, and increase learner motivation [1].

Technology integration—such as digital platforms, online discussions, and multimedia resources—further enhances engagement and provides opportunities for personalized learning experiences. While traditional pedagogy offers structure and can be effective for teaching foundational grammar and vocabulary, progressive methods foster adaptability, creativity, and communicative competence.



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The contrast between the two highlights an important shift in educational priorities: from mastering linguistic forms in isolation to developing fluency, confidence, and the ability to use English in diverse contexts. Examining these differences provides valuable insights for educators seeking to balance established practices with modern innovations in language teaching [2].

2. Traditional Teaching Methods

The Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) and the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) are examples of traditional English teaching approaches that are teacher-centered and place a high priority on memorization, repetition, and grammatical correctness. Grammar-Translation Method (GTM): Prioritizes the translation of texts from the target language into the native language. Grammar rules are explicitly taught, and vocabulary is learned by rote.

The Audio-Lingual Method (ALM): Focuses on listening and speaking through imitation and pattern drills. It is based on behaviorist theory and depends heavily on repetition and error correction.

3. Modern Teaching Methods

Modern methodologies are more student-centered and communicative. They promote interaction, critical thinking, and real-world application of language skills. Key modern methods include the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Learning (TBL), and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): Encourages students to communicate meaningfully in real-life situations. Emphasizes fluency over accuracy. Task-Based Learning (TBL): Involves learners in meaningful tasks such as problem-solving, interviews, or projects, which require them to use the target language actively [3]. CLIL: Integrates language learning with content learning, such as teaching history or science in English.

4. Role of Technology

Modern methods often incorporate technology to enhance language learning. Tools such as language learning apps, online platforms, and multimedia resources enable personalized learning, immediate feedback, and exposure to authentic language. Technology has transformed education by enhancing access, engagement, personalization, and collaboration [4]. Below are examples of the role of technology in teaching, organized by category:

1. Digital Learning Platforms

Technology offers access to comprehensive online learning environments that support both teaching and learning [5]. Examples: Google Classroom: Allows teachers to distribute assignments, provide feedback, and manage student progress. Moodle / Canvas: Learning management systems (LMS) used to organize course content, track grades, and conduct assessments. Microsoft Teams / Zoom: Facilitate live virtual classes, discussions, and group projects.

2. Multimedia and Visualization Tools



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Technology enables teachers to use multimedia to explain complex concepts, making learning more interactive and visual [6]. Examples: Khan Academy & YouTube: Offer video tutorials on subjects ranging from algebra to grammar. PowerPoint & Prezi: Used to create engaging lecture presentations. Interactive animations (e.g., PhET simulations): Help visualize scientific processes in physics, chemistry, or biology.

3. Educational Apps and Gamification

Gamification elements and apps can improve engagement, retention, and motivation among students. Examples: Kahoot!, Quizizz: Create interactive quizzes and learning games. Duolingo, Memrise: Language learning apps that use spaced repetition and gamified lessons [7]. Minecraft: Education Edition: Used to teach math, engineering, and creativity.

4. Online Assessment and Feedback

Technology streamlines assessment and provides immediate, data-driven feedback. Examples: Google Forms / Socrative: For quizzes and real-time formative assessments. Turnitin: Checks for plagiarism and encourages academic integrity. AI-Powered Feedback (e.g., Grammarly, Writable): Provides real-time suggestions for writing improvement.

5. Communication and Collaboration Tools

Technology enhances teacher-student and peer-to-peer communication beyond classroom walls. Examples: Email, chat forums (e.g., Edmodo, Padlet): For asynchronous discussions. Collaborative documents (Google Docs, Google Slides): Allow students to work together in real time. Flip grid: Enables students to respond to questions through video reflections.

6. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Adaptive Learning

AI helps personalize instruction based on a learner's strengths and weaknesses. Examples: DreamBox Learning (math), Smart Sparrow: Adjust the content based on student performance. ChatGPT or other AI tutors: Provide explanations, language practice, and homework support. AI-driven analytics: Help teachers monitor student progress and predict at-risk learners.

7. Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) Immersive technologies create experiential learning opportunities. Examples: Google Expeditions: Virtual field trips to museums, oceans, or space. Anatomy VR: Allows medical students to explore 3D models of the human body. AR-based flashcards (e.g., 3DBear): Enhance vocabulary or science lessons with interactive 3D objects.

8. Assistive Technologies

Support inclusive education by helping students with disabilities access and engage with content. Examples: Screen readers (e.g., JAWS, NVDA): Assist visually impaired students. Speech-to-text tools (e.g., Dragon NaturallySpeaking): Help students with motor or learning disabilities write. Closed captioning and subtitles: Assist hearing-impaired students or support multilingual learning.

9. Digital Content Libraries and Open Educational Resources (OER)



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Provide free or low-cost learning materials that can be customized. Examples: OER Commons, CK-12: Offer textbooks, videos, lesson plans, and interactive content. JSTOR, Google Scholar: Give access to scholarly literature for research.

10. Flipped and Hybrid Learning Models

Technology enables flipped classrooms and blended learning environments. Examples: Teachers record lectures using Screencastify or Loom, and students watch them at home.

Both traditional and modern methods of teaching English have their strengths and limitations. While traditional methods provide a solid grammatical foundation, modern approaches foster communication, critical thinking, and learner autonomy [8]. The most effective language instruction often combines elements of both, creating a balanced, adaptive approach tailored to the learners' needs and contexts.

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