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Promoting Active English Language Learning in Post-Method Era

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Abstract

Post-method pedagogy in ELT emerged as a response to the limitations of conventional language teaching methods, emphasizing teacher autonomy, contextualization, and learner-centeredness. Post method pedagogy is termed and advocated by Kumaravadivelu (1994) as an optimized way of teaching English. The objective was to practice a three-dimensional system which included the parameters of particularity, practicality and possibility and application of various micro strategies in ESL/EFL/ELT classroom. The prominent advantages of PM pedagogy are teacher and learner autonomy and growth and also context sensitivity. Post-method pedagogy represents a significant shift in ELT from method-bound teaching to flexible, teacher-driven, and context-responsive practices. Its success lies in empowering teachers to become autonomous professionals who tailor their teaching to the unique needs of their learners and contexts. While challenges such as the need for comprehensive teacher training and systemic support persist, empirical studies affirm that post-method pedagogy can enhance both teacher development and learner autonomy, leading to more effective English language teaching and learning. To promote active learning in the post method era, usage of learner-centered, communicative and contextual approaches should be increased. The language teaching and learning activities should promote language awareness (knowledge of how language works) and upgrade LSRW skills. Creating an environment for collaborative learning which has real world situations and life applications can make learning more engaging and relevant. The teacher must reflect and continuously improve. Harnessing power and potential of technology can provide the teachers with adequate resources to promote English Language learning.

Keywords—Post Method Pedagogy, English Language Teaching, Learner and teacher Autonomy, context sensitivity

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Promoting Active English Language Learning in Post- Method Era

I. Introduction

Many language teaching methods have been developed and put forth as ultimate and effective solutions for English Language Teaching. Starting from the Direct method to Communicative approach- none providing a complete way to ensure effectiveness. With due time, the educators had to acknowledge that any one method or technique is not appropriate in the given context. That is how language educators entered the post method era. Post-method pedagogy in ELT emerged as a response to the limitations of conventional language teaching methods, emphasizing teacher autonomy, contextualization, and learner-centeredness. It is not a new method but an approach that transcends fixed methodologies, allowing teachers to create context-sensitive teaching practices based on their experiences, beliefs, and classroom realities.

II. Post Method Pedagogy-objective and Key Concepts:

Post method pedagogy is termed and advocated by Kumaravadivelu (1994) as an optimized way of teaching English. The objective was to practice a three-dimensional system which included the parameters of particularity, practicality and possibility and application of various micro strategies in ESL/EFL/ELT classroom.

There has always been a gap between theory and real practice. Inadequacy of teaching and learning outcomes using various methods is as old as ELT itself. The deep discontent with the concept of method accumulating for a considerable length of time has finally resulted in emergence of the post method pedagogy (2006, p 160). Owing to the influence of postmodernism, this pedagogy emerged to respond to the demand for an optimized way of teaching English with freedom from restrictions from various methods. Kumaravadivelu argued for and urged ELT practitioners to construct classroom-oriented themes of practice to produce local, specific and novel practices. It was an alternative to methods encouraging teacher autonomy and principled pragmatism.

The post method pedagogy, in a broader sense, not only included classroom strategies, instruction material, curricular objectives and evaluation techniques but also many historical, political and socio-cultural aspects that influenced ELT learners. Kumaravadivelu conceived this methodology as a three-dimensional system made up of particularity, practicality and possibility working in a synergic relationship. Particularity conveys the idea that the pedagogy decided by the group of teachers teaching a particular group of the students with specific learning goals, within a specified institutional context of a specific socio-cultural milieu (Kumaravadivelu 2003,33-34).

While the element of practicality focuses on the quality of relationship between theory and practice of classroom teaching. Putting it very beautifully, Kumaravadivelu says that the element of practicality helps the teacher to practice what they theorize and theorize from their practice. The element of possibility is mainly borrowed from the education philosophy of Paulo Freire who argues a close contact between pedagogy and power and dominance. It is sensitivity of learner's and teacher's subject positions -the class, race, gender, ethnicity and their impact on education. It has been validated by research data that the learner's awareness is cultured by the broader social, economic and political environment in which they grow up. All these affect pedagogic practices in an unexpected manner.

Unlike traditional methods defined by rigid theoretical principles and classroom procedures, post-method pedagogy places teachers at the center of the teaching-learning process. It values their prior knowledge, experiences, and contextual understanding, encouraging them to develop personalized strategies that best fit their learners' needs and sociocultural contexts.

III Advantages of Post-Method Pedagogy:

The most important feature of this pedagogy is teacher autonomy and growth. Post-method pedagogy fosters teacher autonomy by encouraging reflective practice, critical analysis, and the creation of context-sensitive teaching methods. Teachers become strategic researchers and

decision-makers who continuously adapt their teaching to learner needs. The other advantage is promotion of learner autonomy by involving learners actively in the learning process, encouraging them to develop learning strategies and take responsibility for their learning. The feature of context Sensitivity is what makes it different from all other methods and approaches. The post method approach acknowledges the diversity of learners' backgrounds, sociopolitical contexts, and educational settings, allowing for flexible adaptation rather than one-size-fits-all methods.

IV Challenges in implementation of the post method approach:

However, Akbari remarks on this concept by questioning its practical implementation and demands it places on teachers overlooking the social, professional and practical limitations faced by teachers in real world classroom settings. According to him, teachers can not be experts in context specific pedagogy without adequate support or training. Some practical problems faced by teachers like larger class size, limited resources and standardized testing pressures are overlooked in this type of pedagogy. It may lead to lack of clear structure for novice/inexperienced teachers and lack of universally applicable standards for language teaching and teacher education.

So here are some real challenges in implementation of the post method approach:

1. Need for Teacher Training: Effective implementation requires pre-service and in-service teachers to be trained in reflective and autonomous teaching practices, which is often lacking in many educational systems.
2. Systemic and Ideological Constraints: Educational policies, curricula, and institutional ideologies may resist the flexibility and autonomy post-method pedagogy demands, limiting its full realization.
3. Need for Ongoing Professional Development: To be successful, post-method pedagogy requires ongoing professional development to support teachers

V Studies on application of Post Method Pedagogy

Studies, such as those conducted in South African classrooms, show that post-method pedagogy enables pre-service teachers to critically reflect on their teaching, optimize learner potential, and develop autonomous teaching identities. It enhances learners' engagement by making them active participants in negotiating syllabus content and learning strategies.

Similarly, research in Turkey highlights that post-method pedagogy offers an alternative to conventional methods that often fail to meet diverse learner needs. It encourages teachers to re-evaluate and adapt existing methods to create more context-specific and culturally aware pedagogies, resulting in improved learning outcomes. Some studies explore how teachers in India are using post method approaches in ELT. Teachers incorporate local stories and cultural references into their lessons or adapt teaching strategies based on students' learning styles.

V Conclusion:

Post-method pedagogy represents a significant shift in ELT from method-bound teaching to flexible, teacher-driven, and context-responsive practices. Its success lies in empowering teachers to become autonomous professionals who tailor their teaching to the unique needs of their learners and contexts. While challenges such as the need for comprehensive teacher training and systemic support persist, empirical studies affirm that post-method pedagogy can enhance both teacher development and learner autonomy, leading to more effective English language teaching and learning.

It is going to take a few more years to realize the utility and effectiveness of post method pedagogy. So how to promote active English Language Learning in our times? Usage of learner-centered, communicative and contextual approach should be there. The language teaching and learning activities should promote language awareness (knowledge of how language works) and upgrade language skills. Creating an environment for collaborative learning which has real world situations and life applications can make learning more engaging

and relevant. The teacher must reflect and continuously improve. Harnessing power and potential of technology can provide the teachers with adequate resources to promote English Language learning.

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