

ELT Methodology – Fall 2011

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

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Challenging questions which have confronted the teachers in the history of language teaching:

- What else can we do in our language instruction programs to promote more efficient learning?
- What new techniques, new insights, new ideas, new aims or new twist could increase the rate and quality of learning of our students?

- ❖ Advice have come from many disciplines although they are not wholly convincing.
- ❖ There is no single comprehensive method.
- ❖ Pragmatic Eclectic way supported. (best of all approaches)
- ❖ All methods work!!! Yet not equally efficiently.

COMPREHENSION-BASED APPROACHES (CBA)

- TPR (Asher)
- Delayed Oral Response (Postovsky)
- Draw the Picture
- Optimal Habit Reinforcement and the learnables
- The Natural Approach (T. Terrell)
- Diglot-weave Input

Definition of CBA (CBL):

Approaches which focus on establishing receptive skills first and do not attempt specifically to train oral production are called Comprehension Based Approaches

CBL (CBA) advocates that just as there is a natural progression in child's acquisition of motor skills, so also there is a natural progression in the development of progression skills, reception being the foundation for production.

TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE

- Asher observed that during the preproduction period children apparently learn to understand a great deal long before they try to say much.
- The door of understanding is first opened as children respond meaningfully to a particular type of input.

Criticism of TPR

It deals with the language in a too general way and fails to train students to perform survival functions, such as greetings, asking directions, and ordering a meal.

Delayed Oral Response (Postovsky)

The principle mechanisms of L1 acquisition are not vocal imitation of model utterances, correction of mistakes and similar methods but these along with heavy memorization tasks, grammar explanation and structural drill.

Draw the picture

Another kind of problem solving task that is close to the spirit of TPR gives instructions for drawing simple picture.

Optimal Habit Reinforcement and The Learnables H. Winitz

Winitz's experimentation with the model led to significant publications about its assumptions and performance and also the development of learnables (a self instructional consisting of audiocassettes with accompanying picture books) which follows the principle of CBL.

NATURAL APPROACH (T. Terrell)


- ⇒ The most fully developed CBA
- ⇒ Learners of any age are able to take in speech input. (if comprehensible)
- ⇒ The approach supplies high amount of input made comprehensible through...
 - ★ pictures / actions / situational, grammatical, and lexical transparency

Diglot-Weave Input

- A significant part of a teacher's task in CBL is to supply learners with voluminous comprehensible input.
- ⇒ Code switching = diglot-weave
- ⇒ e.g., Changing a French text into English a heavily influenced by French syntax, yet understandable.
- Some of the texts maybe presented with the aid of picture and mime.

PRODUCTION-BASED LEARNING

- The Silent Way (C. Gattegno)
- Sheltered Initiation Language Learning (Bar Lev)
- Outreach Learning (T. Brewster, E. Brewster, D. Larson)

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- More radical than CBL.
 - They don't accept speech emerges naturally out of comprehension.
 - While agreeing that language acquisition research is relevant to formal language teaching, they reject applications that have been proposed.

SILENT WAY LEARNING (SWL)

- The best known Production-based learning
- The method doesn't mean that students keep silent.
- Production is typically elicited at first with the aid of `scatter charts` of words and affixes, Cuisenaire rods language specific 'Fidel Charts' which color-code all pronunciation possibilities uniformly, regardless of spelling and gestural cues, and other kinds of hints.

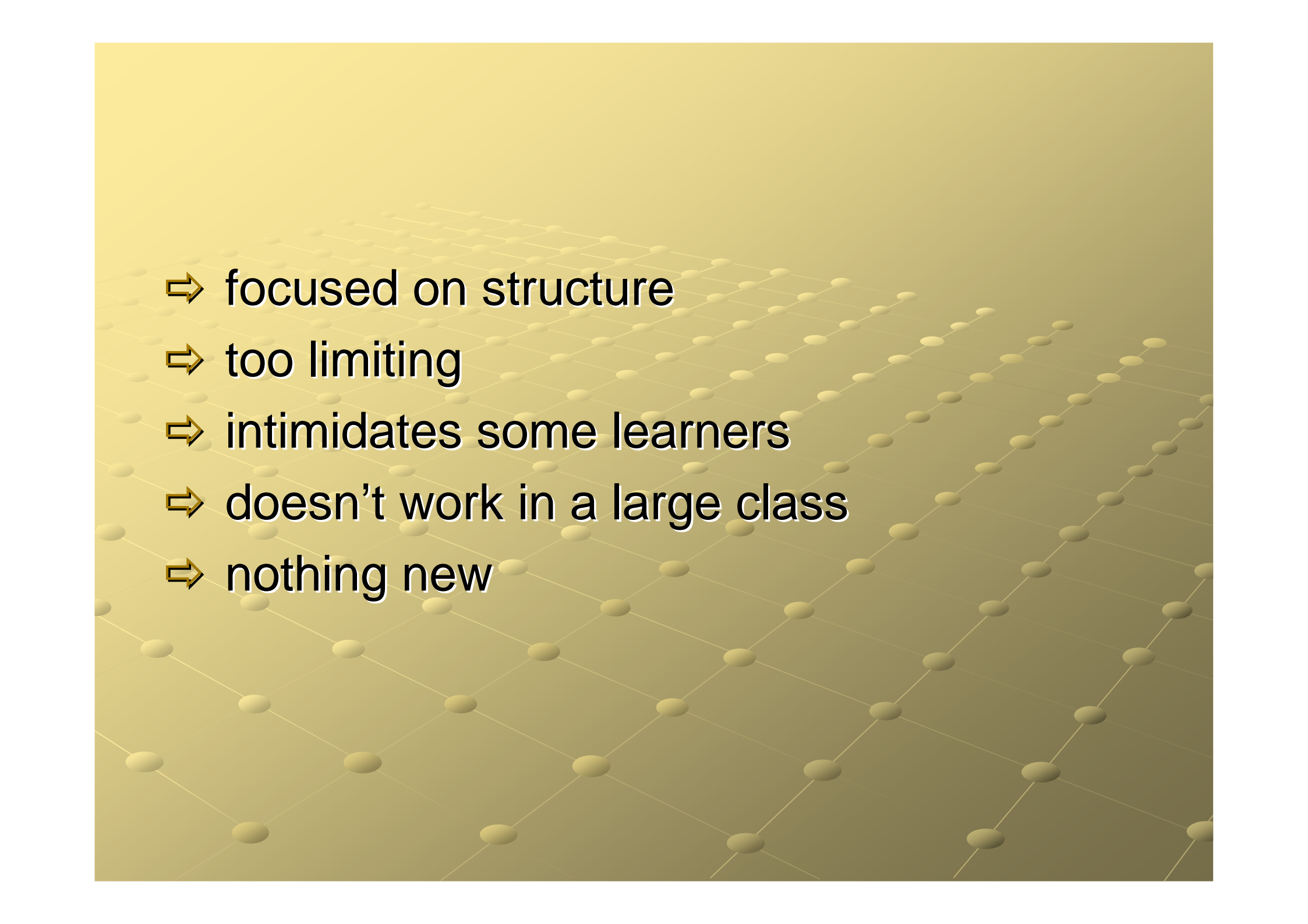
All of these unusual features of SWL are used to make pronunciation, vocabulary and structures available for the learners to discover and test in use.

- The instructor invites the learners to assume responsibility for their learning

Criticism of SWL

There had been many criticisms of SWL, some well taken, some inane:

- ⇒ too slow
- ⇒ too ambitious
- ⇒ not based on an accepted theory
- ⇒ doesn't work without a gifted teacher

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- ⇒ focused on structure
 - ⇒ too limiting
 - ⇒ intimidates some learners
 - ⇒ doesn't work in a large class
 - ⇒ nothing new

Sheltered Initiation Language Learning (SILL) Bar LEV

- not widely known
- yet no official name
- SILL prompts meaningful, ambitious oral creations in the first hours of instruction

- ◆ Bar Lev has learners enter a language through ingeniously contrived, grammatically progressive planned interlanguage levels of the language.
- ◆ Each lesson is a level of pre-language rather than a chunk of the standard language and each level contains a selected vocabulary and a restricted grammar.

- Within a few hours of SILL training students become fluent narrators of stories and able to ask and answer simple questions.
- All language learners speak imperfectly even after years of study. What Bar Lev wants to do is lead learners more quickly to optimal imperfection and to put them at peace with their imperfections.

- Criticism of SILL is predictable. First of all, because
- in SILL learnability takes precedence over relevancy, and enjoyment
- and ease of learning over strict functionality, the same objections made to SWL will be brought against SILL.

OUTREACH LEARNING

Outreach learning is based on two books :

⇒ *Language Acquisition Made Practical* by E. Thomas Brewster and E. Brewster.

⇒ *Guidelines for Bare Foot Language Learning* by Donald Larson.

- Courses which use these books require each student in the course to select a language to learn for which there is a community of speakers nearby.
- The main challenge is to become a new social group in a foreign culture.

- The classroom is used only as a base from which learning in the community is launched.
- **Speech** emerges not from listening comprehension training or production practice, but from the process of repeated, motivated, meaningful interaction with native speakers whose group one aspires to join.

- **Learning** the language comes as a product of meeting the increasing communication demands that attend the process of becoming an insider/

HUMANISTIC AND PSYCHOSUGGESTIVE APPROACHES

Value Clarification and Problem Posing Approach (Galyean, Freire)

- Certain words are commonly associated with approaches which take aim on lowering the filters:
- Whole person, humanistic, holistic, new dimensions, accelerated, suggestopedic.

A Value Clarification Approach is an example of one of these.

- The principle assumption behind it is that the most efficient learning is that which promotes self understanding and self realization, that language learners experience least resistance to learning when they use language to look within and talk about themselves and the immediate community and events surrounding them.

- The students are not role playing but are **being themselves**.
- In the pleasure and excitement of speaking and hearing (language from within) they drop their defenses and lower their affective filter.
- It aims also self understanding but at a personal and community level deeper.

Suggestopedia

- As Lozanov called pedagogical application of **`the science of suggestology`** aims specifically at **neutralizing learning inhibition and desuggesting false limitations** that cultural norms impose on learning.
- The use of musical, dramatic, and visual art are marked characteristics of Lozanov's teaching.

Counseling Learning Community Language Learning

- ❖ The teacher uses effective ways of deeply understanding learners in their struggle to learn.
- ❖ These ways parallel those found in the dynamics of an effective counselor-client relationship as viewed by Rogers.

- ❖ There is no visible textbook, prepared lesson plan, or even defined objectives. Rather, there is a group of learners, sitting in a circle, who themselves initiate conversation the proper target-language form.

CONCLUSION

- The work of the innovators constitute a challenge to conventional thinking about language teaching.
- As the process and the results of alternative models are researched and compared to those of more conversational models, it will be interesting to see what the data will show.