

**An Experience of Implementing Eclectic Method in EFL Class**

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## **Dedication**

This paper is dedicated to my parents

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

I am FarhanaSadiqah. I have done my major in ELT. To fulfill the requirement of under graduation I have to complete my dissertation. I have done my internship in Cordova International School. It is situated at Banasree C block. This school has been established in 2001 and their slogan is “Cordova is the last resort of total education.” The school has both Bengali and English medium curriculum. The school’s education level starts from play group to A’ level. I worked in the English medium and taught in STD III and STD IV.

I began my internship from the 14<sup>th</sup> of September and to the 26<sup>th</sup> of December, 2014. After two weeks’ class observation I started taking classes. I took classes of English grammar, English language and English literature. I worked under the supervision of Saleh Uddin Ahmed who is the founder and chairman of this school.

The internship basically helped me to apply the ELT methods and techniques in the EFL classes. Besides this, I learned so many things regarding teaching and it was really an opportunity for me to experience it from an authentic classroom. In my internship report I will mainly focus on eclecticism that I have used as my teaching method and my experience as well. The discussion part contains the critical analysis of my experience.

## Chapter 2

### Literature review

Different methods have been established for ELT purpose. All the methods have some positive and negative aspects. To meet the language objective a teacher's first priority should be given in selecting the teaching methods. According to Anthony's model, "method is the level at which theory is put into practice and at which choices are made about the particular skills to be taught, the content to be taught, and the order in which the content will be presented" (as cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 21). According to Wail (2009), different methods have been introduced by the experts but they have realized that no particular method is good enough to be accepted as the best. All methods have some strengths and limitations (p.34).

Some popular methods that are used for ELT purpose:

The Grammar translation method

The Direct Method

The Oral Approach and Situational Language Teaching

The Audio lingual Method

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Total Physical Response (TPR)

Community Language Learning (CLL)

All the methods have been used by the language teachers and they have figured out that no particular method is perfect for all kind of students in EFL classrooms. Basically the failure of one method led to create the next method. In this regard, Eskey (1983) says our tendency is to find out the simplest solution for the complicated problems and there is no exception in second language teaching (p. 315).

Now the question is how a language teacher will select methods for the ELT classes. According to Popova(2001), different learners learn differently so a teacher has to adopt such methods that will work for the majority of the learners (p.4).

Therefore, with this intention a teacher needs to focus on the students' necessity while selecting the methods for teaching. So a language teacher should go for adaptation to design a set of effective methods which is known as eclecticism. As Wali (2009) points out that no ELT method can meet all the teaching and learning needs, so teachers need to adopt a set of principles as their teaching procedure to fulfill all language goals and programme objectives. He says, experienced teachers will reject the weak points of each approach and hold on to those aspects that are appropriate for the particular learning situations (p.34).

Furthermore, to implement different teaching techniques a teacher should have a teaching style as well to grab the students' attention. On the other hand, Li (2012) states that, "learning styles and learning strategies will influence the learning rate" (p.169). Considering this aspect of teaching, in the beginning of 1990's the eclectic method of learning was advocated and these days it has become one of the fashionably popular methods (Kumar, 2013, p.1). Language teachers and experts describe eclectic method to be one of the successful ELT methods.

In order to explain eclecticism language experts and teachers have defined it in several ways: For instance, AL Hamash described eclecticism "as a type of methodology that makes use of the different language learning approaches instead of sticking to one standard approach" (as cited in Wali, 2009, p.37).

According Larsen- Freeman (2000), "when teachers who subscribe to the pluralistic view of methods pick and choose from among methods to create their own blend, their practice is said to be eclectic" (p.183).

Indeed "The successful teacher usually organizes and makes a blend of methods he/ she thinks are appropriate. Each method has its value and uniqueness on one side and its difficulties and

disadvantages on the other side” (Bell, 2007, p.140-141).Hence, having a variety of language learning activities, eclecticism method works effectively for all types of learners (Kumar, 2013, p.1).

**Grammar translation method (GTM):**

This method has been used for many years by the language teachers and has various names. The goal of the teachers who use this method is being able to read literature written in the target language. Students learn to translate from one language to another. Only reading and writing skills are emphasized. Grammatical rules and vocabularies of the target language are taught to reach the goal (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p.17-18).

**Principal Characteristics of the Grammar Translation Method:**

- Students learn and apply grammatical rules to translate sentences and texts into and out of the target language
- The major focus is reading and writing
- Grammar is taught deductively (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.5-6).
- There is little emphasize on spoken language
- Accuracy is considered to be essential (Harmer, 2007, p.63).

The role of the teacher is authoritative in the classroom. Students are to follow their teachers’ instructions and if they make errors, teachers help them with the correct answer (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p.17-19).

**The Direct Method:** This method arrived at the end of the nineteenth century as the replacement of the grammar translation method. In direct method, translation was totally abandoned and accuracy is important (Harmer, 2007, p.63).

**Principal Characteristics of the Direct Method:**

- Translation is not allowed
- Students speak in the target language and communicate as if they were in the real situations
- Grammar is taught deductively

- By using new words students practice vocabulary in full sentence
- Oral communication is emphasized

The goal of the method is to teach students communicate in the target language. The role of the teacher and the students are like partner in the classroom. Self-correction is encouraged (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p.27- 30).

### **Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):**

Communicative Language teaching aims to involve students in real or realistic communication. Thus role -plays simulation and to solve a puzzle can only do so by sharing information. To communicate properly students should have a desire to communicate and purposes for communication (Harmer, 2007, p.69-70).

### **Principal Characteristics of the Communicative Language Teaching:**

- CLT is learning to communicate in the target language by using language for real purposes.
- CLT extensively focused on speaking and listening skills.
- CLT involves little grammar instruction (Sato and Kleinsasser, 1999, p.502-504).

Another characteristic of this method is the use of authentic materials. The teacher acts as an advisor and his/her responsibility is to establish situations to promote communication. Errors are tolerated during fluency -based activities and seen as the development of communication skills. Teacher notes down the errors during fluency activities and return them in an accuracy –based activities (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p.128-132).

Code switching is another phenomenon that I observed in EFL classroom. Argenter (2001) defines code –switching, “as the use of two languages or two codes in the same communicative event who are bilingual” He also addressed it as an interactional phenomenon in everyday talk (p.378).

## **Chapter 3**

### **My Experience**

To complete my dissertation, I decided to do an internship so that I can apply the techniques and knowledge of English Language Teaching (ELT) through my teaching in a school. The name of the school that I had chosen for my internship was Cordova International School. It is an English medium school, approved by the Edexcel. Cordova is situated at Banasree C block. This school has been established in 2001 and their slogan is “Cordova is the last resort of total education.”

I started taking classes after observing classes for two weeks. I taught students of grade III and IV. I used to take classes of English grammar, English language and English literature. It was an opportunity for me to implement the ELT theories as well as the other linguistic aspects to explore how those techniques and principles work in language teaching classes. From the very first day of my class, I tried to focus on my teaching style so that I can grab the students’ attention which I found very important during class observation period. The first two weeks’ class observation really helped me to choose my teaching methods based on the majority of the individual students. I basically taught different topics using different methods. During class observation period, I have noticed that the teacher used to teach everyday almost in the same way. There was no variation in teaching style. It made students unenthusiastic towards the class. I usually sat on the last bench. It was easier for me to monitor the whole class. I also noticed that rotation of seats was absent. Students usually liked to sit with their friends and started talking and whispering during the class. The school is basically a residential house which has been rented to run its programmes. So every classroom is comparatively smaller to the number of the students. Teacher has to spend much time to manage the class. As it was not possible to change the infrastructure of the classroom the only option was to change the teaching method and style to grab the students’ attention. This is why I choose eclectic method as a topic of my paper which I applied during my teaching in Cordova International school as a teacher.

**3.1. My first day as a teacher:**

Before starting taking classes, I was informed of few rules of the school. Like

- I have to finish the syllabus on time
- After the class I have to write what I have taught in the register book.
- I was also asked to keep consultation hour for the students

On the first day, I took class in class IV. It was English literature class. There were 33 students in the class and time allocation was 45 minutes. At the beginning of the class I introduced myself and I asked my students to introduce themselves as well. They were so curious about me that first 15 minutes I had to spend in answering their questions. The conversation helped me to remove my nervousness and stand before them confidently. Before coming to the class, I talked to the class teacher who gave me the syllabus and other instructions regarding the course. It was tougher than I expected it to be to stand in front of the classroom as a teacher because 33 pairs of eyes were looking at me at a time. Suddenly, I looked at the clock; I saw one third of the class time was left. So I did not wait to start teaching them the story “Magic Sleep” from Grimm’s fairy tales. I used some elicitation techniques. I wrote down two words “magic” and “Fairy Tales” on the board. Then I asked them what they knew about the two words. They related so many interesting words like “wish”, “dream”, “vanish”, and “power” to the word magic. When I talked about “Fairy tales” they instantly uttered the word Cinderella. So it helped me to know their knowledge about the topic. Scrivener (1994) thinks “Elicitation enables to start from where the learners are and then to work forward from there” (p.73). This is how I ended up my first class. It was really interesting as well as challenging for me to teach as a teacher in the classroom for the first time.

**3.2. Teaching literature:**

From the second day I basically started them teaching. It was an English literature class. So it was important to understand the story first. In Grammar Teaching Method, reading and writing are developed as the primary skills. “A fundamental purpose of learning a foreign language is to be able

to read literature written in the target language” (Larsen- Freeman, 2004, p.17). At first, I asked my students to go through the text to get the main idea which is called Skimming. Then I choose students one by one to read out a few lines from the story “Magic sleep”. I helped them with the meaning as well as with the pronunciations if they failed to utter any words. To solve the question answer part and fill in the blanks, they used to do scanning, a type of expeditious reading. Hughes (2003) defines expeditious reading as quick and efficient reading which includes,

**Skimming** a type of reading to obtain the main idea of the text and

**Scanning** is to find out specific words, percentages, names or information from the reading text (p.138). In this way students practiced reading.

### 3.2.1. Teaching grammar:

For teaching grammar, I have used both GTM and direct method. Both GTM and direct method use deductive and inductive methods respectively. I choose few grammatical items where I used deductive method because it was easier for them to learn those particular items. At the same time I chose inductive method when the topic was consisted of so many rules. For example, I taught articles inductively while I used deductive approach to teach them tense.

### 3.2.2. Teaching Tense:

GTM follows deductive way of teaching grammar. In deductive approach, the explanations of grammatical principle precede its application (Fischer, 1979, p.98). I only applied deductive process to teach them tense. Because I observed that students find it pretty much boring. I wrote few sentences on the board.

For example:	I do my home workeveryday.	He does his home work everyday
	We do our home workeveryday.	Sadia does his home work everyday
	They do their home work every day.	She does his homework every day.

So without applying the rules it was not possible for me to make them understand why we use does /do in the above sentences. I taught them if the subject is 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular number then in present simple tense we need to add s/es to the verb. After learning the rule they applied it in different sentences.

### 3.3. Teaching Articles:

In direct method, grammar is taught inductively (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.12). As I was following eclectic method, I had used both GTM and direct method in teaching grammar. For teaching articles, I have used inductive method. In inductive approach, students discover the grammatical principle for themselves (Fischer, 1979, p.98). To do that, I wrote down few sentences on the board.

For example:

<u>An</u> hour	<u>A</u> horse
<u>An</u> honest man	<u>A</u> house
<u>An</u> honorable man	<u>A</u> hospital

From the above examples, it was generalized that, if the sound of the consonant is absent or if the consonant sounds like a vowel then we will use “an” article otherwise we will use “a”. I also provided them with other examples to understand the rules of articles.

#### 3.3. 1. Teaching Vocabulary:

In the language part, I had to teach Vocabularies. There are few traditional ways of teaching vocabularies. Weir states that, “Students develop extensive vocabularies not by completing work sheets, memorizing word lists, or using dictionary to define unknown words but by the act of reading (as cited in Bintz, 2011, p.46).” Bintz (2011) refers to free choice of reading where students spend much time and develop vocabulary growth (p.46). I chose direct method to teach them new words and synonyms. After reading the story “magic sleep” I picked up few words like ‘Spell’, ‘magic’, ‘Roved’, ‘staircase’, ‘nod’ etc. and explained them in English rather than translating those words into Bengali. After the explanation, I gave them few tasks. I asked my student to make few sentences using those new words, to make sure whether they got the meaning or not. Nagy (1988) explains that Student

should be given tasks that requires them to use the words rather than to state the meaning of the words they are learning (p.26). In the language class they also practiced opposite words where I used the same techniques to teach them new words.

### **3.3.2. Teaching writing:**

In the literature class, I taught them biography of William Shakespeare. To practice writing, they were asked to write the poet's profile. Again after teaching the story "Magic sleep" I asked my students to write the summary of the story. Sometimes I chose one of the characters from the reading texts and asked them to write about that character. They used their text books for further information. For example, in class IV, after reading the story "magic sleep" I asked them to write about the princess who was left alone in the palace on the very day she was fifteen years old. According to McDonough, Shaw and Masuhara (2003), reading passage works as a stimulus for a piece of writing (p.185). In the Grammar Translation Method, teacher asks students to write on a topic based upon the aspects of the reading passage of the lesson (Larsen –Freeman, 2004, p.20). In the language class, I have followed CLT to make them practice writing. For example, in one class I asked them to write about the good and bad qualities of a person. I checked some of the copies where they wrote about their class teacher. Sometimes I choose topics from the context of their real lives and asked them to write on those topics. So that they can share their own ideas and ways of expressing themselves in their own language. Here are few topics that I choose them to write.

- a. Write both the bad and good qualities of yours
- b. Write about your best friend
- c. Write about your favorite show on T.V.

According to the teachers of Japan who use CLT, students should be given the opportunity to speak and write from their own experience (as cited in Sato and Kleinsasser, 1999, p.496).



il + legal = illegal

rest + full =restful

dis + honest = dishonest

After giving the examples, I read out few words where they used prefixes and suffixes. While reading out the words, some of the students were making a noise. So to make them quiet I said, “aste” in bengali and instantly they made a new word, “disaste”. It was quite interesting to teach them suffix and prefix items. Whenever they heard a new word they used to produce a new one by adding suffix or prefix.

I ended the class with a language game. I used to divide the class into two groups and reviewed the whole class by playing a game. Like, in one class, I taught adjectives. So I chose students one by one to complement his or her friends with adjectives. Again, I gave marks for each correct answer and deducted mark for the wrong answers. So students found the game interesting and played with enthusiasm. There was a competition between the girls and boys as well. If one girl fails to answer or gave wrong answer they boys made fun of it and tried to answer for the bonus mark. I used the board to give marks to both of the groups. So they took it very seriously.

#### **3.4.1. Teaching pronunciation:**

There was not any task on pronunciation. So I just corrected my students if they uttered any word incorrectly. Cook (2013) states few process of teaching pronunciation

- a. Use of phonetic script
- b. Imitation
- c. Discrimination of sounds
- d. Consciousness raising
- e. Communication (p.81-82)

At advanced levels, students learn pronunciation by phonetic transcription of spoken language using IPA. Since my students were in pre- intermediate level so I could not use phonetic transcript. They made mistakes frequently while uttering the words “pleasure”, “measure”, “version”, “genre”,

“magenta” etc. To correct them I uttered the words and asked them to repeat. In imitation, students repeat words and phrases again and again. To make it clearer I wrote “measure” and “magenta” on the board and uttered them so that they can figure out the difference between the sounds /ʒ/ and /dʒ/. I have noticed that students hardly use the sound /ʒ/. So discrimination of sounds helped them to identify /ʒ/ sound.

## Chapter 4

## Discussion

A teacher's big task is to manage the class. As a teacher it is very important to create an environment so that learning can take place. According to Scrivener (1994), "The skills of creating and managing a successful class maybe the key to the whole success of a course" (p.54). As I mentioned that, rotation of seats was absent, so I used to rearrange the seats to avoid gossiping and whispering inside the class.

I used to start the class with elicitation which helped me to grab the students' concentration. I used the board and when I wrote on it I choose sideways position. It helped me to make eye contact with the class. I played different roles as a teacher in the different situations. Sometimes I had to be strict to manage the class. While I was discussing grammatical rules or giving any instructions, I played a role of a controller. Harmer (2007) says, when a teacher acts as a controller, he or she is basically in charge of the class and "acting as a controller makes sense, for example when giving explanations, organizing question and answer work, lecturing, making announcements or bringing a class to order (p.108-109). But most of the time I used to be less dominant and encouraged students' talking. As Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) state that CLT teacher should motivate students' communication (p.496). I encouraged my students communicate more in the target language. It was one of the rules of the school that students were not allowed to use native language inside the school campus. But students had a tendency to use L1 in their conversation. They hardly used L1 to express a full sentence, they used to switch code. According to Cook (2013), going from one language to the other in mid –speech when both speakers know the same two languages is code switching (173-174). For example, "valo", "shundor", "onek", etc are the words they frequently used in sentences during conversation.

I used GTM in teaching literature. But to fulfill reading objective other aspects of reading like sentence rhythm, intonation are also important. Cook (2013) points out the importance of intonation by differentiating two sentences. For example: "He is going, with falling intonation is a statement; he is

going with rising intonation is a question” (p.83). I helped my students with the difficult pronunciation but my focus was to making them understand the text so that they can solve the question answer part. Reichert (1948) points out that, to fulfill reading objective translation method do not work properly. Students learn decoding language by translation method. But pronunciation, sentence rhythm and meaning- producing intonation are learnt through the direct method. I have applied eclectic method but due to the time limit and to complete their syllabus I had to give more emphasize on GTM than the direct method. So reading objective was not fulfilled in that much.

At the beginning when students made any mistakes, I would not correct them immediately. As Tony Lynch said, “the best answer to the question of when to intervene in learner talk is: as late as possible (as cited in Harmer, 2007, p.143). But it made another problem. They made the same mistake again and again. The reason might be the level of class they belong to. They would have forgotten the feedback that I gave. For the same reason, after checking the home work I would note down the major mistakes and discuss them in the classroom. While checking homework, I observed that they used small letters. They hardly used capital letters to start a sentence. It might be the effect of using cell phones where they use small letters to write messages. At the end of the class, I had to write down what I have taught in the register book. It helped the authority to be informed of the classroom activities.

I also worked as an invigilator during the exam. It was quite interesting to be in the exam hall as an invigilator. Students always looked for opportunities to ask me questions. In language exam, one of the students asked me a word meaning. When I tried to make her understand that I cannot tell her the answer she just threw the exam paper over my face. It was the most shocking experience that I had in Cordova international school during my internship.

## Chapter 5

### Recommendation

Language comprises of all the four skills which are reading, writing, speaking and listening. It is important to select methods and apply them to teach all of them. In our country, most of the time only the traditional methods are used for teaching purpose. There is hardly any focus on teaching style or methods. In a classroom both teaching and learning are executed simultaneously. So it is important to have an effective method or a set of methods to accomplish teaching objective. Here are some recommendations for selecting ELT methods as well as implementation in the classroom.

- Teaching methods and technique should be selected on the basis of the students' performance.
- It is important to grab the students' attention to execute an effective class. Elicitation, group work, language game work as a catalyst to do so.
- Teacher oriented classroom is not suitable for teaching and learning purpose.
- Students' interaction with the teacher and the students is important to identify the students' improvement in language proficiency.
- Teacher should maintain a balance between teacher's talk time (TTT) and students' talk time so that students may feel free to ask any questions regarding their course.
- Teacher should identify methods that are beneficial to the students.
- By applying an eclectic method, a teacher gets to know which methods are suitable for the students.
- After checking homework, teacher should note down the mistakes and discuss them in the next class.
- Teacher should give feedback as soon as possible. It is better to start with the positive one.
- Before ending the class teacher should make a quick review by playing a game or asking questions regarding what they have been taught in the class.

- Teacher should encourage students to speak in L2. Both accuracy and fluency is important. If students don't speak fluently in L2 then how can a teacher make them accurate.
- Teacher should give comprehensible instruction before any class activity or group work.
- The tendency of the interference of native language is very obvious. Teachers should encourage students to use L2 more but native language should be given the priority as well. Because a main purpose of a language is to express thoughts. So if one can't express it in L2 then he or she should be given the chance to express it in his or her own language. Teacher may help students to express it in L2 further.
- In the syllabus the school authority should include some tasks on pronunciation and listening skills. So that all the four skills are emphasized at a time.
- The school authority should think of improving the infrastructure of the school to minimise noise in classrooms.
- It is important to have privacy in each classroom so that both teacher and students can concentrate in teaching and learning.

## Chapter 6

### Conclusion

In our education system, there is hardly any focus on teaching methods. In most of the educational institutions teachers follow the traditional style in teaching. In the EFL classes, I think teachers should have a teaching style to accomplish the teaching goal. It is important to give emphasize on four skills of language. But most of the time speaking and reading get the priority. As a result students learn reading and writing comparatively better than the other two skills.

Eclectic method is the combination of different methods. A teacher can design this method according to the students' competency and proficiency by adapting different methods. It is beneficial to both of the teachers and students to fulfill the requirement of EFL classes. Another advantage of this method is, a teacher can modify this method if one of the techniques fails to fulfill the course requirement.

In conclusion, I want to say that it was quite interesting to teach in Cordova International School. The practical knowledge of teaching really helped me to compare the linguistic theory and methods to the academic knowledge of mine. It was an opportunity to experience different aspect of teaching as a teacher. I have observed different psychological aspect of the students which was another interesting part of my teaching.

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