

# **A Review on Perceptions of the Teachers on the Applicability of Postmethod Pedagogy in Language Teaching**

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## **Abstract**

*This study aims to observe how the parameters of post-method pedagogy plays a role in English language teaching from the perspectives of teachers. To acknowledge these perspectives, this study reviewed 19 articles published in the relevant genres, particularly analyzing findings derived from these very writings. The research design employed in this study was qualitative and the methodology that I used was preferred reporting Items for systematic reviews and meta analysis. It elicits teachers' inclination in the applicability and future scope of post-method pedagogy in English language classrooms. It reveals that many teachers have positive perspectives concerning the parameters of post method pedagogy and its strategies in teaching language; however, they have not succeeded for its complete application because of decade-long challenges existing in the classrooms. The result also discloses that the shift from transmission to transformative teaching techniques embraces a slow move. This study contributes to the practical understanding of the potentiality of three parameters in postmethod pedagogy as a new paradigm to evaluate how current practices are ongoing in language teaching. Thus, traditional methods of teaching are constantly under inspection, and teachers' struggle to transform their pedagogy in language teaching has a trivial impact on ongoing pedagogy.*

**Keywords:** Post method pedagogy, language, applicability, transformative teaching, perspectives

## **Introduction**

Historically, English language teaching mainly rested on grammar translation methods which mainly emphasized translation of target language into native language. Having seen the loopholes of the grammar translation method, educators brought a direct method which had a strong resistance in the use of translation. Additionally, an audio-lingual method was also in practice to teach the target language. Methods came one after another with some

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critical comments on the previously practiced methods of language teaching. Therefore, this rise of methods continues with the movement of era to meet the existing demands and needs of the learners, teachers and society. The next thing that was noticeable in the past was the focus on the four skills of language teaching i.e. writing, reading, speaking and listening; however, methods that come later emphasize on the development of critical thinking of the learners along with these four skills through language teaching. Richards (1984) in his paper, 'The Secret Life of Methods' also states, "The rise and fall of methods depends upon a variety of factors extrinsic to a method itself and often reflects the influence of fads and fashions, of profit-seekers and promoters, as well as the forces of the intellectual marketplace" (p.13). Educators (Akbari et al., 2010; Ur, 2013), while dealing with language classes, render more sophisticated methods emerging in contact with social-political issues based on their experiences and epistemologies. Despite the enrichment of various methods, educators in the midst of the 20th century began to discuss the limitations and insufficiency of these very methods (Bastidas, 2022).

The 20th century has seen the emergence and spread of numerous systems and techniques for teaching languages. Out of all the recommended techniques and strategies, CLT seems to be the most ground-breaking and has lasted the longest, followed by TBLT (Shakouri, 2012). Language is a complex system that refutes the comprehensive explanation; all descriptions are partial and insufficient. Moreover, learning is an unforeseeable and covert process, as learners have different abilities at different rates (Maley, 2020). New developments in L2 pedagogy point to a move from the traditional idea of method towards a "postmethod condition" that may change how theorists and teachers interact by giving teachers more autonomy, knowledge, and competence (Kumaravadivelu, 1994). Bax (2003) argued that even CLT, an approach to language teaching, ignored the context where pedagogy resides. Therefore, it must be replaceable with a context approach; many educators and learners already experience the shift of the most popular method and adopt a new approach.

In this backdrop, I studied various articles to explore how the existing language teaching methods facilitate second or foreign language from the lens of postmethod pedagogy. Moreover, how does post-method pedagogy facilitate English language teaching in the classroom from the perspectives of teachers? This study is inclined to explore the results of using postmethod pedagogy as a lens to explore the existing condition of methods and approaches. Different research has been carried out to observe how post-method pedagogy works as a method; however, this study inspects how postmethod pedagogy, a perception of educators, works in the language learning sector. Regarding the application of different methods of language teaching, teachers have constantly embraced approaches one after another as proposed by the educators. However, the work to embrace these approaches either intentionally or unintentionally appears as experimentation. This study focuses on whether post-method pedagogy is accepted as a method or an approach to view how English language classes have been taught and learnt. The results that come from this research underpins the educators, teachers, curriculum designers and students for effective and efficient teaching of target language by acknowledging the functions and motives of three parameters of postmethod pedagogy.

## **Literature Review**

Chen (2014) explored that most classroom activities, where Chinese teachers taught, mainly depend on teacher-centered methods, not as per the principles instructed by postmethod pedagogy. What is claimed is explanations of texts and contents are frequent along with the trends of note taking and correcting the mistakes. This postmethod pedagogy never encompasses the activities of explanation, note-taking, and instant correction of errors, as well as restrictions and dependency. Motlhaka (2015) aimed to investigate lecturers' teaching methods and postmethod pedagogy for professional development to enhance ESL students' English proficiency. The findings of this study could provide a useful substitute for the shortcomings encountered while using recommended or traditional approaches, as well as a valuable approach to teaching and learning L2. The category of professional development and teaching practices of lecturers, and the improvement of students' English proficiency are used to present the study's results. The subcategories include: the role of lecturers as transformative intellectuals, optimizing learning opportunities; encouraging student autonomy; contextualizing linguistic input; appreciating adventure learning; and recognizing individual cultures.

In their research (Soomro et al., 2017), they discovered that, when it comes to effective language teaching, post-method pedagogies are a better choice than method-based pedagogies because they provide teachers with more freedom to work within broader parameters. In contrast, specific methods force them to follow strict limits. They did, however, express some reservations about the use of these pedagogies in their particular setting. The term "pedagogy" broadly refers to a variety of historical, political, and sociocultural experiences that directly or indirectly influence L2 education, as well as concerns about classroom techniques, instructional materials, curriculum objectives, and assessment measures.

This postmethod pedagogy is a three-dimensional system made up of the three pedagogic dimensions of particularity, practicality, and possibility within such a broad description (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). When asked why they believe there is no one optimum way, the most common response from those who claim there isn't one is "Because it frequently depends," which implies that the optimal approach varies on who is using it, under what conditions, and so on. for, intent, Since there are differences in every person's unique educational situation that affect what works best, the idea that there is no one best approach also implies that there is no one way that is best (Prabhu, 1990). Similarly, the techniques are no longer the turning points in our historical trajectory of language instruction (Brown, 2001). This claim posited that even the methods of language teaching could no longer be revolutionary and perpetual instead they could be in the phase of evolution. Methods, which are always prone to extinction, don't have the power of sustenance as the apparent reasons for their demise are their prescriptive nature, the mutual overlapping the principles sustaining them, their general lack of validation and there are not always overt connections with linguistic policies and ideologies. This clearly argues that method, an activity of language teaching, is mostly reliant on circumstances in which a learner and teacher are. Basically, the situations are societal, organizational, teacher-related and student related factors. The second existing parameter that is often discussed in language

teaching is practicality. This term is often used in academia with practice that is to mean action or doing something (Ahmed, 2019). Accordingly, praxis in Aristotle's sense necessitates both knowledge and practical insight. In praxis, one's concerns extend beyond acquiring knowledge and insight in and of itself to include "doing - living well" (Bernstein, 1971). Success in the classroom depends mostly on the personal investment of the teacher, how this investment is enacted interpersonally and socially, and how it establishes the classroom as a safe and engaging zone for language learning (Kiely et.al, 2008). This trend of fusing interpersonal and social goals also determine how language teaching becomes effective and fruitful in the classroom. Consideration about reflectiveness and reflection on teaching has evolved over many years; numerous teachers, educators, academicians, theorists and researchers have consistently contributed to the epistemology of this approach (York-Barr, et al. 2006). Praxis is a reflective practice (RP), not merely a practice. Teachers carry out their praxis when they do RP (Ahsanu et.al, 2020). The principle of *possibility* deals with the socio-cultural realities and socio-political experiences that participants bring to the pedagogical setting (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 174). Introduction to language in the classroom without discussion, analysis and interpretation of societal issues like power, identity, ideology, discrimination and segregation is partially complete.

Moreover, language teaching does not rest on only grammar and language function, but also depends upon the consciousness and familiarity of power relations of the society. These existing factors pave the way of determining particularity (Kumaravadivelu, 2001) that encapsulated various domains of learners and teachers. Kumaravadivelu (2006) further argued that the English language and its center-based pedagogy carries with it its colonial form from four perspectives-- scholastic, linguistic, cultural and economic. According to him, the scholastic dimension refers to the dissemination of Western knowledge which makes the local knowledge less valuable; the linguistic dimension refers to the global spread of English and its effects on local languages and knowledge; the cultural dimension is concerned with how the teaching of English carries with it the culture of the English speaking countries and makes the local culture less valuable; and finally the economic aspect refers to the financial gain for the English speaking countries and their ELT professionals by the commodification of English teaching. The notion that universal principles and theories of English language teaching exist and are applicable to all settings in the world has been questioned and criticized by a number of scholars in applied linguistics and TESOL. (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). The history of English language teaching has been well documented, and one method after another has attempted to serve the language teaching process.

This ever changing situation appeared to have reached a plateau, first with the advent of the communicative approach, and later with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) methodology, umbrella term that encompasses an array of closely related methods, such as Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) or Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) (Soto, 2014. p. 39).

The advent of different methods one after another definitely questioned the applicability of different methods and their ways of functioning.

## **Analytical Thought on Nepali Context from Postmethod**

Teachers in Nepal demonstrated sound remarks on applying postmethod pedagogy and committed to executing context-sensitive pedagogy for language teaching (Paudel, 2018). The next study (Kandel, 2019) remarked that even learning M.Phil scholars favored the principles and methodologies of postmethod pedagogy as it foregrounded the contextual localized needs along with the fusion between theory and practice. Three pedagogic parameters, particularity, practicality and possibility, are the base for improvising the ELT practices in Nepal, however, ELT classes of Nepal concede that they have several challenges and issues to bring these pedagogies into practice. In addition, this research also reported there would be urgency to apply the postmethod pedagogy in ELT classrooms (Sapkota, 2022). The same study also revealed that the existing ELT practices are no longer effective and questioned the sustenance of the ELT learning environment in academic institutions.

The study (Chaulagain, 2020) highlighted the requirement of postmethod pedagogy in the present context of Nepal; nevertheless, the trend of taking ELT classes have several challenges as these classrooms have been driven by the Gurukul education system where autonomy for teacher is liberal and learners enjoy no autonomy like teachers. Moreover, the need of postmethod pedagogy to facilitate the learners is on the climax these days. The transition from a method-based PPP model to post-method PPP pedagogy is one of the most significant shifts currently occurring in language teaching and language teaching. It has become the primary concern of almost all ELT practitioners and ELT experts worldwide. Additionally, the next research (Guragain, 2024) expressed that post-method pedagogy embraces need, innovation, and choice. These terms choice, creativity, and need are associated with teaching strategies, instructional resources, and teaching-learning exercises in this context.

Numerous mini-pedagogical shifts have occurred over time (Nepal, 2023). Many teachers working in the field of language teaching conceded that learner autonomy, students' freedom in terms of choices for learning, should be the top priority. The same research revealed that half of the teachers of the total participants agreed there would be a need for such teaching, which is directed to meet the needs and necessities of learners. Teachers having the sound epistemology of cognitive and affective levels also imbibe the approach of praxis, action with reflection, in the class (Paudel, 2020). The next study of Phyak and Sharma (2017) suggested the four different ways to execute transformative pedagogy in the class so that students and teachers can be familiar with the existing societal issues of the society. They included

1. Selecting codes: A code refers to a concrete representation of themes. In this article, the codes included texts, pictures, and videos that illustrate the themes used in the teacher workshops.
2. Adapting and designing materials that go with the goal of secondary-level EFL curriculum: In this stage, we simplified the original texts, introduced new grammar and vocabulary items in the texts used for codes, and shortened the length of the materials.
3. Designing pedagogical activities based on the materials or codes.

4. Producing the final form of the materials in language lessons in the following format: lesson goals; materials to be used; teaching-learning activities; post-lesson activities. (Phyak & Sharma, 2017 p.7)

The way they foregrounded the four steps could revolutionize the conventional teaching practice and set up a new paradigm about using particularity, practicality and possibility in the language classroom. This is a big concern for the postmethod pedagogy as it mainly rests on the three pedagogic parameters. From the above research, the parameter of possibility along with the concept of praxis in real life students can easily be introduced in the classroom. There is no denying the value of education in fostering social development; however, language instructors frequently concentrate their efforts on helping students gain communicative or linguistic competence at the expense of social competence or the utilization of materials meant to expand students' experience repertoire through a humanistic and cultural perspective (Pereira, 2017).

These discussions obviously conjecture the needs, and the need of postmethod pedagogy is undeniable in English language classrooms in Nepal according to these studies. Different research demonstrated that this postmethod could be the helping hands to improvise the learning environment, and this commencement would drive the concept of language teaching into the new direction. Only the area of priority is not in communicative and linguistic competence, but also in making students aware of societal issues along with these competence is essential today.

### **International Practices of Postmethod Pedagogy**

Tremendous changes have occurred in the last twenty years in the second or foreign language teaching profession (Akbari, 2008). The rise of postmethod pedagogy is a consequence of constant discontent that emerged after applying several methods in the language teaching field. Dissatisfaction with the language-teaching techniques that dominated second language education from the late 19th to the late 20th centuries gave rise to the postmethod pedagogy movement (Scholl, 2017). The research held in Iran (Khodabakhshzadeh et.al, 2018) stated that the principles and methods of postmethod pedagogy make the teacher satisfied and confident. This also encouraged teachers to abandon all the rigid methods and routineized principles and approach to postmethod pedagogy. Teachers' reflection on the concept of postmethod pedagogy revealed their willingness and enthusiasm to accept this approach is tremendous.

The study (Mothaka, 2015) suggested that postmethod pedagogy acknowledges the need of inclusive practices and empowerment of lecturers to be acquainted whether the classroom would be child-friendly or restriction based. The same field also claimed that teachers are capable of espousing their own theories which are beyond the principles and methods of professional theories. Liberation, a primary pillar of postmethod pedagogy, eased the language teaching-learning environment that comes in the form of negotiation. Respecting subjectivity and self-identity may contribute to the equalization of power dynamics in roles that

have historically been arenas of conflict. Thirdly, when the teacher treats the other participants as informants rather than opponents, positive working relationships emerge in a negotiating environment (Delport, 2010).

While examining the teachers' perception on the applicability of three parameters of postmethod pedagogy, the study (Nizigama, 2020) underpinned particularity, practicality and possibility are very relevant in the language teaching. The findings suggested that language teaching must comply with localization, empiricism and transformation. Regarding academic autonomy of postmethod pedagogy, it could be the biggest advantage for the teachers and students to transform conventional ways of teaching language (Rajabieslami, 2016).

According to another research, students were able to question their ideas about language as they read and analyzed works authored by subaltern bodies, which caused them to become more aware of social than structural factors (Da et.al, 2020). This means to prescribe that language teaching does not only emphasize mentoring grammatical rules and regulations but also emphasizes the societal structures. Language acts as an instrument to empower and awaken the individuals in relation to identity, power and justice. Postmethod pedagogy is influenced by constructivism and postmodernism, particularity, pragmatism, and possibility, as well as context-oriented teaching and learning. In this backdrop, thus, the post-method age has to do with glocalization. Language teachers are expected to incorporate local culture into their English instruction and teach their students based on their individual differences and learning strategies. Glocalization has an impact on interlanguage and culture, individual differences, and learning strategies (Lusianov, 2020). However, teachers in one research, Sabouri & Mahboubi (2022) revealed the desire of reluctance in acceptance of postmethod pedagogy as they were accustomed to using the same method since long ago. Teachers do not believe that there is a single, ideal approach, despite their support for the use of language teaching techniques in the classroom. They concurred that teachers can combine different approaches for more effective instruction, and that methods can be changed based on the requirements of the community. These findings seem to validate the central tenet of post-method teaching, namely teacher autonomy (Boran & Gürkan, 2020).

Looking from the angle of postmethod pedagogy, language teaching process is mainly reliant on constructivism and postmodernism; these paradigms liberates teachers and students from rigidity and encourage them to embrace their own methods according to their own socio-cultural experiences and local epistemological domain. Many educators firmly believe that no single method is compatible for all situations. Moreover, standing on the base of postmethod pedagogy, belief in a single method as the ideal method is no longer present in academia. Choosing a language approach is not how influential and comprehensive it is; however, it is capable of addressing the existing needs of students and teachers in certain communities is a decent examination area. Here, teachers enjoy the power of epistemological fusion between various approaches to form a new approach compatible with their own needs and expectations. TheThe study concluded that teachers have initiated enjoying autonomy only after the complete understanding of the tenets of postmethod pedagogy.

## **Methodology**

This study reviewed various articles and books published in the field of postmethod pedagogy. Complying with the collected data and thematic generalization of various articles, I analyzed them from the angle of postmethod pedagogy. During this review process, I segregated the parameters of postmethod pedagogy and retrieved different findings. After this, I used preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta analysis to retrieve how this approach scrutinizes and moderates the ongoing practices of language teaching. I scanned altogether nineteen articles, 12 from qualitative and 7 from quantitative research design. For PRISMA, papers published incorporating language teaching issues of Nepal and international community have been thoroughly scanned and analyzed from the post method pedagogy, namely particularity, practicality and possibility.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Evolution versus Revolution in Approach to Language Teaching**

While analyzing different papers, this research found that the approach to teaching language is just a process of evolution. The advent of approach to language facilitating comes just a consequence of insufficiency and impracticality to certain communities. The rise of these methods are on the stage of evolution as one method in one era plays a dominant role while the next one is in the next epoch. This process, in this analysis, involves a certain investigation on the previous approach, namely the areas not to be addressed by the previous approach. Therefore, the realization of necessity is aligned with the fulfilment of existing needs, and hence the next approach knocks on the door of the previous approach. There are many other approaches, from grammar translation methods to eclectic approaches to language teaching. Nevertheless, their arrival seems complementary not supplementary in this field. Standing on the base of complementary, this evolution is a linear process.

In contrast, revolution means entire change in the existing situation. Methods come just to replace the other methods; however, these methods are in compliance with the previous approaches. Supporting a few tenets and principles, a new approach just resides behind it. Here, in the postmodern period, postmethod pedagogy comes to observe how these methods work and what further requires improvisation. Its inception is mainly for inspection and inspiration to other approaches for contextualization of the major issues of language teaching.

In the area of applicability, teachers' concern is just to express its features; however, an apparent model of three parameters of this pedagogy has not been presented and implemented in the classroom yet. Moreover, this postmethod pedagogy is viewed as just a method to substitute other methods, but it comes in the name of assistance to other existing methods of language teaching.

### **Demystify, Decentralize and Decoloniality**

Analyzing from these papers, this research retrieved that whatever practices and



perceptions attempt to be embraced in the field of language teaching come under the influence of demystification, decentralization and decoloniality. The approach has been projected to simplify language teaching and learning process with the alignment of present situation to address present needs. The transparent result that study sheds lights on is an intensive desire to breach the legacy of continuous practices of the same approaches as they were before. Few educators claim that they have initiated to fuse locally- suitable pedagogy and the pedagogy invented elsewhere. The next outcome is how the role of teachers changes according to the context. Hierarchy and hegemony have been converted into nonhierarchical and non hegemonic relationships in the classroom. In this backdrop, the relationship between teachers and students narrows down, and students feel comfortable in constant conversation and negotiation with teachers to produce the meaning.. Here, language learning, mostly dependent on engagement and interaction, comes under the influence of constructivism and pragmatism. However, these practices and provisions are still obscure in the domain of specific uses as teachers expressed their views standing on the periphery of post-method pedagogy.

The constant rise in the desire to modify, amend and reconstruct the approaches and accept them is an example of decoloniality. Analyzed papers project that despite being familiar about the emerging paradigm and swiftness of language teaching, teachers' accustomation with their long teaching trends appear as constraint for application.

### **Assistance to Several Approaches**

The findings of the study incorporated that postmethod pedagogy could be and is much relevant to examine existing trends and practices of various methods and underpin these methods to language teaching. Moreover, postmethod pedagogy foregrounds and represents the clear route for other methods to incorporate concrete practices about how to facilitate language teaching, fuse both the theory and practice, and negotiate different societal issues via language. Teachers who approached postmethod pedagogy expressed their satisfaction and confidence in language teaching. Similarly, it inscribed the new paradigm in pedagogy where teachers are no longer thought to be practitioners of rigid-based method and imported approach from outside, rather they enjoy espousing their own methods compatible to comply with the needs and expectations of respective areas and learners.

This effort concedes that localization is to be adopted in both practices and syllabus. Standing on the base of particularity, it emphasizes a local-driven curriculum and pedagogy that are aligned with the interests of students and teachers. The acquaintance of the subject and culturally noticeable behaviors of teachers ignites the craze of learning in the community of students. In the subsequent stage, practicality encompasses the concrete learning with a fusion of theory and practice. Taking the support of particularity, teachers and students simultaneously execute their practices that align with their courses. Last parameter is possibility, an entity that incorporates critical thinking, and consequently emphasizes societal issues in language classrooms. According to possibility, society is a laboratory of language, and language is an instrument of social transformation. It concluded that language teaching must comply with social issues and subjects. However, many educators have not executed this

possibility in classrooms. The findings demonstrate that despite the advocacy on particularity, practicality, and possibility, teachers' concern about application still faces complexities. In addition, research revealed that students feel liberated when they are in a language classroom asking various questions about status-quo, power, ideology and freedom. However, for its entire application as a lens to observe weaknesses of other methods and improvise these shortcomings, one has to precisely acknowledge its basic epistemology and principles. Many educators and academicians are fully aware of its theoretical aspect; however, the method of its application still requires an extensive and comprehensive study. From the data retrieved from the literature review, it analyzed that the classroom raised social awareness and prepared learners to ask questions on social issues.

## Conclusion

Currently, the existing approaches in the domain of language teaching have not entirely satisfied practitioners to address the full-fledged goals of curriculum and learners in the class. Looking at the present scenario in detail, three parameters of postmethod pedagogy have concluded that the teaching procedures and inclusion of subject matters have not complied with students' needs and areas of interest. In terms of preference, postmethod pedagogy is the most preferred area of educators as it embraces ten macro strategies that are in direct connection with teaching and learning process. The constant dissatisfaction on approaches has resulted in the movement of postmethod pedagogy, and its new direction paved the way for both novice and experienced teachers. In the subsequent stage, postmethod pedagogy is indispensable in language teaching academia. Looking both in Nepal and across Nepal, it has become a buzzword that assists in different areas. Nevertheless, having some problems, according to previous research, namely in Nepal, like lecture driven classrooms, teaching influenced by gurukul system, teachers' autonomy and their imposed rules, impede the application of observation of postmethod pedagogy. At present, this result demonstrates that only willingness to accept postmethod pedagogy is not enough; however, the mentality of educators and management of the classroom is in need of transformation to better understand how postmethod pedagogy works.

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