

# English Language Teaching with Engagement in Mind Implementing Post Method Approaches

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**ABSTRACT** – *This research studies the post method approaches in the English language teaching context of Pakistan. The study argues that methods are colonial legacy which are imposed upon all the cultural and social settings. The post-method approaches like particularity, practicality and possibility can bring drastic change in English language teaching of Pakistani context. This research has used qualitative questionnaires for collecting data. The selection of research participants is based on purposive sampling. The findings reveal that the post method approach makes teaching and learning effective by emphasizing on the context of the students and situation. Therefore, this study has investigated the post method strategies and approaches practiced in the ELT context of Pakistan.*

**Key words:** *Post-Method Approaches; ELT; Second Language Teaching;*

## I. Introduction

Post-method approaches deal with a context based situation for micro and macro language teaching and learning strategies to engage students in the given condition. Post-method approach is an academic and intellectual reaction to the methods of modernity that were emphasized to be fixed in every given context which produced unexpected results. Modern era methods ignored the particularity of the society i.e, context and its contradictions and were generalized around the globe. Post-method approach is based upon post-modern approach of relativity of the context and is also viewed from the lenses of post-colonial reaction to the so-called modernity. In the words of Kumaravadivelu (2006), being a post-modern construct, post-method approaches entail bottom-up strategy that set up context, curriculum, teaching and learning in a relevant situation different from the marginalization of modernity. In contrast to the modern methods, post method approach allows learners to understand the world and form its worldview from unusual and new perspective.

This research paper deals with the post-method approach in post-modern teaching and learning settings. It also argues against the modern approach of generalization of the context without considering its incongruity and challenges that halt effective teaching and learning in the given context. The importance of this study is in the fact that post method approach plays a vital role in developing creative and critical understanding and practice of the learners. Moreover, this study will reveal the dynamics of contextualization that post-methodists deal with and will also provide grounds of implementing the post-method approach to the novice language practitioners. Its results will satisfy the inquisitive minds by

responding the questions after investigating the collected data from English language practitioners across Pakistan.

Additionally, this study will supply some important inputs to the complex field of teaching and learning English language. The context of the study is Pakistan and the researcher intends to bring forth the pedagogical ins and outs which teachers set as their aims and objectives to achieve. The findings from the data analysis will contribute the deep and clear understanding for the importance of the contextualizing of English language teaching and learning. This will also contribute to the new and effective approaches for novice teachers to acquire their language teaching objectives and goals in the provided context of the classroom. This study shall also guide the curriculum designers, language practitioners and policy makers to decide and set language learning and teaching in the given direction of Pakistan's context. They all will enrich their understanding about the importance of strategies applied in specific context in order to promote the cultural-guided teaching and learning of English language in an effective way. Above all, this research will contribute to make English language teaching in a relevant in the context of Pakistan in the light of post-method strategies.

## II. Literature Review

Post-method approach is an emancipatory response to the pedagogies based upon modern methods. Modern methods are ideological and political loaded that impose particular methods in all contexts across globe. Since they are ideological and political in their construct, they exercise power relations based on propaganda and exploitation (Khong and Saito, 2014). Post-method approach can challenge the class

structure of oppression and dominance. According to Paulo Friere (1972) current pedagogies can challenge and knock down the structure of exploitation and dominance. He further argues that it is the pedagogy through dialogue that facilitates both teachers and students to challenge the social context critically, pose question to it and reconstruct it through dialogue-based approach in pedagogical practices. Modern approaches of methodical practices are monologic in their nature and context; as their foundations are colonial as imposed from the core on the peripheries (Peter McLaren, 1995). Post-method approach, according to him, is post-modern construct that focuses on the importance of the relative context in which pedagogical practices are employed. These arguments clarify the demarcation between method and post-method approaches.

Moreover, a method is believed to be prescriptive in its nature and approach, however a post method approach is descriptive approach that cannot be generalized to all the teaching and learning contexts, but it is specific to a particular context that a situation provides (Douglas Brown, 2002). It means that every method puts forward some fixed rules claimed to be applicable in all contexts, but post-method approach does not prescribe any rigid set of rules. Post method approach is rather flexible in nature and conduct it provides varieties of strategies in order to stasify the needs of learners. Since post method approach is descriptive in its nature and conduct, it does not tag along any prescribed syllabus (Richards, 2013). For that, a teacher draws on his own conceptualized version of language and situation-specific concepts about teaching and learning. Thus, the post method approach substitutes the rigidity of language teaching and learning and provides strategies to deal with the needs of the learners.

The post-method approach encloses socio-political and ideological aspects including classroom dynamics that control the second language (L2) teaching and learning (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). In addition to it, Kumaravadivelu has drawn post method approach on three factors: Possibility, particularity and practicality. He defines possibility as the applicability of the post method approach through given resources. Particularity deals with the relevance of the objectives achieved by teachers and students in the process of English language teaching and learning. Possibility is the context-based strategy for him. Therefore, it proves that a teacher does not have to generalize his borrowed teaching strategies from other contexts to his own cultural situation.

The employment of post-method pedagogical strategies and approaches are increasing in the teaching and learning context of Pakistan, but there is lack of research work on this perspective which can mainly contribute to highlight the issues

related to methodical approach for teaching and learning in this particular context. Hence, English language teaching approaches practiced in Pakistan should be studied in order to establish a mature understanding of the post-method strategies of the teachers and students. Similarly, this study investigates the contextualized understanding and use of the post method approaches and strategies in Pakistan.

### III. Research Methodology

This study lies within the sphere of qualitative research that studies the post method approaches in English language teaching and learning context of Pakistan. Strauss and Corbin (1990) define qualitative research as:

The term 'qualitative research' means any type of research study that generates results without using statistical procedures or any means leading to quantification. It refers to investigate the lives of people, their lived experiences, sentiments, feelings, behaviors, functions of organizations, social and political movements, cultural conducts and trends as well as interactions between nations. Hence, qualitative paradigm findings are not the result of any statistical data but by exploring rationales behind diverse characteristics of behavior.

The researcher has used open-ended qualitative survey questionnaire as a tool for data collection. The questionnaire was sent to the four research participants through email and their answers were received in the same way. The researcher has used purposive sampling for the selection of four research participants from different sections of Pakistan who use post-method approaches in their teaching strategy. Moreover, the researcher has also made use of thematic analysis method for the study of collected data.

### IV. Data Analysis

In this part, the researcher has conducted thematic analysis of the three post method approaches used in Pakistan's ELT context: particularity, practicality, and possibility respectively.

#### A. The Post-Method Approach of Particularity in Pakistan's ELT Context

The second participant responded to the same question and asserted that he uses flip classroom strategy. He uses technological devices and allow students to use mobile phones for listening skills.

According to the third participant he uses local language at the start of his class in order to develop intimacy and the sense of connectivity among students and then he makes them discuss their day to day affairs in English in order to make his teaching context specific to particularity.

The fourth participant also relatively uses the same approach. He makes a list of local issues like religious festivals and poor health infrastructure and address these issues firstly then ask his students for solution in order to make learning student-oriented in order to strengthen the particularity of the context.

All of the four participants who are ELT practitioners belong to different parts of Pakistan. Their responses reveal the fact that they employ post-method approach of particularity for effective teaching and learning. Various ELT teachers use it for their situational-specific motives, and they employ it in a particular region of the context. For example starting the class in local language creates harmony and closeness among teacher and student or for listening skills teacher allows his students to use mobile phones in their class that is less practiced in the context of Pakistan. Normally, we have a teacher who keeps on delivering his lecture on specific topic and students listen to his accent and adapt it for their spoken, but allowing usage of technical devices creates difference as students can acquire native accent after listening to the videos for listening skills. This reveals that particularity of language learning and teaching is an effective approach for engaging students in learning.

### **B. The Post-Method Approach of Practicality**

In response to the question regarding practicality of post-method approach in Pakistani context, the first participant emphasized on the practicality than theoretical approach in order to make teaching relevant.

The second participant stated that freedom is the important component for practicality. In context of Pakistan, most of the private and public institutes do not allow teachers to devise their own approaches and lessons. So for him, freedom to a language practitioner is the basic factor in order to be context-specific for practicing effective language teaching approach.

The third participant emphasized the importance of reflective teaching in order to acquire practicality in his teaching context. The assessment of one's own teaching may help teacher to be context-specific in his language teaching approach.

The fourth participant is of the view that practicality starts with cultural context. If any teacher brings lessons that are very close to the cultural context of the students they will respond positively and engage themselves in a effective learning setting.

All of the above responses emphasize the importance of cultural context in language teaching and learning for achieving particularity in post-method era. The freedom provided to a teacher, reflective approach and context-specific

lessons assist in establishing particularity which again has to engage students' needs and understanding. Moreover, the participants' responses reveal that post-method approach for practicality is not one-sided and linear, but it is again context based that helps to get success in teaching and learning objectives.

Above all, the ELT practitioners clarify that they bring local context in their language teaching and set up such activities which have relevance to the culture in order to engage students' practicality of learning in effective manner. In this way, students can improve their language competence and performance out of the confusion of non-nativity. The improvement in students' language skills provide proofs to the teacher that he has acquired the post method practicality without engaging and confusing the foreign context into local situation of language learning.

### **C. The Post Method Strategy of Possibility**

The first participant responded to the question regarding achieving the approach of possibility in ELT class and said that prescribed methods like Grammar Translation Method and Direct method are colonial legacies. They have implications of dominance of one situation over the other. These methods do not fix generally in the context of Sub-continent and Pakistan in particular. He makes use of Post method approach for possibility through allowing students to choose any topic that interests them for constructing the possibility of Post method strategy for specific context.

The second ELT practitioner stated that he creates possibility for post method approach through respecting the needs and wants of students. Students have contextual leanings which develop their interest in learning.

The third language teacher argued that possibility for post method approach is possible only if teachers become unbound to the methods and consistently interact with their students.

The final participant responded that possibility can only be developed if the teacher and student hierarchy is challenged. In order to develop post method approach of possibility, the teacher has to be student and the student a teacher.

The above responses show that the approach of possibility can only occur through engaging students in context based tasks, respecting their needs, challenging the social hierarchies and leaving behind the modern methods. If any teacher meets with these criteria, the approach of possibility will prevail in the ELT context of Pakistan. Furthermore, it will help students in achieving highest results.

## V. Conclusion

The above study shows that some teachers are using post-method approaches of particularity, possibility and practicality across Pakistan for effective teaching. These approaches also contribute to the better performance of the students. If post method approaches become embedded part of the ELT context of Pakistan, they will enhance linguistic richness among the social diversity and multiplicity of the cultures.

## VI. References

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