

Utilizing the Eclectic Method in Teaching English to Iraqi EFL Learners: A Teacher's Perspective

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ABSTRACT:

The study aimed to explain the importance of using the eclectic method and its distinctive role in the process of teaching the English language in the Iraqi EFL classroom. The study was designed on a review of previous literature. A literature review is considered to be the use of ideas found in the literature to justify a particular approach and to choose appropriate methods to achieve the basic goals. The results of previous studies have emphasized the development of education as a result of the use of eclectic methods. Additionally, the researcher found that teaching the English language currently requires the use of the eclectic method because it includes the use of more than one method while teaching the new curriculum, especially in Iraq, and it is one of the preferred methods for developing learners' communication and enabling them to understand activities.

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Introduction:

Ishcan (2017) mentioned the importance of skills that help to develop the learners' competence. In addition, the ability to converse or to speak the language and knowing the types of sentences and grammatical rules is not sufficient to know the language or a way to understand and develop the art of communication. Knowing a foreign language requires speaking the language, understanding what is being heard, writing according to grammatical rules, and understanding any written text by acquiring it from the learning method. Several years ago, the question was, "What methods should be used to acquire basic skills?" It is one of the most important issues for educating learners, as well as teachers' knowledge of the types of methods that help them to develop their field of knowledge in the field of language teaching.

Likewise, Duzzy (2002) explained in his study in the field of teaching the English language, especially the use of eclectic methods and their application in developing learners' ideas and strengthening their communication with others through the use of activities within the classroom. He emphasized the distinctive role of the eclectic method and the application of mixed language teaching methods with developments from the past to the present. Although each method aims to teach the language as quickly as possible, eclecticism is the method that alone can meet this need.

One of the most important methods that occurs between the teacher and the learners is called the eclectic method, it is effectively derived from different fields related to methodology, sociology, psychology, and language (Dozi, 2002). In addition, cooperative learning also helps students become more confident, supports teachers in utilizing a range of techniques in a single lesson, and plays a useful role in helping students pay attention to lessons (Yapıcı, 2016).

The role of the eclectic method is very important in teaching language, the eclectic approach is the distinctive approach in language teaching methodologies, as most teachers use it in classroom activities and techniques that help the learners understand difficult topics and

subjects that need clarification (Billah, 2015). It depends on the use of a variety of activities and active events in the book that help in learning the language, each of which may have very different characteristics and objectives within the daily lessons and whose components in the different language (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, etc.) do not have meaning when they are isolated from each other (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Mellow, 2000). Likewise, the four skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, are considered the basis of teaching the eclectic method. There cannot be eclectic practice without the four skills, and it may include real practice that includes the basics of paragraphs in the classroom. In this method, the teacher decides the teaching methodology or approach to be used depending on the objectives of the lesson and the learners in the group. Gao (2011) believes that the eclectic approach is the best type of modern method that has produced fruitful results because it is a combination of various methods that work to develop the teacher's skills, work to develop the educational process, and make teaching a type suitable for any type of learner, regardless of age and standard. From this principle, learning is fun and innovative, as new learners have a clear vision of the educational concepts they are learning. Multiple approaches to the lesson, high interaction, and quick and active learning are the prominent features of this method. The main goal of the eclectic method is to link real-life experiences with the ideas presented in language learning.

In most countries, the eclectic method has an important role in teaching the English language, it contributes to changing the learners' ideas and developing learners' activities, each lesson or small group of lessons, especially when the teacher relies on lesson planning, including semester planning, which includes (distribution of the course over months and weeks, teaching objectives for each academic session or period, and the specific methods and evaluation tools used). Also, weekly or daily planning is done for learners. Therefore, the objective of this study explain the importance of using the eclectic method, which has proven its distinctive role in the process of teaching and training the English language in the Iraqi EFL classroom.

The problem of the Study:

Teaching English has become very significant during the latter era, and the essentials have been set to this discipline. Hussein and Elttayef (2018) mentioned in their study that the role of teachers is very important in teaching modern curricula, but in recent years, they have been facing various types of obstacles that have exhausted them and made education boring and also made the process slow and weak in educational institutions. These obstacles put teachers in a dilemma in dealing with all the difficulties and obstacles in teaching learners for their future. Iraq is one of the countries where the educational system has deteriorated in recent years. It has been proven that many types of research work to reduce problems and at least find solutions to weaknesses in the results to achieve high levels of quality in teaching English as a foreign language in all educational institutions.

Many studies were also conducted on the use of modern methods and activating the role of the eclectic method in both the Arab world and Western countries and emphasized the problems of teaching the English language, as there were varying differences in views and opinions on the subject. By focusing on this topic, it was found that teaching the English language in Arab countries, especially Iraq is exposed to many problems that prevent teachers from doing their work adequately and do not help them to complete their work with confidence and accuracy (Hussein and Elttayef, 2017).

There are social and cultural factors that have a significant impact on the methods of teaching English. Many teachers in the Arab world are affected by these factors in teaching English as a foreign language, these factors play a major role in the educational process (Hussein and Elttayef, 2018). Currently, some teachers teach English in educational institutions, they do not teach English as a language of communication, they teach formally without focusing on the basic matters of developing and motivating their students. Therefore, teachers and learners take English as a foreign language lightly and without interest. In addition, students think about only marks to pass the test without paying attention to the details of basic communication. Hence, they pass the English test to finish the lesson without learning any English. As a result, there will be various obstacles in the current study, for example, teachers present English formally without focusing on basic tasks or using standards in playing the role of developing their communication. When creating daily plans for language instruction, some teachers neglect to prioritize behavioral and cognitive goals. Despite the fact that Iraq implemented a new curriculum called "Iraq Opportunities" that required the use of eclectic methods, this approach is regarded as one of the most important ways to teach English because the curriculum contains a variety of materials that require the use of one, two, or three methods during a lesson. This approach makes it easier for teachers to meet the learning objectives. Thus, the eclectic approach makes it easy for EFL students to comprehend the lesson's contents. Some educators fail to acknowledge the unique characteristics of their students, which makes the less proficient students feel ashamed. Educators still maintain that teaching language as a collection of separate, disjointed skills is preferable to teaching it as an integrated set of skills. For instance, according to Hussein and Elttayef (2018), grammar is taught separately from reading and writing. Moreover, writing and reading are unrelated. The disjointed approach lowers pupils' communicative proficiency.

Method:

The current study was designed on a review of previous literature. A literature review is considered to be "the use of ideas found in the literature to justify a particular approach and to choose appropriate methods to achieve the basic goals of developing the educational process." (Hart, 1998).

Theoretical Perspective:

Today, it is clear that there will not be sufficient methods in the field of teaching a foreign language. Some researchers who specialize in the field of teaching believe that teachers can be effective in their work and able to solve the obstacles that exhaust education, especially in teaching a foreign language (Sebüktekin, 1981; Mellow, 2000). Moreover, language teaching is important in the modern era. It is not possible to focus on a specific method in the classroom. In the new curriculum, the idea of using the appropriate method that solves teaching problems and facilitates understanding and comprehension emerged. It is called the eclectic method, which is the method that combines several methods and works simultaneously (Demirel, 1988; Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Therefore, the eclectic method is considered one of the best methods of teaching the language and works to develop social and cultural communication. The reason is that it combines methods for teaching the language according to the objectives of the course and the capabilities of the learners. It also improves the learners' ambitions because it is also known as the mixed approach in stimulating learners' knowledge.

More importantly, Kumar (2013) stated the eclectic method is one of the latest methods that play a major role in developing learners' vocabularies. This method is a stimulating way to improve students' understanding at all ages and levels. Learning language through the eclectic method is the best method because it is fun and innovative. According to Taron and Yule (1989), this method is stimulating to learners' communication, because it allows the learners to participate and then allows the teacher to choose the paragraphs from time to time. The eclectic method allows teachers to interact clearly and encourages the completion of exercises and interaction by placing vocabulary in the appropriate place. This method helps to combine elements of traditional and cognitive methods to make them powerful. It helps to teach equality and enhance competitiveness.

Moreover, Demirel (2008) specified that this method is called the eclectic method because it takes and uses the useful parts of the topics in the classroom. In the classroom, the teacher chooses the method that is closest to the learners' understanding and uses it as needed depending on the situation in the paragraphs. For example; the cognitive method can be used in teaching the rules of linguistic knowledge, and the habit method and the communication method can be used to acquire the skill of speaking and listening. Also, the study of (Barın, 1994; İşcan 2017) claimed that this method helps to develop learners' ideas and desires towards the language, especially in conversations and dialogues. When learners' activities are sufficiently developed, various techniques are used such as demonstration, questions and answers on ambiguous topics, drama, simulation, group work, and games. Here, the eclectic approach can be the best way to solve problems and stimulate learners' ideas in classroom activities.

Important points for the teacher:

- 1- The teacher selects different teaching strategies from different approaches and integrates them into one curriculum (İşcan, A., 2017). For example, if the topic requires a communication method and a direct method, the teacher is supposed to use two methods to facilitate the process of understanding the lesson.
- 2- Teachers monitor the classroom and choose the most effective and appropriate language strategies (İşcan, A., 2017). For example, the teacher asks some students to solve an exercise in front of other students, looks at the language, and motivates others to interact and complete other exercises in class.
- 3- The eclectic approach does not refer to mixing random methods but rather relates to the real ships that are systematic in all aspects (İşcan, A., 2017). For example, the teacher selects three methods that are appropriate to the lesson and facilitates the process of understanding the lesson, in addition to using the four skills in the same lesson so that he can motivate students to learn.

Advantages of the Eclectic Method:

- 1- The eclectic method approach helps in gaining students' interest. Especially when it combines elements of traditional and cognitive methods to make them interesting. It helps to teach equality and enhance competitiveness.
- 2- Gives diversity in the classroom. The teacher provides a variety of exercises that support the lesson, in addition to pictures and group work, to allow all students to participate in the lesson.

- 3- Covers all aspects of a language. This method helps to develop learners' ideas and desires towards the language, especially in conversations and dialogues.
- 4- Presents a clear way to students of what they are learning. The best way to solve problems and stimulate learners' ideas in the classroom.
- 5- Increase engagement of students in learning. This method is a stimulating way to improve students' understanding at all ages and levels.
- 6- The teacher has flexibility in teaching. It serves the learning purpose and encourages the students to learn the language easily.
- 7- Ease of choosing teaching methods and methods according to the needs of students. There is an important role for the teacher in choosing methods according to the student's needs, which is important because it develops the learners' ideas quickly and motivates the learners to pay attention to the lesson (İşcan, A., 2017).

Disadvantage of the Eclectic Method:

- 1- It needs the deep knowledge of the teacher. The teacher cannot give the lesson if he does not have great knowledge of the method
- 2- 2-It can't be used by inexperienced teachers; this method requires an experienced teacher or a trainer in eclectic methods
- 3- It takes a long time. This method takes a lot of time from the lesson and effort in conveying the idea to the students, which is why some teachers do not use this method
- 4- 4-It isn't useful to slow learners since the method takes time to teach the paragraphs, it slows down the learners (İşcan, A., 2017).

The characteristics of the teaching and learning process in the Eclectic approach are:

- 1- Innovative and fun teaching. Teaching is characterized by the highest level of enjoyment when the teacher gives the details of the lesson in an eclectic manner
- 2- Active participant. Here the learner and teacher are active in the interaction process. The educational process is effective in developing learners' skills
- 3- 3-Individual needs. The eclectic method meets individual needs and develops learners' ideas by motivating them to solve questions
- 4- 4-practical and objective learning, the eclectic method helps learners learn practically and easily, and its work is purposeful in developing communication between students
- 5- Retained knowledge. One of the advantages of the eclectic method of teaching is retrieving information through lesson activities and using the eclectic method by referring to pictures or suggestions.
- 6- 6-Methodology clearness. Clarity of methodology, the method is characterized by the clarity of the work methodology through the correct vision (İşcan, A., 2017).

What is the role of the teacher in the eclectic approach?

The teacher selects the Eclectic types of learning activities in the textbook that should be directly related to the student's experiences in the real world. So an eclectic teacher has to be imaginative, energetic, and willing to experiment to keep lessons varied and interesting (İşcan, A., 2017). For example, the teacher teaches the lesson collectively, by teaching grammar, and integrating it with other skills such as reading and writing, and using more

than one method according to the need of the topic with the method that is easiest for the learner by supporting it with examples that facilitate the learners' understanding. This type makes the student strong in understanding basic paragraphs (Hussein and Latif, 2017).

The Criticism of the Method:

The eclectic method is a very essential method for teaching the English language, especially in the new curriculum named "Iraq Opportunities. This method is flexible and comprehensive because it works to encourage learners to participate collectively (İşcan, 2017). This method has become widely known among researchers and teachers, and the field of its application is exciting. However, it has become more popular among teachers who apply it with pleasure and interaction. According to İşcan's (2017), the eclectic approach is a technique for selecting methods, much more than one method itself, it serves the learning purpose and encourages the students to learn the language systematically. Teachers must collaborate to select the most effective approaches or approaches that they believe will be most helpful (Arak, 2014).

More essentially, İşkan (2017) mentioned in the study that this new approach develops learners' ideas about communication strategies and different teaching methods and techniques and gives them a great incentive to be able to choose the right path among the good situations in textbooks. In this case, all teachers need to come together and choose the best methods or approaches that they find suitable and to synthesize a new synthesis. (Memiş & Erdem, 2013).

Practice of Eclectic Process in Instruction Language to Iraqi learners

Subject: Four skills in teaching language

Aim: To develop the language of the learners.

Class: 3rd intermediate

Approach: apply the Eclectic Technique

Procedure: Concept Map Technique

Duration: 25 min.

Presentation of practice:

Use four skills to teach English, which include four abilities: speaking and writing as well as the skills of expression (reading, listening). Expression refers to the ability to learner's thoughts and feelings through written or spoken words. Understanding a learner refers to understanding of learner's written statement in a textbook. These abilities are useful because they facilitate the development of comprehension, which is based on hearing or interpreting the thoughts and feelings of others. Two categories could also be used to analyze comprehension abilities. So, the teacher selects different teaching methods from different activities and blends them into one approach, which is called the eclectic method to instruct language to Iraqi learners.

Discussion:

The eclectic method is considered the best modern method. It is a comprehensive method and the appropriate method according to the level of learners' interest. There is a consensus on the idea of eclecticism and its fundamental role, especially in experimental studies, and specialists in the field of methodology, applied linguistics, and TESL have also focused on it (İşcan, 2017). It has been shown in the results of many experimental studies that this method played a distinctive role in developing the educational process and also increased the learners' motivation. This method has emerged in various countries such as China, Malaysia, America, Morocco, and other countries. (Yun et.al. 2007). In the study shown by Zhi (2004), it has been noted in recent studies that the eclectic method is very important in the interaction between the teacher and the learners and has contributed to activating the role of the teacher by choosing the appropriate method, It has also contributed to developing listening and reading skills in language teaching, which increases the learners' knowledge. Similarly, Jebiwot et.al. (2016) stated that the eclectic method has succeeded in teaching the English language, especially in the implication of teaching language. In his study on using new methods in the application of language in the classroom such as direct, communicative, and eclectic approaches. More importantly, Sıddıqi (2012) explained in the study that teachers mostly prefer this method to enjoy themselves and feel free, and it's a useful strategy for students. Ubeid (2013) discovered that the student's vocabulary and reading comprehension have both increased as a result of the use of an eclectic approach. It has been noted that Kaur, Kohli, and Devi's (2008) study discovered that the eclectic approach and cognitive techniques have helped learners improve learners' mathematics skills. According to Rekha's (2014) pilot study, using the eclectic technique helps students improve a variety of skills, including reading, listening comprehension, and pronunciation. Furthermore, Suleman and Hussain (2016) found that the eclectic approach improved students' academic performance in their English language.

Based on the findings of the previous studies as well as the current study, an emphasis must be on the importance of using the eclectic method, which has proven its distinctive role in the process of teaching and training the English language. This method focused mainly on quotations and explanations that contribute to the development of communicative linguistic skills, meanings, and vocabulary. This method is considered one of the most important modern foreign language teaching methods in terms of the foreign language teaching process (İşcan, 2017) Although there was a new curriculum named Because the lesson plan contains a variety of topics that require the use of one, two, or three distinct techniques, "Iraq Opportunities" in Iraq requires the use of an eclectic method, which is recognized as one of the most significant approaches in teaching English. Teachers can easily accomplish the learning objectives with this strategy. Therefore, EFL students find it easier to understand the lesson's contents thanks to the eclectic approach. Some teachers fail to recognize the special qualities in each of their students, which causes the less skilled students to feel inferior. Teachers still focus on the old ways as they believe that language can be better taught as separate skills than as integrated skills. For example, when teachers present the lesson, grammar is taught independently and is not combined with other items such as reading and writing, this type makes the student weak in understanding basic paragraphs (Hussein and Elttayef, 2017).

Conclusion:

In the conclusion of the current study, Through surveying the opinions of most English language teachers, experts in the field of the English language, and based on the findings of the previous studies, the researcher found that teaching the English language currently requires the use of the eclectic method because it includes the use of more than one method while teaching the new curriculum, especially in Iraq, and it is one of the preferred methods for developing learners' communication and enabling them to understand activities. As well as this method has also achieved basic goals in developing the educational process and giving the student a prominent role in understanding lessons and achieving the successful application of comprehensive quality, which is the basis of the Ministry's vision to achieve successful quality.

As a result of this study, the importance of using the eclectic method should be emphasized in the process of education. In the light of the above mentioned determinations. This method is particularly evidenced by the quotations and explanations that contribute to the development of language skills and vocabulary, and that this method is a contemporary foreign language teaching method in terms of the foreign language teaching process.

استخدام الطريقة الانتقائية في تدريس اللغة الإنكليزية لمعلمي اللغة الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية في العراق: من وجهة نظر المدرس

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الكلمات المفتاحية | الطريقة الانتقائية، اللغة الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية، اللغة الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية للمتعلمين العراقيين.



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ملخص البحث:

هدفت الدراسة إلى توضيح أهمية استخدام الطريقة الانتقائية ودورها المميز في عملية تدريس اللغة الإنكليزية في الفصول الدراسية العراقية. وقد صممت الدراسة الحالية على مراجعة الأدبيات السابقة. تعتبر مراجعة الأدبيات هي استخدام الأفكار الموجودة في الأدبيات لترير النهج معين واختيار الأساليب المناسبة لتحقيق الأهداف الأساسية للدراسة. وقد أكدت نتائج الدراسات السابقة على تطور التعليم نتيجة استخدام الأساليب الانتقائية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك وجد الباحث أن تدريس اللغة الإنكليزية حالياً يتطلب استخدام الطريقة الانتقائية لأنها تتضمن استخدام أكثر من طريقة أثناء تدريس المنهج الجديد وخاصة في مدارس العراق وهي من الطرق المفضلة لتنمية مهارات المتعلمين ومهارات التواصل وتمكينهم من فهم الأنشطة الصفية.