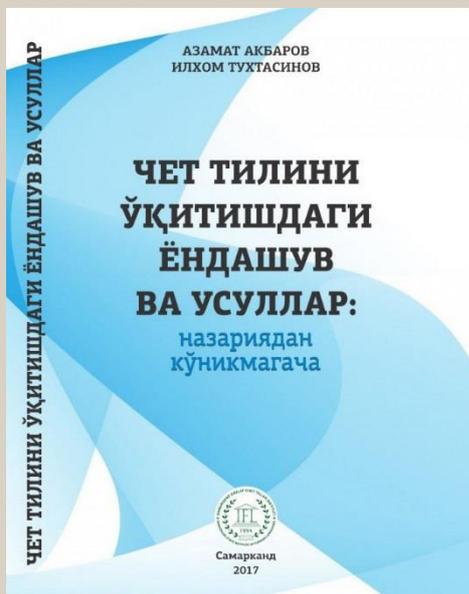


## FROM THEORIES TO SKILLS

*The review to the book Akbarov A., Tukhtasinov I. Approaches and Methods in Foreign Language Classroom: From Theories to Skills. – Tashkent, 2017.*



Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages on December 20, 2017 published an innovative book in English language teaching and second language acquisition “Approaches and Methods in Foreign Language Classroom: From Theories to Skills”. It was co-authored by Prof.dr. Azamat Akbarov and Dr. Ilkhom Tukhtasinov. Taking into consideration the growing popularity of learning foreign languages in Uzbekistan and to cover the wider audience the book was published in Uzbek language.

There has been substantial growth and expansion of knowledge in the field of foreign language teaching and learning in the past few decades. Language learning has received greater recognition in the present and future school and university curriculum. Teachers need to know and choose among the options presented in books to be able to select the best and to know why. Moreover, they need to be open to new ideas to make positive change in their profession.

The English language teaching is a constant state of flux with theories, approaches, methods, practices and materials everywhere and every day. New researches provoke beliefs and sheer creativity of teachers, theorists, methodologists, and materials developers besides students. Change is necessary for teaching profession to enhance learning and produce better results. Of course, English language teaching has been debated a lot and awareness of its methods may be culture bond and mainly specific.

A glance through the past century or so of language teaching gives us an interesting picture of how varied the interpretations have been of the best way to teach a foreign language. As schools of thought have come and gone, so have language teaching methods waxed and waned in popularity. Teaching methods are the application of theoretical findings and positions. They may be thought of as “theories in practice”. It is no surprise that in a field as young and dynamic as foreign language teaching there have been a variety of such applications, some in total philosophical opposition to some others.

Since the early 1970s, the relationship between theoretical disciplines and teaching methodology has been especially evident. The field of psychology has witnessed a growing interest in interpersonal relationships, in the value of group work, and in the use of numerous self-help strategies for coping with the stresses of daily living. The same era has seen linguists searching ever more deeply for answers to the nature of communication and communicative competence and for explanations of interactive process of language. Language teaching profession has responded to these theoretical trends with methods that stress the importance of the self-esteem of the students cooperatively learning together, of developing individual strategies for success, and above all, of focusing on the communicative process in language learning.

This book reflects on learning and teaching issues like theories, approaches and methods along with chapters on written and oral skills while taking their components into consideration, too. It has three sections and seven chapters as well as twenty seven sub-chapters. This book can be of some help to practicing teachers, in service training programs, B.A. and M.A. students whose major is teaching English and all those who want to have an introduction to the art and science of this field to obtain qualities that make a good teacher.

The ideas come from many sources based on studies and directed at teaching a foreign language. Readers can assess and evaluate various methods and techniques presented with regard to learning styles, personality traits, strategies and study habits of the learners. Teachers have to be able to evaluate the potential effectiveness of the methods using their previous experience.

*1<sup>st</sup> chapter* is intended to give you a comprehensive picture of the theoretical foundations of language learning and teaching. But theory remains abstract and relatively powerless without its application to the practical concerns of pedagogy in the classroom. In an attempt to build bridges between theory and practice, we will refer to the major methodological trends and issues in the profession in the next part.

*2<sup>nd</sup> chapter* deals with the concept of approach. An approach is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning. An approach is axiomatic. It describes the nature of subject matter to be taught.

*3<sup>rd</sup> chapter* focuses on language teaching methods. References to language methodologies of the past often seem intended to serve as foil for today's innovation. The purpose of this chapter; however, is not to review with our excellent hindsight the failings of certain language teaching practices of the past. Nor is it to chronicle past methodologies simply because, like Everest, they 'are there'. One aim is to help the EFL teacher avoid diachronic provinciality by examining insights from language specialists and teachers of the past, some of whom were giants in their time and indeed in ours still.

**4<sup>th</sup> chapter** covers new trends in language teaching and learning. It is a new general approach to foreign language instruction which has been named "the comprehension approach." It is called this because of the importance it gives to listening comprehension. All the other methods have students speaking in the target language from the first day.

**5<sup>th</sup> chapter** we take a brief look at language skills such as listening and speaking. According to Chastain (1987), communication may break down at the point of production or at the point of reception. Listening comprehension, then, under this outlook is no more considered a passive decoding skill but it is as active and productive as the speaking process. As Rivers (1980) notes 'speaking does not itself constitute communication unless what is being said is comprehended by another person.'

**6<sup>th</sup> chapter** reflects another important language skill; reading and writing. Reading is the most important activity in any language class, not only as a source of information and a pleasurable activity, but also as a means of consolidating and improving one's knowledge of the language. Writing is an important experience through which we are able to share ideas, arouse feelings, persuade and convince other people (White & Arndt, 1991). It is important to view writing not solely as the product of an individual, but as a cognitive, social and cultural act. Writing is 'an act that takes place within a context, that accomplishes a particular purpose and that is appropriately shaped for its intended audience (Hamplions & Condon, 1989).

**7<sup>th</sup> chapter** covers teaching vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Vocabulary is a powerful carrier of meaning. Experienced teachers of English as a Foreign/Second Language know very well how important vocabulary is. They know students must learn thousands of words that speakers and writers of English use. This chapter also poses two major questions that need to be considered with regard to grammar teaching in EFL language pedagogy:

1. Should we teach grammar at all?
2. If we should teach grammar, how should we teach it?

Nowadays, the acquisition of a good pronunciation in the target language, as Paulston et al (1976) say, is commonly held to be the most difficult of all tasks in language learning. It is a matter of physical fact that after the age of puberty virtually no one can acquire a native pronunciation. An important question, then, is how much time should be devoted to pronunciation? The answer will depend on several factors: level of instruction, age range of the students, aims of the course, availability of materials, training of teachers, intensity of involvement, interest of students, etc.