1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous block we studied about concept, nature and characteristics of language. We discussed about place of English in India and also aims and objectives of teaching English. Language is a means of communicating thoughts and feelings to others. The purpose of language teaching is to facilitate language learning. It is essential for a teacher to understand the concept of language teaching and learning. Teaching of any subject becomes much more effective and systematic only when the teacher is fully aware of the methods and approaches of teaching of that subject. Some of us must have used these terms interchangeably. Though the terms methods and approaches are related, there is a fine hairline difference separating them.

In this unit we will discuss about meanings, importance and difference between methods and approaches.
1.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to understand the

- Meaning of methods and approaches;
- Importance of methods and approaches; and
- Differentiate between methods and approaches.

1.3 UNDERSTANDING METHODS AND APPROACHES

Development of scientific thinking in every walk of life emphasised upon the methods to be adopted in order to achieve an objectives in a systematic way. What should be taught and how should be taught is possible by using teaching methods. For a particular teaching method to be appropriate and efficient it has to be in relation with the characteristic of the learner and the type of learning it is supposed to bring about.

In English language teaching the terms method and approach are used frequently and interchangeably. The term ‘Method’ is very ambiguous, and refers to the overall plan for the orderly presentations of language material, no part of which contradicts and all of which is based on selected approach. The term ‘Method’ is sometimes compared with the term ‘Approach’. According to Yardi “Method is rigid while Approach is flexible”.

It is obvious that in teaching learning process there should particular strategy to transact any content to the learner. These strategies could be in the form of an approach, which is a broader aspect of teaching. Approach involves various methods. Let us understand an approach and a method with an example; for an English Language teacher, an approach is how the teacher vision his/her students to improve in a longer time frame, what should be taught whether pronunciation first or spelling first? Or listening more or reading more?

A method is how the teacher implements the approach with specific activities during a lesson: whether s/he teaches English songs, or tells stories? Or ask students to act it out, or translate? Or review vocabulary by playing a game, or giving a quiz etc. The overall aim of a teacher is that the learner should converse in English.

Generally teaching methods are the methods adopted by the teacher to transact the curricular material to the students while teaching language. It comprises the principles and
methods used for instruction to be implemented by teachers to achieve the desired learning in students. These strategies are determined partly on subject matter to be taught and partly by the nature of the learner.

Fig:1

Check your progress

Note: a) Write your answer in the space provided after each item.
      b) Compare your answers with those given in the end of the unit.

1. What do you understand by approach and method?

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1.4 MEANING OF METHOD

A method is an overall procedure for an orderly presentation of teaching material to the
students. A method means different things to different people. A method refers to a set of pedagogic principles for putting up the materials to practical use. Methods are evolved for quick and effective results.

According to W.F. Makeys "a method must include four things-selection and gradation of linguistic material, the techniques of presentation and practice by the pupil.

According to Anthony "method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material as part of which contradicts and all of which is based upon the selected approach". The questions what should be taught and how should it be taught are intimately connected because if better methods of teaching are devised, it is possible to learn more.

Davis (1997) suggests that the design and selection of teaching methods must take into account not only the nature of the subject matter but also how students learn. Today’s school encourages creativity. The teaching method is the path of the teaching learning process. Teaching methods makes teachers task easy to accomplish. If we desire to acquire better results of our teaching subjects we must adopt better methods and approaches and techniques. A method is concerned with how to teach? It is not concerned with what to teach?

Selection of the methods depends on the aims. Aims take precedence over methodology which in fact is concerned upon how best to achieve specified aims of teaching. Method directly deals with a teacher's manner of performance and the mode they adopt in accomplishing their task and hence is a means to an end.

In short we can say:

- The method of teaching is a tool to help the teachers to do their job.
- It is an important factor that makes teachers task easy and meaningful.
- Method is an overall plan based on some approach.
- The purpose of adopting each and every method is clear to educational practitioners.
- It is aimed to create certain desirable change of behaviour through transaction of language curriculum.
- It is done in the classroom between the teacher and the students through a series of planned activities performed by the teacher in the classroom. Those planned activities are the tactics to communicate the curriculum is the method of teaching.
The method of teaching creates only a direct effect on the students. A direct effect is an effect of transacting the curricular materials. It is an outcome of teaching generally and pedagogically called by the term learning achievement or change in behaviour.

In teaching methods the main aspects is a way or procedure to transact the content.

All methodology of teaching is flexible. At any time during the development of a content matter, teachers have the freedom to switch over from one method to another.

### 1.4.1 IMPORTANCE OF METHOD

- It is important for the teacher to do the task easily.
- Methods systematise the task in logical order.
- It is made prior to the execution so the delivery of the lesson becomes easy.
- It helps in achievement of the objectives of the chapter.
- It has direct effect on the students.
- It is a body of technique that a teacher adopts in classroom teaching learning situations to put across the subject matter in an effective and efficient manner.
- It assists in reaching out to pupils in a manner that satisfies their intellectual pursuit and hence is an index of teacher effectiveness.
- It also helps a teacher to organise his lessons in an orderly manner for ease of communication. Therefore method of teaching is equally important from the tripolar nature of a teaching learning process.
Check your progress

**Note:** a) Write your answer in the space provided after each item.

b) Compare your answers with those given in the end of the unit.

2. How methods are important in teaching?

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1.5 MEANING OF APPROACH

Approach generally refers to a set of ideas, beliefs and principles that help the teacher to decide what should be taught, why should be taught and how it should be presented. Where, what refers to the general content (teaching items, topics, themes, exercises), why and how relate to the design and layout of the materials as well as to the classroom methodology which are based on the pre-existing and therefore well-considered rationale. An ‘approach’ is concerned with the theory of the nature of language and language learning.

Approach is a broader term than method. It is the study of the self-evident truths. Approaches deal with assumptions about how a language is learnt. Within one approach there can be many methods. In the words of Anthony "it states a point of view or philosophy or assumption which is belief but cannot necessarily be proved. Approaches should follow maxims of teaching.

When an instructional design is quite explicit at the level of theory of language and learning, but can be applied in many different ways at the level of objectives, teacher and learner roles and activities, it is usually referred to as an approach. Communicative language teaching is generally regarded as an approach, because the principles underlying it can be applied in many
different ways. Teachers adopting an approach have considerable flexibility in how they apply the principles to their own contexts.

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 the subject matter to be taught. Approach is what one is going to teach. Within approach there can be many methods, for example in linguistics behaviourism is an approach, but within behaviourism Audio Lingual Method is a method.

Approach is how a teacher is going to tackle his/her students gaining the knowledge. It is a general guideline on ways of performing a work. It does not identify all the steps involved. Instead it just indicates the direction to proceed in or ways of handling some major or important tasks.

1.5.1 IMPORTANCE OF APPROACH

1. It sets certain pedagogical principles and assumptions to be adopted for teaching and learning.

2. It helps the teacher to select learning/teaching methods for realising the principles setup by the approach itself.

3. It gives the direction for thinking.

4. It guides the teacher to select and organise the suitable learning experiences for teaching and learning.

5. It guides the teacher to develop a classroom learning environment.

6. It helps the teacher to select appropriate learning resources and materials.

7. It also guides the teacher for assessment of learners learning.
Check your progress

**Note:** a) Write your answer in the space provided after each item.
b) Compare your answers with those given in the end of the unit.

3. What is the importance of approach in language teaching?

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4. Give one example of an approach and method?

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1.6 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN METHOD AND APPROACH

When an instructional design includes a specific level of application in terms of objectives, teacher and learner roles and classroom activities, it is referred to as a method. With a method, there are prescribed objectives, roles for teacher and learners and guidelines for activities, and, consequently, little flexibility for teachers in how the method is used. The teacher’s role is to implement the method. Audio lingualism, Total Physical Response and Silent Way are examples of methods. Approach is a broad view. In an approach several methods may be used. Method has a clear pathway, very obvious step passing through which we reach at a definite answer like we use in maths. On the other hand approach deals with the subject matter. It is the way in which one will approach the piece of literature while teaching. It may centre on
the diction, or the theme, or the structure, or the romantic (or modern, etc.) nature of the piece; whatever one choose to teach. Approach is the level at which assumptions and beliefs about language and language learning are specified; whereas, method is the level at which theory is put into practice and at which choices are made about the particular skills to be taught, and the order in which the content will be presented.

After going through meaning and importance of methods and approaches we could easily differentiate between them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Approach</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>It is specific.</td>
<td>It is general.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>It deals with how to teach. Lecture, small-group work, PowerPoint, worksheet, class discussion, etc.</td>
<td>It deals with what should be taught, why should be taught and how it should be presented.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>It is a step by step description of tasks to be performed for performing a work.</td>
<td>It does not identify all the steps involved. Instead it just indicates the direction to proceed in or ways of handling some major or important tasks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Method is procedural. It is an overall plan of action.</td>
<td>Approach is an axiomatic. It is a set of correlative assumptions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Method has a clear pathway, very obvious step passing through which we reach at a definite answer.</td>
<td>Approach is a broad view. In an approach several methods may be used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Method is specific and short-term.</td>
<td>Approach is holistic and long-term.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Methods for performing different kind of works are often formally designed and specified.</td>
<td>Approach is a general guideline on ways of performing a work. It does not identify all the steps involved.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Check your progress

**Note:** a) Write your answer in the space provided after each item.
    b) Compare your answers with those given in the end of the unit.

5. How we can say that approach is holistic whereas method is specific?

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1.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we discussed about the meaning, importance and difference between method and approach. Teaching learning process to be effective and successful must be based on particular approach, which is well knitted with methods. Use of approaches makes content transaction systematic and simple, with the help of which students are benefitted and the aims and objectives are attained by the teacher. Therefore teacher should be well versed with the use of method and approaches.

1.8 QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- How can an approach be helpful to the teacher in language classroom?
- Do you think it is important for the language teacher to use particular approach in every class?
- What are important factors influencing the choice of particular method and approach in language classroom?
- What are the drawbacks of using single methods in every class for language teaching?
1.9 ANSWERS FOR CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. In teaching learning process there should particular strategy to transact any content to the learner. These strategies could be in the form of an approach, which is a broader aspect of teaching. Approach involves various methods. A method is how the teacher implements the approach with specific activities during a lesson.

2. Method is important for the teacher to do the task easily. It systematise the task in logical order. It is made prior to the execution so the delivery of the lesson becomes easy and it helps in achievement of the objectives of the chapter.

3. Approach helps the teacher to select learning/teaching methods for realising the principles set up by the approach itself. It gives the direction for thinking. It guides the teacher to select and organise the suitable learning experiences for teaching and learning and helps the teacher to develop a classroom learning environment.

4. Behaviourism, constructivism, communicative language teaching is an approach where as inquiry, audio lingualism, translation are examples of methods of teaching English language.

5. Approach deals with set of ideas, beliefs and principles that help the teacher to decide what should be taught, why should be taught and how it should be presented. Where, what refers to the general content (teaching items, topics, themes, exercises), why and how relate to the design and layout of the materials as well as to the classroom methodology which are based on the pre-existing and therefore well -considered rationale whereas method directly deals with a teacher's manner of performance and the mode they adopt in accomplishing their task and hence is a means to an end.
1.10 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READING