

Yuliya Sakalova

Belarusian State University, Minsk

Methodological Concepts and Research Methods Used in Foreign Language Teaching

Methodology in language teaching has been characterized in a variety of ways. A more or less classical formulation suggests that methodology links theory and practice. Within methodology a distinction is often made between methods and approaches, in which methods are held to be fixed teaching systems with prescribed techniques and practices, and approaches are language teaching philosophies that can be interpreted and applied in a variety of different ways in the classroom. The knowledge of different methods gives foreign teachers a good background reference to their own stand on pedagogical matters and classroom practice, and in addition helps them understand the process that foreign language teaching (FLT) has undergone, particularly through century.

There is a historical overview concerning methodologies in FLT.

Grammar-Translation Method (1890s–1930s)

The Grammar-Translation Method is the oldest method in teaching a foreign language which had its origin in Latin schools. It was widely used in teaching the classics, namely Latin, and it was transferred to the teaching of modern languages when they were introduced into schools.

Around the turn-of-the-century language students often translated vast volumes from Classical Greek or Latin into English via this approach. It consisted mainly of exhaustive use of dictionaries, explanations of grammar rules (in English), some sample sentences, and exercise drills to practise new structures. Little opportunity for real foreign language acquisition existed then.

In teaching a foreign language by means of the Grammar-Translation Method the attention is paid to the assimilation of grammar rules of the foreign language. The main aim of this method is to give students the grammar rules and paradigms of the target language.

Let us analyse the main principles of the Grammar-Translation Method.

1. The student's native language is the medium of instruction and is used for explanation, comparison and checking.

2. The emphasis is put on study and translation of written language, which is considered to be superior to spoken one.
3. Reading and writing skills are considered the main language skills and their development becomes the focus of attention.
4. Teachers play an authoritarian role in the classroom and the predominant interaction is between teacher – student.
5. The deductive explanation of grammar and the use of grammatical exercises – that is, the rule is first stated, and then sentences embodying the rule are studied. Students must know grammatical paradigms of the language studied and deduce their applications to exercises.

The Grammar-Translation Method focuses on teaching foreign language grammar through the presentation of rules together with some exceptions and lists of vocabulary translated into the students' mother tongue. Translation is considered its most important classroom activity. All the exercises to assimilate the language material are limited to translation from a mother tongue into a foreign language and vice versa. The main procedure of an ordinary lesson follows this plan: a presentation of a grammatical rule, followed by a list of vocabulary and, finally, translation exercises from selected texts (H.H. Stern, 1983, p. 453).

Other activities can be the following:

- do reading comprehension questions about the text,
- find antonyms and synonyms to the words in the text,
- all sorts of fill-in-the-blank exercises,
- writing comprehension for a given topic,
- vocabulary selected from the reading texts and memorized.

Apparently there are some very obvious disadvantages of this method, which are summarized below (E. Roulet, 1972).

1. Learning vast amounts of grammatical issues, lists of forms and examples, students are not able to apply this theoretical knowledge to practice and real-life communication.

As an example we may take the **list of irregular verbs**. They are approximately 144 and English language learners are made to learn all of them by heart. But judging by my own teaching experience, in rapid connected speech students still make a lot of mistakes in using the past indefinite form. They keep saying „spended” instead of the right form „spent” or „builded” instead of „built”.

2. Language is taught in isolation, no attention is paid to developing communicative competence, and foreign language learners are not involved in communication at all.

As a result students have fear in speaking a foreign language because they lack necessary skills. They can translate each language into the other, though they can't communicate orally.

Regardless its pointed drawbacks the majority of Belarusian schools, however, still adhere to Grammar-Translation Method.

Audio-Lingual Method (1950s–1960s)

With the rising popularity of audio tapes this approach suggested listening to audio tapes where the language learner could actually hear and mimic native speakers on reel-to-reel audio tapes, often used with earphones in a language lab setting. Lessons often began with a sample dialogue to be recited and memorized. This was followed up with substitution

pattern and saturation drills in which the grammatical structure previously introduced was reinforced, with emphasis given to rapid fire student response. Repetition, substitution, transformation, and translation became the order of the day.

Audio-Lingual Method has its popularity among foreign language teachers. A typical lesson would have the following procedures:

1. Students first hear a dialogue with the key structures of the lesson, repeat and memorise them. The teacher pays special attention to pronunciation and fluency. Correction is immediate.
2. The dialogue is selected to the students' interest or situation.
3. Certain key structures from the dialogue are selected and used as the basis for repetition and pattern drills, first practised in chorus and then individually. An example of a pattern drill could be this.

The key structure of the lesson: **there's** (a man watching TV)

Teacher: There's a policeman. He's standing near the car.

Student: There's a policeman standing near the car.

Teacher: There's a girl. She's looking at you.

Student: There's a girl looking at you.

4. Follow-up reading, writing or vocabulary activities based on the dialogue may be introduced.

Unfortunately, as practice shows, most students are not able to transfer these dialogues into their own real-life experiences.

The Direct Method (1970s)

The Direct Method was perhaps a necessary antidote to the earlier grammatical approaches to language teaching that emphasized teaching grammar in isolation.

The characteristic features of the direct method are as follows.

1. The practical direction in teaching a foreign language which is understood as teaching language skills and speaking in particular, therefore spoken language becomes the basis of teaching. Students learn the language by hearing it and being engaged in conversation.
2. Ignoring the existence of the mother tongue. The native language is never used. A direct connection is established between a foreign word and the thing or notion it denotes without the aid of the native language. This explains the origin of the method's name.
3. Restricted application or even elimination of translation as a means of teaching a foreign language, which plays a leading part in the Grammar-Translation Method. Instead of translation, visual aids and various oral and written exercises are recommended on a large scale.
4. The inductive approach to teaching grammar – that is, the learner discovers the rules of grammar for himself after he has become acquainted with a great number of examples.
5. The development of grammar intuition. Learners are able to acquire grammar through incidental, subconscious language acquisition.

With regard to the psychology of teaching grammar (B.A. Артемов, 1969, p. 252) it is necessary to stress the idea that the concept that grammar rules should be neglected and

grammar intuition should be developed instead is not approved. It was proved by the psychologists that the skill could be formed by two ways: the first is the mechanical way – that is a multiple repetition of the action; the second is the conscious activity. The latter way is the most effective, as the learners resort to mental operations and brainwork.

Another drawback of the direct method is that it ignores the existence of the mother tongue. The followers of this method exclude the native language from the teaching process. However, it is impossible to exclude it from the learner's mind. That is why it is vital to use the native language for explanation and comparison.

One should admit that the direct method has its positive sides, as well. It encourages students to learn and make progress. The extensive use of audio and video tapes has the benefit of providing real language and cultural situations.

Video allows learners to see facial expressions and body language at the same time as they hear the stress, the intonation and rhythm of the language. Materials presented visually are more easily learned than comparable materials presented aurally.

The instructor who has accepted the direct approach in FLT from the very first step involves students into a conversation.

The Natural/Communicative Approach (1960s–2000s)

It is a contemporary method in FLT. Its main aim is to develop communicative competence as a desired goal in foreign language acquisition. It means that a learner is able to use a foreign language appropriate to a given social context.

Communicative competence is described as integrated by four parts (Е.И. Пассов, 1989):

- linguistic competence – the grammatical, lexical, semantic and phonological competence;
- discourse competence – the linguistic and meaning relationships within the discourse (coherence, gesture, etc.)
- socio-linguistic competence or understanding functional aspects of communication (including role relationships, personal factors, social and cultural context, etc.)
- strategic competence, referred to the coping strategies developed to solve the learning problems.

The main features of the Communicative Method are the following.

1. Language is speech. Hence, language learning is learning to communicate, students are expected to be involved in communication and interaction with other people and, in particular, with native speakers.
2. The development of audio-lingual skills first, i.e. listening comprehension and speaking.
3. The rejection of translation as the main tool of instruction. Translation is not a substitute for a language practice. Only the target language is used in class now, introducing the „total immersion” concept for the very first time. The use of the learner's native language is minimized.
4. Students are being treated like they were living in the country where the foreign language is spoken. Now the classroom becomes more student-centered with the teacher allowing for students to output the language more often on their own. Pairing off of students into small groups to practise newly acquired structures becomes the major focus.
5. Teaching grammar through pattern practice. The grammatical exercises usually take the form of drills in which the student is asked to substitute words for other words, or make

changes in sentences, e.g. from singular to plural, from past to present, from active to passive.

6. Extensive use of real-life communication situations to stimulate student's language activity. Such visualization activities as slide presentations, word games, dialogues, contests, recreational activities provide situations with problem-solving tasks which might include the use of charts, maps, graphs, and advertisements, all to be performed on the spot in class. This is done to involve the learner in the act of communication in the target language and in this way to arouse their interest in the language learning and increase their motivation.

In modern FLT grammar is of use only where it definitely contributes to the ease of learning (L. Bloomfield, 1993, p. 6). Grammar, as such, is not necessary for the use or understanding of a language: a normal speaker or reader is not conscious of the grammatical abstractions. Consequently the grammatical features of a new text are of secondary importance, provided that it is easily explained and understood. Grammar should be used only as a summary and mnemonic aid for the retention of what has been already learned. Where it cannot be used, it should be omitted.

Such an approach seems for us rather a disputable one. Grammar is an important part of communicative competence. If the students remember the words and patterns of the language and integrate them into their personalities, the students have acquired the language and the teacher has done all that needs to be done. Teaching grammar through communicative activities makes two processes (memorization and integration) more effective (W. Rivers, 1993, p. 43).

Communicative approaches make use of a variety of materials which are selected and viewed as a way of improving classroom interaction and a communicative use of the language. Here are some activities and techniques that can be used in a classroom:

- communicative language games – students have different pieces of information and have to exchange them through questions and answers; they can choose different answers, which means negotiation while talking;
- role-plays that allow students to be aware of the different social contexts, roles, attitudes, mood;
- problem-solving activities that make learners think, analyse and give their personal opinion about the issues being discussed.

It is difficult to assess the Communicative Approach as it is not a totally defined method and has been subject to several interpretations – as it has been pointed above. Nevertheless, it has a strong impact on language teaching and the importance of its contribution is vivid.

We have considered the main approaches and methods of FLT as models or paradigms of theory, research and school practice. All methods have at least two things in common:

- their belief to be the best one, and
- a set of prescriptions that teachers have to follow necessarily.

But there is one question what is still urgent in FLT. Which method to choose and how to measure its effectiveness for this particular group of learners?

Information is desired on which to base decisions concerning who should be taught foreign languages, at what ages instruction should be started and how long it should be continued, what languages should be taught, what skills should be emphasized.

Taking into account the discussed techniques used by different methods in FLT, we as foreign language teachers need:

- to test experimentally whether translation exercises are necessary for establishing new language habits,
- to determine whether learning dialogues by heart can help in real-life situations,
- more research studies on the measurement, effectiveness and motivation,
- research on the effectiveness of various types of visual aids for specific elements of learning.

Teachers should introduce a constant analysis and interpretation of what is happening in the classroom. This would involve shifting much of the present research emphasis from „total” methods to specific problems in pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary acquisition in the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Here are some proposed targets of investigation.

A teacher should conduct a research of the group he or she'll be working with to analyse their skills in four types of speech activity: reading, listening, speaking and writing. Diagnostic tests are compiled taking into account the curriculum and average level of knowledge learners should possess at this stage. After diagnosing a teacher should try to find the most effective method for this particular group, it may happen that it can a mixed one, as it depends on the factors that will be stated now.

Language groups are heterogeneous and learners may have different levels of knowledge. So the teacher is to balance between these extremes, encouraging and giving simpler tasks to the weakest and giving project work to the best.

But in the process of learning it may appear that not all the students are able to cope with this chosen method. The reasons can be different, for one student grammar acquisition is the hardest point, for another one pronunciation is difficult, somebody else is afraid to make mistakes and keeps silence during classes. All these problems are often faced with in a real language learning environment.

I would like to draw your attention to the fact that what really happens in a classroom is totally different from what methodologists suggest.

Let's take contemporary approach to teaching grammar as the aspect of the language.

Grammatical, lexical and articulatory skills – in their unity – form speech ability. No speaking is possible without designing a grammar mechanism of the target language. A sentence may contain one, two and more unknown words but if one has a good knowledge of the structure of the language they can easily guess the meaning of these words. For instance, one can hardly understand the following sentences without knowing grammar even if all the words are familiar: „There is nobody interesting to talk to. We **may as well** go home”.

The sentence includes a certain grammar difficulty for Russian-speaking pupils, namely the expression **may as well** which is used to describe the only thing left to do, something the speaker is not enthusiastic about.

Let's take another sentence: „You **could have helped** me – why did you just sit and watch?”. This sentence contains a special structure **could have + past participle** to talk about unrealized past ability, to express reproach that somebody was able to do something, but did not try to do it.

Thus, without assimilating necessary grammar rules English-learners will not be able to understand speech properly. Students need grammar to be able to apprehend, speak, read and write in the target language.

The usage of correct grammar patterns depends on developing lexical skills – that is, the ability to choose proper words for a certain situation, combine them with each other and use them in speech.

The usage of wrong words and corrupted articulation prevents from normal communication as well. **While a student thinks how to build up a phrase and tries to do it, he/she often forgets what he/she wanted to say.** That is a common problem for all foreign-language learners. In order to understand a language and express oneself correctly one must assimilate the grammar mechanism of the language studied.

The major difficulty in learning a new language is that of switching from the grammar mechanism of the native language to that of the new language. Indeed, all grammar phenomena of any foreign language are new for its learners. They experience great difficulties in assimilating grammar material and furthermore in communication. The reason is that grammatical skills are not formed properly.

To communicate freely in the target language grammatical skills should be fluent, stable and flexible.

If the action is fluent one doesn't think **how** to perform it – the action is performed automatically.

However, the thoroughly studied grammar phenomenon can be misused in speech. For example, one forms the past progressive tense correctly in an isolated phrase, but does not make the auxiliary verb agree with the subject in speech.

That is why it is not enough to automatize the action, it should be stable as well. Foreign-language learners are not only to assimilate the grammar mechanism of the language studied, they are to apply the theoretical knowledge on grammar to real communicative situations, to use it freely in foreign everyday speech. It should be pointed out that types of exercises play an important role in developing fluent and stable grammar skills: the more the exercises remind of a real communicative situation, the more valuable and effective they are.

So, it is obvious that grammar is an important part of communicative competence and further research is needed in this field of foreign language acquisition.

Let us analyse one more example: **The usage of the native language during foreign language classes.**

As it has already been pointed out, some methods exclude (like Direct Method) or minimize (like Communicative Method) the usage of the native language during learning process. So the question remains open. I personally consider it is vital to use the native language during foreign language classes for explanation and comparison. It is a mother tongue and under no circumstances it can be excluded it from the learners' mind.

The next problem in teaching a foreign language is the **problem of learning and translating culture-loaded words.**

Language and culture are inseparable. There are words and phrases in one language or another which are closely connected with the national and cultural contexts and occupy an important position in the language. They are called culture-loaded words. Being rich in cultural connotation and reflecting the essence of the language these terms become the main basis of learning vocabulary in foreign language acquisition.

Translating culture-loaded words into another language is mostly difficult and challenging as there is no equivalence in the target language. For example, such Belarusian words as *skamarohi*, *zacirka*, *pryzba*, *lapci* (Этнаграфія Беларусі: Энцыклапедыя, 1989) have no equivalence in the English language. To explain the meaning of these culture-loaded words to English speakers it is to better explain them in the target language by giving a descriptive translation rather than find a single equivalent for them, which may not carry the intended meaning at all.

Skamarohi – wandering folk actors who entertained the public and appeared as minstrels, clowns, animals' trainers, acrobats, puppeteers, etc.

Zacirka – a rare dish made with flour. Thoroughly mix up rye or wheat flour with water or an egg (sometimes with starch), pour in the boiling water or milk and boil. When and if it is cooked with water, add butter or *skvarka* (cracklings, the crisp skin of a roasted animal, such as a pig, eaten as food).

Pryzba (zavalinka) – a small mound of earth along the outer wall of a peasant's house.

Łapci (laptsy) – bast sandals.

Culture-loaded words are like mirrors, showing us a nation's unique character and they are good ways for the people to express their cultural background. These culture-loaded words are gained from human ancestors' early living experience, and illustrate the spirit and mentality of the whole nation.

The aforesaid proves that while mastering a foreign language it is vital to learn culture-loaded words. To make the process of learning a foreign language possible, a student needs to be fully familiar with the cultural load of these words and phrases to be able to find the closest possible equivalent for them.

Not being familiar with the cultural background of these terms will lead to the danger of literal translation, which will result in their inappropriate usage in communication and cause misunderstanding.

Let's examine the problems that literary translators confront when translating culture-loaded words from one language into another (on the example of Belarusian-English translation).

Translating literary works is always challenging and controversial due to aesthetic and expressive values such as figurative language, metaphors, difference in cultural and historical contexts.

Here are some examples of translating Belarusian culture-loaded words into English.

<i>Аб ёй брэджу на яве і ў сне</i>	<i>Awake, asleep, think of her constantly</i>
санет Я люблю Я. Купалы (2002, р. 27)	sonnet <i>I love</i> by J. Kupala ¹

In the original text the word *брэдзіць* is used. According to the etymology of this word it has the meaning *трызніць*, which implies talk, speech activity (*Этымалагічны слоўнік беларускай мовы*, vol. 1, 1978, р. 394), Polish *brednia*, English *to rave*:

- a) to talk irrationally in or as if in delirium,
- b) to speak out wildly,
- c) to talk or write about someone or something in an excited or enthusiastic way with extreme enthusiasm,
- d) to utter in madness or frenzy.

In the English variant the translator suggested using the word collocation *think of her constantly*, which we personally consider is not appropriate for a given context and doesn't reflect culture-loadedness of the original word. The definition of the verb *to think*, according to Merriam-Webster dictionary and thesaurus (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/diction->

¹ English translation is made by Vera Rich (1936–2009), British poet, journalist, historian, and translator from Belarusian and Ukrainian. Her *Like Water, Like Fire: An Anthology of Byelorussian Poetry from 1828 to the Present Day* (1971) became the world's first anthology of translations of Belarusian poetry (J. Kupala, J. Kolas, P. Brouka, K. Krapiva, P. Piestrak and others) into a western European language. Later she published *The Images Swarm Free* – a collection of translations of verses by prominent Belarusian authors: A. Harun, M. Bahdanovič and Ž. Biadula.

ary/think) is „to form or have something in the mind”, it implies mental activity and the suggested adverb *constantly* has the meaning „continually occurring or recurring”.

So the English verb *to rave* seems more suitable for this context and closer to the meaning of the Belarusian word *брэдзіць*:

*Awake asleep I rave about her*².

It is interesting to point out that in Old English there was a word *breodian* – *крычаць, клікаць (cry out)*, which has the same semantic meaning as the Belarusian word *брэдзіць* and even similar pronunciation. So as a possible variant of translation of Kupala’s *Аб ёй брэджу на ябе і ў сне* can be *Awake asleep I cry out for her*.

However, there is one more word in the English language that bears a similar meaning. This is the word *mad*:

- a) completely unrestrained by reason and judgment,
- b) unable to think in a clear or sensible way,
- c) liking someone or something very much; very fond of or enthusiastic about someone or something,

So one more variant of the translation can be:

Awake, asleep I am mad about her.

It is obvious from the analysed examples it is not an easy task to transplant a text steeped in one culture into another. Particularly demanding from the translator’s point of view is the use of culturally specific metaphors and allusions.

It should be pointed out that adequate translation of the Belarusian culture-loaded words in the context of modern globalization is helpful for increasing the mutual understanding between Belarusian people and the people from other ethnic groups, protecting the ethnic identity of the Belarusian language.

It is clearly seen from the aforesaid that in the process of learning a foreign language an important place should be given to the development of translation skills taking into account culture-loadedness of the language vocabulary.

Which method in FLT can be the most effective for accomplishing this task? Certainly the Grammar-Translation method has its advantages because it focuses mostly on translation. But at the same time this challenging task implies dense cultural consciousness and rich cultural knowledge about the country of the original and target language. Thus, interdisciplinary approach seems the best one and certainly, it requires collaboration of linguistics, translators, culturologists, etymologists, ethnographers and others.

There exists one more problem in FLT: **What is it to master a foreign language?** None of the methodological concepts gives an answer.

The author of the article tried to find an answer to this important question by making her own research in this field. A survey was carried out. Approximately fifty students took part in it, their language level varying from intermediate to advanced. The main target of the research was to find out how students evaluate their teacher’s competence, what problems they face while learning a foreign language (FL), how to measure effectiveness of learning process, what results they want to achieve.

² Here and further translated by Y. Sakalova.

The results are shown in this table.

Table 1. What is it to master a foreign language?

Questions suggested	Answers got
1. A competent foreign language teacher	<p>Practically all the students want their teachers to be attentive and have individual approach to each of them. A competent teacher is the one who is not only an expert in his/her field but an expert in communication with students. Lesson's material should be presented with pleasure and a teacher should be inspired by what he/she is doing. It's important for students to feel free with their teacher.</p> <p>An interesting FL lesson doesn't consist of boring bare theory, but of varied tasks combined by a teacher, as educational games, watching films, presentations, discussions, reading books in the original. In such a way students become more motivated in learning process.</p> <p>Practically all of the surveyed mentioned that it's important in learning a FL not to be afraid to make a mistake.</p>
2. Problems students face while learning a FL	<p>Half of the students surveyed have problems in grammar acquisition and pronunciation, another half find it hard to learn large amounts of vocabulary. Speaking and comprehending fluent speech is not easy either.</p> <p>Some students made a complaint that the majority of teachers don't show enthusiasm, just use „dry” material from books, thus lack of motivation from the learners' side.</p> <p>There is nervous atmosphere during classes and students are afraid to make mistakes because they will be criticized by their teacher.</p>
3. Results foreign language learners want to achieve	<p>One of the main results to be achieved is acquiring language proficiency, application of the knowledge to usual real-life situations, ability to express thoughts in the target language clearly and coherently.</p>

Source: own research.

As it is seen from the table there are a lot of problems in real language learning environment and they all are to be dealt with by a teacher.

What is it to be a competent foreign language teacher? Surely only rich baggage of knowledge is not enough. Good intelligible pronunciation, easy to comprehend, enthusiasm and inspiration, combination of different activities, interesting for students, a wide range of personal qualities such as intelligence, patience, responsibility, optimism, energy, sense of humour, creativeness, empathy, tact, etc.

Being foreign language teachers we need a comprehensive image of what we do in order to help students master a foreign language. We've identified several guidelines for the classroom teacher in assisting students to develop their foreign language communicative skills.

1. Talk to your students in English. Make English a vital language of communication.
2. Give opportunities in class for the students to exchange ideas with each other in English. Point to them how they are becoming confident and effective users of English.
3. Make sure that you evaluate students' learning, and not just their language ability. Bring everything into your classroom to make it a more inviting place.
4. Never forget to involve the students' first languages and first cultures in the classroom. Make sure that students understand that their own languages and cultures are important.
5. Begin with the assumption that your students know the answers to your questions, their struggle is to find the English to express themselves.
6. Learn how to teach grammar in context, starting with examples in real oral or written discourse. Present grammatical features in authentic contexts.

7. Use a lot of authentic materials, visual aids, audio tapes, hand-outs to create real foreign language environment.
8. Don't follow anything slavishly! Experiment! Look for effective ways to utilize grammar exercises and tests that come with textbooks you're using. With some thought and experimentation with different types of grammar exercises you'll find relevant and productive uses for these exercises.
9. Don't experiment too often. Give your students time to get used to one routine before switching to another.
10. Let students evaluate your work and your competence by making a survey. It will help you establish a feedback and students will know that their opinion matters.
11. Believe in the human ability to learn and communicate. Don't be afraid that students won't understand you. Speak clearly, emphasizing important work and words, saying them louder, softer, or with pauses before and after. Use objects and gestures to demonstrate what you're saying. Involve your students in talking, translating and explaining.
12. As you prepare for your each day, when your students enter the class and encounter their attitudes, ranging from eager, enthusiastic anticipation to uncertain apathy and desire not to do anything at all, think of the noble title you have... teacher and present yourself to the students as a person worthy this title.
13. The superior teacher has really gotten superior results regardless of the method.

So, in conclusion, it is necessary to emphasize that teaching should not be approached following a particular method as a set of prescriptions, but on the contrary as a dynamic and reflective process, which means a permanent interaction among curriculum, teachers, students, methodology, and instructional materials.

What actually happens in the classroom, alongside careful planning and evaluation, becomes the most important thing teachers have to reflect on and then relate to theory or to other experiences.

I propose, therefore, an active role for teachers, who design their own content and tasks, classroom interaction, materials, methodology evaluation, etc., instead of passive role which means dependence on other people's designs and methods.

The expression **classroom researcher** clearly represents the new role considered above.

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Summary

This article examines and illustrates existing methodological concepts in FLT, their main features and techniques, as well as considers their effectiveness for a particular group of learners with their own problems in foreign language acquisition. The following methods have been analysed: the Grammar-Translation Method, the Audio-Lingual Method, the Direct Method and the Communicative Approach. The attention has also been paid to the problem of learning and translating culture-loaded words as one of the aspects in teaching a foreign language. Finally, our own research results in the field of foreign language acquisition are presented.

Streszczenie

Artykuł prezentuje i ilustruje metodologiczne koncepcje obecne w nauczaniu języków obcych, ich główne cechy i metody; rozważa również ich efektywność w odniesieniu do szczególnych grup uczących się, z ich własnymi problemami w opanowaniu języka obcego. Analizie poddane zostały następujące metody: gramatyczno-translacyjna, audio-językowa, bezpośrednia i podejście komunikatywne. Podjęto problem uczenia się oraz tłumaczenia słów w kulturowym kontekście jako jeden z aspektów nauczania języka obcego. Na koniec zaprezentowano wyniki badań własnych w zakresie nabywania języka obcego.