BLOCK 4.
The past meets the present: Language teaching methods in the 20th and 21st centuries

Sub-block 4.6.
The Postmethod era

Outline

1. Objectives of this unit

2. The search for the "best method" in FLT and reasons for the rejection of methods

3. From method-based pedagogy to Postmethod pedagogy and Critical Pedagogy

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with methods: Allwright's "Exploratory Practice" (1991a, 2003, 2005), Bax's "Context approach to language teaching" (2003), and Kumaravadivelu's "Macrostrategic framework", located within the Postmethod condition (1994, 2003a, 2003b, 2006a, 2006b, 2012a, 2012b)

5. Pedagogical implications of Kumaravidelu's "Postmethod condition"

6. Criticisms of Postmethod pedagogy

7. Conclusion: Guidelines to assess whether to opt for a new method/approach or a postmethod perspective

1. Objectives of this unit

1. Understand the reasons behind the move from method-based pedagogy to Postmethod pedagogy.

2. Understand the concept of "Critical Pedagogy" and analyse its implications for FLT.

3. Lean about three major proposals that fit in the Postmethod era: Allwright's "Exploratory Practice" (1991a, 2003, 2005); Bax's "Context approach to language teaching" (2003) and Kumaravadivelu's "Macrostrategic framework" located within the Postmethod condition (1994, 2003a, 2003b, 2006a, 2006b, 2012a, 2012b)

4. Critically examine pros and cons of the Postmethod condition.

2. The search for the "best method" in FLT and reasons for the rejection of methods

Two key quotations:

It has been realised that there never was and probably never will be a method for all, and the focus in recent years has been on the development of classroom tasks and activities which are consonant with what we know about second language acquisition, and which are also in keeping with the dynamics of the classroom itself.

(Nunan, 1991: 228)

Center-produced methods [such as the ALM, CLT…] *are based on idealized concepts geared towards idealized contexts. Since language learning and teaching needs, wants, and situations are unpredictably numerous, no idealized method can visualize all the variables in advance in order to provide situation-specific suggestions that practicing teachers need to tackle the challenges they confront in the practice of their everyday teaching. As a predominantly top-down exercise, the conception and construction of methods have been largely guided by a one-size-fits-all cookie-cutter approach that assumes a common clientele with common goals.*

(Kumaravadivelu, 2012a: 19-20)

2. The search for the "best method" in FLT and reasons for the rejection of methods

Unit 1.2

✓ From the mid 1880s to the mid 1980s, language teaching specialists have been involved the search of the best method (Brown, 2002):

- ❑ 1880: Gouin's Series Method. *The Art of Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages* (1880; English translation: 1892)

- ❑ End of 19th century: Direct Method and Berlitz's Method (end of 19th century).

- ❑ From the late 1940s until the 1960s: ALM and remaining Structurally-based methods.

- ❑ Early 1960s: Cognitive-Code Learning Method

- ❑ 1960s-present time: immersion programs and CLIL.

- ❑ 1970s-1980s: Humanistic Methods.

- ❑ Late 1970s-present time: CLT.

- ❑ 1980s-present time: TBLT.
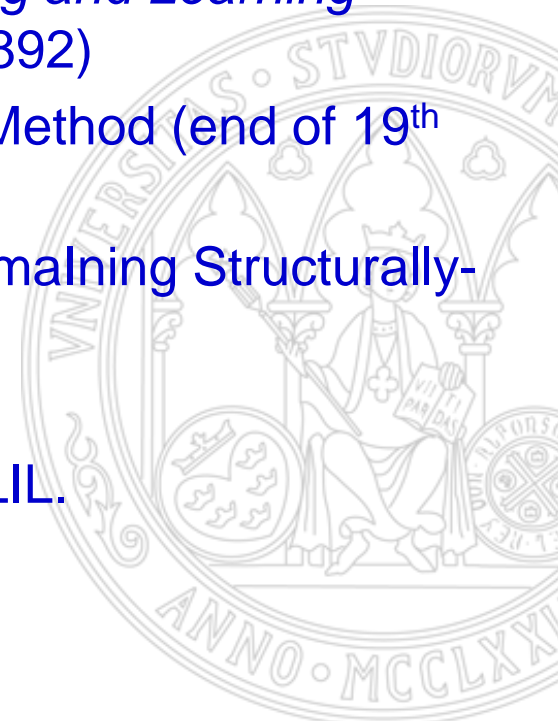
2. The search for the "best method" in FLT and reasons for the rejection of methods

Brown (2002: 10) states the following reasons for the current rejection of the *method* concept in language teaching and *methods* themselves.

1) *Methods are too prescriptive, assuming too much about a context before the context has even been identified. They are therefore overgeneralized in their potential application to practical situations.*

2) *Generally, methods are quite distinctive at the early beginning stages of a language course and rather indistinguishable from each other at later stages.*

2. The search for the "best method" in FLT and reasons for the rejection of methods

3) It was once thought that methods could be empirically tested by scientific quantification to determine which one is "best." We have now discovered that something as artful and intuitive as language pedagogy cannot ever be so clearly verified by empirical validation.

(Brown, 2002: 10)

The Pennsylvania Project (Unit 1.2 and sub-block 4.5)

In the case of CLT, there are several data-based, classroom-oriented studies undertaken in various contexts which show that officially communicatively-oriented classes are not quite communicative (Cerezo, 2007; Kumaravadivelu, 1993a, Legutke & Thomas, 1991; Nunan, 1987; Thornbury, 1996; Pallarés, 1988).

2. The search for the "best method" in FLT and reasons for the rejection of methods

4) Methods are laden with what Pennycook (1989) referred to as "interested knowledge" - the quasi-political or mercenary agendas of their proponents. Recent work in the power and politics of English language teaching […] *has demonstrated that methods, often the creations of the powerful "center," become vehicles of a "linguistic imperialism" (Phillipson, 1992) targeting the disempowered periphery.*

(Brown, 2002: 10)

❑ For Pennycook (1989), the concept of *method* "reflects a particular view of the world and is articulated in the interests of unequal power relationships" (pp. 589-590), and that it "has diminished rather than enhanced our understanding of language teaching" (p. 597).

❑ For Prabhu (1990), there is no best method but the need for teachers to learn "to operate with some personal conceptualization of how their teaching leads to desired learning –with a notion of causation that has a measure of credibility for them" (p. 172). The resulting pedagogic intuition was called by Prabhu "a teacher's sense of plausibility".

↓

Two consequences:

2. The search for the "best method" in FLT and reasons for the rejection of methods

a) […] *the concept of method has only a limited and limiting impact on language learning and teaching,* […] *method should no longer be considered a valuable or a viable construct, and* […] *what is needed is not an alternative method but an alternative to method.*

(Kumaravadivelu, 2006a: 67)

b) Death of the *method* concept (Allwright, 1991b; Brown, 2002)
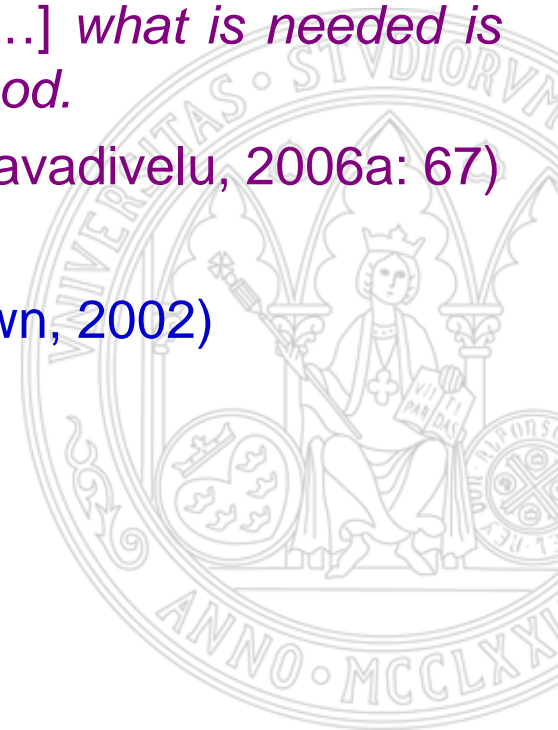
3. From method-based pedagogy to Postmethod pedagogy and Critical Pedagogy

From method-based pedagogy –ALM, CLT, TBLT–

to Postmethod pedagogy:

1) From ALM to CLT

❑ The disenchantment with the ALM brought with it the emergence of CLT.

❑ Novelties of CLT regarding the ALM: *Unit 4.3.2*

- Information-gap activities, games, role plays, drama techniques and scenarios, all of which were supposed…
  - to make students tackle real-life communication outside the classroom.
  - to promote grammatical accuracy as well as communicative fluency.
  - to enhance learners' motivation
- From teacher-centred teaching to learner-centred teaching.
- Less preoccupation with formal mistakes or forms that deviate from native speech as long as they are comprehensible and communicatively effective.

3. From method-based pedagogy to Postmethod pedagogy and Critical Pedagogy

1) From ALM to CLT

➢ Problems with CLT at three levels: authenticity, acceptability and adaptability (Kumaravadivelu, 2006a)

❑ Authenticity: CLT practice does not actually entail meaningful, communicative interaction in the classroom

Studies on the implementation of CLT in classrooms (slide 7)

3. From method-based pedagogy to Postmethod pedagogy and Critical Pedagogy

1) From ALM to CLT

➢ Problems with CLT at three levels: authenticity, acceptability and adaptability (Kumaravadivelu, 2006a)

- ❑ Acceptability: "the claim that CLT marks a revolutionary step in the annals of language teaching" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006a: 62).

  - ▪ CLT textbooks falsify this claim (Howatt, 1987; Savignon, 1983; Swan, 1985; Widdowson, 2003). In fact, CLT textbooks draw on the following ALM elements:

    - The linear and additive view of language learning, as well as a behaviouristic view of learning. CLT believes that learning will happen automatically, provided there is enough optimal interaction (Cook, 2008)

    - From a pedagogical perspective, this is translated as the P-P-P view of language teaching.

    - The "exploitation phase" in the ALM, or the third P, which served "purposeful communication" (Lado, 1964), is retaken by CLT and even by TBLT, given that it is aimed at making students use language actively and autonomously.

What is the main difference in this respect between the ALM and CLT?

Practice activities in Units 4.1.1 and 4.3.2

3. From method-based pedagogy to Postmethod pedagogy and Critical Pedagogy

1) From ALM to CLT

➢ Problems with CLT at three levels: authenticity, acceptability and adaptability (Kumaravadivelu, 2006a)

❑ Adaptability:

It refers to the observation that the principles and practices of CLT can be adapted to suit various contexts of language teaching across the world and across time. […] *Such optimistic observations have been repeatedly called into question by reports of uneasiness from different parts of the world.* [India, South Africa, Pakistan, South Korea, China, Thailand]

(Kumaravadivelu, 2006a: 63)

What have these countries got in common? Remember this for Kumaravadivelu's account of the Postmethod condition.

3. From method-based pedagogy to Postmethod pedagogy and Critical Pedagogy

2) From CLT to TBLT

✓ Because of all the shortcomings highlighted before, FLT research moved to TBLT, which has really encouraged a great body of psycholinguistic empirical research in L2 acquisition.

✓ Since the initial work on TBLT coincided with the first phase of CLT (e.g., Candlin & Murphy, 1987), many authors consider the former as a spin-off of the latter (Criado, 2009, 2010; Nunan, 2004; Savignon, 1991; Willis, 1996).

✓ Common shortcoming to TBLT and CLT: the fallacy that both can be suitable for any teaching context (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, 2003, 2006a, 2006b, 2012a).

Unit 4.3.2.

*It should be remembered that advocates of both CLT and TBLT have been using the term **context** mainly to refer to linguistic and pragmatic features of language and language use. They seldom include the broader social, cultural, political, and historical particularities .*

(Kumaravadivelu, 2006a: 72. Emphasis in the original)

3. From method-based pedagogy to Postmethod pedagogy and Critical Pedagogy

3) From CLT and TBLT to the "Postmethod condition" movement and Critical Pedagogy

Unit 1.2

It is clear that universal solutions that are transposed acritically, and often accompanied by calls for increased standardisation, and which ignore indigenous conditions, the diversity of learners, and the agency of teachers are immanent in a modernism that no longer applies, if it ever did.

(Larsen-Freeman & Freeman, 2008: 168)

↓

1. **Theoretical need for a "context-approach to language teaching" (Bax, 2003) and**

2. **Theoretical and pedagogical articulation of a context-approach to language teaching: Postmethod pedagogy (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, 2003a, 2003b, 2006a, 2006b, 2012a, 2012b):**

"An alternative to *method* rather than an alternative method" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006a: 73).

3. From method-based pedagogy to Postmethod pedagogy and Critical Pedagogy

3) From CLT and TBLT to the "Postmethod condition" and Critical Pedagogy

- ✓ Rejections to the *method* concept in language teaching and language teaching methods in general can be associated to the Critical Pedagogy movement.

- ✓ Origins of Critical Pedagogy: Paulo Freire (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.*

  Prevailing educational paradigm nowadays: positivism. Knowledge exists as a body of facts that can, and should, be transmitted from teacher (and textbook) to learner. Alternative: a 'dialogic' pedagogy, granting more weight and responsibility to learners in the teaching process.

3. From method-based pedagogy to Postmethod pedagogy and Critical Pedagogy

3) From CLT and TBLT to the "Postmethod condition" and Critical Pedagogy

✓ According to several authors (Pennycook, 1999; 2001; Norton & Toohey, 2004), Critical Pedagogy…

1. is transformative, and seeks social change

2. foregrounds social inquiry and critique

3. challenges the status quo and problematizes 'givens'

4. devolves agency to the learner

5. is participatory and collaborative

6. is dialogic

7. is locally-situated, and socially-mediated

8. is non-essentialist, i.e. it doesn't reduce learners to stereotypes, but rather legitimizes individual identities

9. is self-reflexive

(Thornbury, 2009. Our highlighting)

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

1) Allwright's "Exploratory Practice" (1991a, 2003, 2005)
2) Bax's "Context approach to language teaching" (2003)
3) Kumaravadivelu's "Macrostrategic framework", located within the Postmethod condition (1994, 2003a, 2003b, 2006a, 2006b, 2012a, 2012b)

✓ Out of the three, Bax's is the least specified one in terms of pedagogical procedures. Still, it is very powerful and thought-provoking in theoretical terms so as to raise teachers' awareness about this issue.

✓ All of them are located within an "ecological approach to language learning and teaching": Environment-friendly teaching.

What do you think it is meant by "environment-friendly teaching"?

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

1) Allwright's "Exploratory Practice" (1991a, 2003, 2005)

✓ Leitmotiv: "Think globally, act locally" (*Friends of the Earth* slogan).

✓ Exploratory Practice was initially born as an approach to practitioner research targeted at understanding the quality of language classroom life.

✓ It started as a reaction both to academic classroom research and to Action Research, both of which were primarily devoted to problem-solving issues (quality of output) rather than understanding and fostering quality of life in classrooms.

✓ As a result, Exploratory Practice is rooted in epistemological and ethical thinking rather than technical thinking.

✓ *Exploratory Practice offers an epistemologically and ethically motivated framework for conducting practitioner research in the field of language education. It does not offer a technical framework in itself, but it does make practical suggestions, and there is a considerable and growing published literature of examples of EP work in a wide variety of educational settings around the world.*

(Allwright, 2005: 361)

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

1) Allwright's "Exploratory Practice" (1991a, 2003, 2005)

✓ *Exploratory Practice is an indefinitely sustainable way for classroom language teachers and learners, while getting on with their learning and teaching, to develop their own understandings of life in the language classroom .*

(Allwright, 2005: 361)

✓ Allwright describes Exploratory Practice in six principles and two practical suggestions:

Principle 1. Put "quality of life" first.

Principle 2. Work primarily to understand language classroom life.

Principle 3. Involve everybody.

Principle 4. Work to bring people together.

Principle 5. Work also for mutual development.

Principle 6. Make the work a continuous enterprise.

Suggestion 1. Minimize the extra effort of all sorts for all concerned.

Suggestion 2. Integrate the "work for understanding" into the existing working life of the classroom.

(Allwright, 2005: 360)

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

1) Allwright's "Exploratory Practice" (1991a, 2003, 2005)

✓ Allwright identifies the following pedagogical procedures to implement Exploratory Practice in language classrooms. These principles reflect their potential global reach, whilst pedagogical procedures (see next slide) attend to local specificities of the teaching contexts where Exploratory Practice is applied.

Step 1: Identify a Puzzle Area.

Step 2: Refine Your Thinking about That Puzzle Area.

Step 3: Select a Particular Topic To Focus Upon.

Step 4: Find Appropriate Classroom Procedures to Explore It.

Step 5: Adapt Them to the Particular Puzzle You Want to Explore.

Step 6: Use Them in Class.

Step 7: Interpret the Outcomes.

Step 8: Decide on Their Implications and Plan Accordingly.

(Allwright, 2005: 365-366)

Allwright prefers the term "puzzle" to "problem". Why do you think so?

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

1) Allwright's "Exploratory Practice" (1991a, 2003, 2005)

✓ An example of Exploratory Practice (Perpignan, 2003): statement of puzzle, method and follow-up questions.

Setting: Academic Writing in English as a Foreign Language class, Bar-Ilan University, Israel

Puzzle:

• What kind of feedback, if any, did students consider most useful for learning?

• To what extent was the feedback, as it was intended by the teacher, comprehensible to the receiver?

• After receiving feedback, what strategies did students use in order to plan and produce future writing?

• What were the students' attitudes toward the feedback, the feedback giver and the process of holding a written dialogue through feedback about their writing?

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

1) Allwright's "Exploratory Practice" (1991a, 2003, 2005)

✓ An example of Exploratory Practice (Perpignan, 2003): statement of puzzle, method and follow-up questions.

Setting: Academic Writing in English as a Foreign Language class, Bar-Ilan University, Israel

Method:

• use of data 'already in' (as a result of the original aims of the study)

• a data-generated questionnaire probing the learners' preferences for feedback content, type and intent, in retrospect

• a questionnaire-based activity which attempted to capture the nature of the residue of the feedback several months after it was experienced

• a 40–50 minute semi-structured interview conducted at the end of the course.

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

1) Allwright's "Exploratory Practice" (1991a, 2003, 2005)

✓ An example of Exploratory Practice (Perpignan, 2003): statement of puzzle, method and follow-up questions.

Follow-up questions

1. *Are you happy with the amount you contribute in class, especially in response to my whole-class questions? Or would you like me to do something to help you to contribute more? What?*

2. *Would you like me to nominate people to answer questions? Please explain how this would work for you.*

3. *Have you got any suggestions for helping everyone to get to know each other better, to reduce the embarrassment factor and to help me appreciate individual personalities better?*

4. *What is your reaction to me asking for this kind of feedback, and responding to you with this kind of summary and comment? Would you like to do more of it? Please explain your views and reasons.*

If you've got answers to any of these questions, please tell me, or write me a note. Thanks.

4. Four proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

2) Bax's "Context approach to language teaching" (2003)

- ✓ Wrong assumption of CLT:

  "The Communicative Approach is the way to do it, no matter what the context" (Bax, 2003: 281)

- ✓ CLT transmits an ill-devised message for teachers: by emphasising communication as the object of language teaching and implicitly conveying that the solution to classroom problems is to be found in *methods*, **context** does not become a top priority and as such is granted minor importance.

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

2) Bax's "Context approach to language teaching" (2003)

From Bax (2003: 281):

CLT approach	Context approach
CLT is the complete answer.	We must consider the whole context.
If we don't have CLT, then we can't learn a language.	Methodology (including CLT) is just one factor in learning a language.
No other factors count in learning a language –only teaching methodology.	Other factors may be more important.
If you don't have CLT, then you are backward.	Other methods and approaches may be equally valid.

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

2) Bax's "Context approach to language teaching" (2003)

What is your opinion about Bax's "Context Approach"? Do you agree with all the statements included above?

Harmer (2003) counteracts Bax's stance. He argues that the learning context should not be the first criterion to set up a teaching programme, but *methodology* instead.

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

3) Kumaravadivelu's "Macrostrategic framework", located within the Postmethod condition (1994, 2003a, 2003b, 2006a, 2006b, 2012a, 2012b)

- ✓ Kumaravadivelu's argument in favour of Postmethod and in rejection of the *method* concept in language teaching is rooted in ideological reasons.
- ✓ For Kumaravadivelu (2003), ELT methods reflect British colonialism purposes and as such possess easily identifiable colonial characteristics.
- ✓ In other words, the concept of *method* is a construct of marginality.

It is a multidimensional phenomenon consisting of scholastic, linguistic, cultural, and economic aspects. It extends and expands the colonial agenda of economic exploitation and cultural domination. It perpetuates the colonial image of the native Self and the non-native Other. It continues to ignore local knowledge and local interests.

(Kumaravadivelu, 2003: 543-544)

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

3) Kumaravadivelu's "Macrostrategic framework", located within the Postmethod condition (1994, 2003a, 2003b, 2006a, 2006b, 2012a, 2012b)

✓ In order to liberate non-Western teachers from Centerproduced methods, there must be a shift from the *method* concept to the concept of **Postmethod,** sensitive to the **context** where teaching takes place and which thus proceeds from a bottom-up perspective.

As a predominantly top-down exercise, the conception and construction of methods have been largely guided by a one-size-fits-all cookie-cutter approach that assumes a common clientele with common goals. The construction of any meaningful alternative to the Centerproduced concept of method, therefore, is premised upon breaking this epistemic dependency and striving to design context-specific, locally generated instructional strategies that take into account the particular, the practical, and the possible.

(Kumaravadivelu, 2012a: 18-19)

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

3) Kumaravadivelu's "Macrostrategic framework", located within the Postmethod condition (1994, 2003a, 2003b, 2006a, 2006b, 2012a, 2012b)

✓ In practical terms, in order to perform this shift from the *method* concept to the *Postmethod* concept, Kumaravadivelu devised a "Macrostrategic framework" that is shaped by three operating principles: particularity, practicality, and possibility.

Particularity seeks to facilitate the advancement of a context-sensitive, location-specific pedagogy that is based on a true understanding of local linguistic, social, cultural, and political particularities. Practicality seeks to rupture the reified role relationship between theorizers and practitioners by enabling and encouraging teachers to theorize from their practice and to practice what they theorize. Possibility seeks to tap the sociopolitical consciousness that students bring with them to the classroom so that it can also function as a catalyst for identity formation and social transformation.

(Kumaravadivelu, 2006a: 69. Emphasis in the original)

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

3) Kumaravadivelu's "Macrostrategic framework", located within the Postmethod condition (1994, 2003a, 2003b, 2006a, 2006b, 2012a, 2012b)

✓ The three principles constitute the theoretical rationale of the macrostrategic framework, which consists of macrostrategies and microstrategies. Macrostrategies are made operational in the classroom through microstrategies.

Macrostrategies are guiding principles derived from theoretical, empirical and experiential insights related to second/foreign language learning and teaching. A macrostrategy is thus a general plan, a broad guideline based on which teachers will be able to generate their own situation-specific, need-based microstrategies or classroom techniques. Inevitably, each of these macrostrategies will take on a different content and character depending on local expertise and local expectations.

(Kumaravadivelu, 2003: 545. Our highlighting)

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

3) Kumaravadivelu's "Macrostrategic framework", located within the Postmethod condition (1994, 2003a, 2003b, 2006a, 2006b, 2012a, 2012b)

The macrostrategies are the following (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, 2006a, 2006b):

1. Maximise learning opportunities
2. Minimise perceptual mismatches
3. Facilitate negotiated interaction
4. Promote learner autonomy
5. Foster language awareness
6. Activate intuitive heuristics
7. Contextualise linguistic input
8. Integrate language skills
9. Ensure social relevance
10. Raise cultural consciousness

4. Three proposals to counteract the disillusionment with "methods"

3) Kumaravadivelu's "Macrostrategic framework", located within the Postmethod condition (1994, 2003a, 2003b, 2006a, 2006b, 2012a, 2012b)

✓ Influence of the Postmethod concept in FLT:

We have been awakened to the necessity of making methods-based pedagogies more sensitive to local exigencies, awakened to the opportunity afforded by postmethod pedagogies to help practicing teachers develop their own theory of practice, awakened to the multiplicity of learner identities, awakened to the complexity of teacher beliefs, and awakened to the vitality of macrostructures –social, cultural, political, and historical– that shape and reshape the microstructures of our pedagogic enterprise.

(Kumaravadivelu, 2006a: 75)

5. Pedagogical implications of Kumaravidelu's "Postmethod condition"

✓ A need to break away from the epistemic dependency on Centre-based Textbook Industry (Kumaravadivelu, 2012a).

Why do you think that Kumaravadivelu targets textbooks as the main pedagogical agent to break away from the method *concept in language teaching?*

❑ Current heightened cultural consciousness in our globalised world has been neglected by Centre-based textbooks.

❑ Textbooks should be written and produced by local practitioners.

Why do you think that Kumaravadivelu advocates locally produced textbooks?

❑ Sources on which teachers can draw to devise their own context-sensitive materials: online newspapers, blogs, tweets, YouTube, Facebook, and other forms of social networking.

6. Criticisms of Postmethod pedagogy

Positive criticisms of Postmethod pedagogy

1. Postmethod pedagogy is "a compelling idea that emphasises greater judgment from teachers in each context and a better match between the means and the ends" (Crabbe, 2003: 16).

2. It encourages the teacher "to engage in a carefully crafted process of diagnosis, treatment, and assessment" (Brown, 2002: 13).

3. "It also provides one possible way to be responsive to the lived experiences of learners and teachers, and to the local exigencies of learning and teaching" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006a: 73).

4. [It] *opens up new opportunities for the expertise of language teachers in periphery contexts to be recognized and valued* [and] *makes it more feasible for teachers to acknowledge and work with the diversity of the learners in their classrooms, guided by local assessments of students' strategies for learning rather than by global directives from remote authorities.*

(Block & Cameroon, 2002: 10)

6. Criticisms of Postmethod pedagogy

Negative criticisms of Postmethod pedagogy

1. Postmethod is not an alternative to *method* but only an addition to method (Liu, 1995).

2. Questionning the very concept of Postmethod pedagogy: "Kumaravadivelu's macro-microstrategies constitute a method" (Larsen-Freeman, 2005: 24).

3. Bell (2003) laments that "by deconstructing methods, postmethod pedagogy has tended to cut teachers off from their sense of plausibility, their passion and involvement" (p. 333).

4. One more 'Brave New World' in language teaching?

   Indeed, Postmethod pedagogy requires:

   a) Autonomous, well-trained, responsible, committed, hard-working teachers

   b) Autonomous, responsible and motivated learners

   Is the teaching profession ready for this commitment?

7. Conclusion: Guidelines to assess whether to opt for a new method/approach or a postmethod perspective

Two types of guidelines suggested by Richards & Rodgers (2001):

1) List of general questions to assess whether to opt for a new method or approach. Criado and Sánchez believe that it could also apply to the Postmethod case:

- *What advantages does the new approach or method offer? Is it perceived to be more effective than current practices?*

- *How compatible is it with teachers' existing beliefs and attitudes and with the organization and practices within classrooms and schools?*

- *Is the new approach or method very complicated and difficult to understand and use?*

- *Has it been tested out in some schools and classrooms before teachers are expected to use it?*

- *Have the benefits of the new approach or method been clearly communicated to teachers and institutions?*

- *How clear and practical is the new approach or method? Are its expectations stated in ways that clearly show how it can be used in the classroom?*

(Richards & Rodgers, 2001: 246)

7. Conclusion: guidelines to assess whether to opt for a new method/approach or a post-method perspective

2) Primary reference point to take into account when developing a personal approach to teaching.

Teacher's personal beliefs and principles in relation to:

-his or her role in the classroom

-the nature of effective teaching and learning

-the difficulties learners face and how these can be addressed

-successful learning activities

-the structure of an effective lesson.

(Richards & Rodgers, 2001: 251)