

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING: THE METHODS

ENSINO DE LÍNGUA ESTRANGEIRA: OS MÉTODOS

ENSEÑANZA DE LENGUA EXTRANJERA: LOS MÉTODOS

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ABSTRACT: Language teaching methodologies have changed/improved over the years to meet the needs of teachers and students in the classroom. In this paper we aim to present the evolution of foreign language teaching through a description of language teaching methodologies over time. We describe the principles underlying some methodologies, the role of teacher and student, and how learning assessment is done. Authors such as Richards and Rodgers (1991), Almeida Filho (1999), Silva (2004), Pérez (2007), among others, were some of the academic experts on which we relied to conduct this study. We conclude that methods should work as a reference for the teacher, and should be adapted to each particular situation or context in which they live. Therefore, the teachers should use the methodologies that reflect their principles, reducing the distance between the theory developed by language experts and the teaching experience.

KEYWORDS: Foreign language teaching. Methods. Post method.

RESUMO: *As metodologias de ensino de línguas mudaram/se aperfeiçoaram ao longo dos anos para atender às necessidades de professores e alunos em sala de aula. Objetivamos, neste artigo, apresentar a evolução do ensino de línguas estrangeiras, através de uma descrição das metodologias de ensino de línguas ao longo do tempo. Descrevemos os princípios subjacentes a algumas metodologias, o papel do professor e do aluno e como a avaliação da aprendizagem é realizada. Autores como Richards e Rodgers (1991), Almeida Filho (1999), Silva (2004), Pérez (2007), entre outros, foram os estudiosos nos quais nos baseamos para realizar tal estudo. Concluimos que os métodos devem ser tomados como um ponto de referência pelo professor, e devem ser adaptados de acordo com a situação ou contexto particular em que vivem. Assim, o professor utilizará as metodologias que reflitam seus princípios, reduzindo a distância entre a teoria desenvolvida pelos estudiosos da língua e a prática docente.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Ensino de Línguas Estrangeiras. Métodos. Pós-método.*

RESUMEN: *Las metodologías de enseñanza de lenguas han cambiado/se perfeccionaron a lo largo de los años para satisfacer a las necesidades de profesores y estudiantes en el aula. El objetivo de este artículo es presentar la evolución de la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras, a través de una descripción de las metodologías de enseñanza de lenguas a lo largo de los años. Describimos los principios que subyacen a algunas metodologías, el papel del profesor y del alumno y cómo se realiza la evaluación del aprendizaje. Autores como Richards y Rodgers*

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(1991), Almeida Filho (1999), Silva (2004), Pérez (2007), entre otros, fueron los estudiosos en los cuales nos basamos para la realización de tal estudio. Concluimos que los métodos deben ser tomados como punto de referencia por el profesor y deben adaptarse a la situación o contexto particular en el que viven. Por lo tanto, el maestro utilizará las metodologías que reflejan sus principios, reduciendo la distancia entre la teoría desarrollada por los estudiosos de la lengua y la práctica docente.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras. Métodos. Post-método.

Introduction

The need to get in touch with speakers of other languages, regardless of the purpose (economic, social, commercial, etc.), is very old. Thus, it can be considered that, about five thousand years ago, there was already a professional teaching of foreign languages, since vestiges of communication between the ancient peoples reached up to the modern ones, registered in the most diverse supports (clay, parchment, papyrus, among others). First, a language was taught within a community and that knowledge was passed on from generation to generation. Then, this teaching became that of a foreign language, due to the conquest of peoples of other languages, the commercialization of products, among other reasons for speaking another language. As a people imposed itself economically, commercially and politically on others, its language also imposed itself and, therefore, the need to learn it. As an illustration, the English language is currently seen, which due to the dominance of the United States of North America (English-speaking country) over other countries, is the most studied and used foreign language in international relations. This domain can be compared to that of Latin, which, five hundred years ago, was the dominant language in education, religion and the governments of the western world (RICHARDS; RODGERS, 1991).

In the 16th century, French, Italian and English gained importance as a result of political changes in Europe. Latin went from being a spoken language to being a written language. In schools, it became an occasional subject and had a different function. Apprentices from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries in England first had a rigorous introduction to Latin grammar, meaning that they had to learn grammatical rules, declension and conjugation, translation practices and sentence writing according to bilingual texts and dialogues. After that, these apprentices embarked on an advanced study of grammar and rhetoric, in which mistakes were severely punished. Only when Latin ceased to be a vehicle for communication and was replaced by vernacular languages did its function change, becoming dispensable as a basis for all forms of classical education (PÉREZ, 2007).

In the 18th century, modern languages began to appear in European schools, and the method used to teach them was the same used to teach Latin, with the rules of grammar, vocabulary and phrases for translation. As in this context it was not intended to speak a foreign language (FL), oral practice was only translation of sentences, exemplifying grammatical rules (PÉRES, 2007).

This brief summary of what FL teaching was, in the remote past until the 18th century, works as a context for this article, which aims to describe FL teaching methods, following a timeline, in order to understand how these methods evolved from the 19th century to the present.

The traditional method

At the beginning of the 19th century, books were written to expose the FL morphology and syntax rules, which would eventually be memorized by apprentices. The teacher was the holder of knowledge and his work was reduced to the minimum possible. Students received and created vast vocabulary lists in FL in order to, at the same time, translate and memorize it. The proposed exercises were to apply grammatical rules, dictations, translation and version. This FL teaching method became known as the *Traditional Method (Grammar-translation)* and dominated FL teaching between 1840 and 1940, and even today, with some modifications, it is still used.

The purpose of this method was to transmit knowledge about a language that would allow access to literary texts and a domain of normative grammar. The classes were taught in the apprentice's mother tongue (MT) and limited to teaching grammar and text translation, in order to facilitate students' access to the culture and literature produced by FL (DE NARDI, 2007).

However, at the beginning of the 20th century, the Traditional Method began to be questioned as to its efficiency, since FL was not considered as another linguistic system, distinct from that of MT, and the translation exercises made it seem that everything could be easily translated. The FL, therefore, failed to present a history, its own identity, constituting itself only as a set of rules and norms. However, according to De Nardi (2007), we found that translation cannot be seen as a simple transfer of words from one language to another and that each language, however close to another, has characteristics that differentiate it from others. It is another linguistic and cultural system.

Another fact that also contributed to the questioning of the grammar-translation method was the need to teach oral competence in FL, given that communications between people from different countries multiplied, due commercial, economic, political or cultural reasons. Countries such as France, Germany and England, with specialists in the field of FL teaching, began to look for new methodologies for this teaching, even defending the teaching of oral communication before any other competence (RICHARDS; RODGERS, 1991). Translation and the traditional method, therefore, needed to evolve, obtaining new meanings and objectives, since now it no longer met the needs of students (PÉRES, 2007).

The direct method

In this same context, teachers began to feel the need to prioritize the teaching of orality in FL classes and, at the end of the 19th century, when this interest coincided with that of linguists, a search for new language teaching approaches began, no longer having grammar as a priority. It was established, then, that oral comprehension and expression were very important in the FL learning process. Grammar, in this context, should appear inductively (PÉRES, 2007).

Thus, was born a teaching method that took into account the child's acquisition of MT: the *Direct Method*. In this method, translation was avoided as much as possible and the student was in direct contact with FL. Reading was used to perform oral exercises and writing was done with questionnaires, which were answered by students. In this way, it was believed that the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) were being worked on (LEFFA, 1988 *apud* DE NARDI, 2007)

Trying to offer the student a more regular everyday language, which could be used in his daily life, this method went beyond the use of manufactured, artificial texts and intended, above all, for the acquisition of vocabulary by the student through long lists of words (memorization). Thus, “intuitive” processes, such as gestures and mimics, and resources such as the demonstration of objects, images and examples, helped the student in the construction of the meaning of words and the text itself, which were nothing more than a set of sentences without any cohesion or really textual characteristic (PIETRARÓIA; DELLATORRE, 2012).

This method aimed to distance the student from his MT, making him think of FL, as if entering the classroom, the student left out everything he had learned in his MT. The MT, here, would not help in the acquisition of FL, as it could contaminate the teaching-learning process, producing negative interferences in the apprentice's expression. What was thought was that the subject could move away from his own MT so as not to hinder learning. Thus, the role of the

MT in the construction of the subject's identity was ignored, and the apprentice, to enter this new world presented by the FL, needed to “forget” his MT, as if he had never had contact with it, what happens to a child who learns a language and has never had contact with any other language (DE NARDI, 2007).

In this sense, Coracini (2005) states that it is impossible to determine once and for all the separation between the languages that make up the subject, as they are identified, transformed, in the mixture of languages, from others (texts, speeches, memory, wish...): “languages are 'contaminated', swallowing (spoiling) the much desired and impossible purity of the mother tongue” (op. cit. p. 17). To illustrate this statement, Coracini (2005) provides an excerpt from the speech of one of the subjects involved in one of his researches.

The subjects were given the task of translating the summary of a doctoral thesis in the area of Food Engineering, from Portuguese to Spanish, which was rejected by a Spanish magazine with the observation that the Spanish should be revised. This text had already been translated by the professor responsible for the research, together with a Bolivian student who lived in Brazil for four years. “Contaminated” by the Portuguese, the Bolivian wrote “contribuición” instead of “contribución”. From the example, it is possible to perceive the existence of an illusion of borders, an illusion of purity of each language taken in isolation, when in reality they mix. The constant use of FL distances the subject who speaks of his MT, who now does not speak even pure MT, but the mixture of the two codes.

The audio-oral method

In the 1940s, the *Audio-oral* or *Audio-lingual Method* appeared, with the objective of creating automatisms with the intensive practice of structural exercises, in order to allow the student to develop orality. This method gained ground with the need for the United States to train people in other languages to communicate during the Second World War (MARTINS, 2017).

Based on (Skinner's) behaviorism, this method intended to make these new habits acquired by learners through a stimulus-response process, developing the skills of speaking and listening, which was believed to be possible simply through presentation of language structures, which should be repeated until its use becomes automatic and the student becomes a speaker of the object language.

There was a great concern here that the students did not make mistakes. Thus, it was taught through the gradual presentation of structures. Grammar, therefore, was presented to

students not by rules, but by a series of examples or models. Grammatical paradigms and vocabulary were presented through complete sentences, not through lists.

After a few years, it was found that structural exercises bored students and, thus, motivation disappeared. Students were unable to reuse the structures taught by the teacher spontaneously. This would be exactly the biggest criticism of this method: not being able to take the student to more advanced levels, since he did not express himself spontaneously in FL. In the long run, it was noticed that the results in relation to listening comprehension were not significantly superior to previous methodologies.

The audiovisual method

The *Audiovisual Method* arose from the desire to perpetuate the diffusion of the French language, consisting of adding the visual component as an element of learning. This approach is based on the extension of the direct method, since its main innovations constitute, in part, the attempts to solve the problems that the defenders of this method faced.

Puren (1988) classified audiovisual courses into three phases: the first generation in the 1960s; the second generation, in the 1970s, marked by didactic integration and the behaviorist tendency; and the third, in the 1980s, beginning the communicative approach.

The mechanical exercises and the strict grammatical gradation, in addition to the combination of memorization and dramatization of the dialogues, marks of the first audiovisual generation, resemble models of the audio-oral courses. The second generation is essentially marked by an effort to correct and/or adapt to school contexts. The third generation is marked, in turn, by attempts to integrate new didactic, notional-functional and communicative trends.

According to Puren (1988), in the Archipel French language teaching method (J. Courtillon and S. Raillad, Didier, 1982), classified as the third generation of audiovisual methods, any idea of progression is abolished. Another change proposed by Archipel is the abandonment of excess images to support the construction of the meaning of the dialogues. In this method, some images give a general idea of the situation and the protagonists. In this case, the images are the starting point of the explanation and not the main support of the communication. Thus, the image has the role of verbal stimulator and not of semantic facilitator, as occurred in the previous methodologies.

In the first two generations of the audiovisual method, the student plays a receptive and submissive role in relation to the teacher and the textbook. He has neither autonomy nor creativity. The teacher centralizes communication, is manipulative and technical. In the third

generation, the teacher-student relationship is more interactive. The teacher avoids correcting students' mistakes during the first repetition. Then, the phonetic correction work begins until the memorization phase. The purpose of assessments is to measure the mastery of language and communication skills, as well as creativity (MARTINS, 2017).

The communicative method

While the United States emphasized the language code at the sentence level, in Europe linguists emphasized the study of speech. Here it was proposed not only the analysis of the oral and written text, but also the circumstances in which the text was produced and interpreted. The language, therefore, is analyzed as a set of communicative events (LEFFA, 1988).

Thus, in the early 1980s, arises in Europe, as a reaction to audio-oral and audiovisual methods, the *Communicative Approach*, in response, as stated by Mascia (2003 *apud* DE NARDI, 2007), to the need to teach a foreign language to immigrants, generated by the opening of the European Common Market. This method also arises with the concern to move away from the student's mother tongue, as well as to integrate error as something natural in the teaching-learning process. It is the error that will allow the teacher to make decisions in the selection of material, as well as in the reorganization of teaching activities.

In this approach, language teaching is centered on communication. The student is taught to communicate in a foreign language and to acquire communication skills. This concept was developed by Hymes (1991), based on critical reflections on Chomsky's notion of competence and performance (1965). Hymes says that members of a linguistic community have a competence of two types: *linguistic knowledge* (combined knowledge of grammatical forms) and *sociolinguistic knowledge* (rules of use). In relation to the mother tongue, the acquisition of these two systems occurs jointly and implicitly.

For Canale and Swain (1980 *apud* GERMAIN, 1993), a communication competence comprises a grammatical competence, a sociolinguistic competence and a strategic competence. Moirand (1982) states that communicative competence involves the combination of several components: linguistic, discursive, referential and sociocultural.

Grammatical activities, in the communicative method, are at the service of communication. It is the grammar of ideas and the organization of meaning. Formerly formal and repetitive exercises are now real or simulated, interactive communication exercises. The practice of conceptualizing is used, and the student, through reflection and hypothesis

elaboration, discovers, by himself, the rules of language functioning, which requires his greater participation in the learning process.

The communicative approach has some methodological procedures that help students to learn, that is, they perform a sequence of acts, such as greeting, casually socializing experiences with the help of objects, etc. In addition, it may include traces of orality and information load, not exhausting its potential, as its objective is to create favorable conditions for the effective (real) use of FL. The affective aspect, in this method, is seen as an important variable in which the teacher must be sensitized to the students' interests, encouraging participation and acceptance of suggestions.

It is in this sense that Almeida Filho (1999) states:

Being communicative means being more concerned with the student as a subject and agent in the formation process through the foreign language. This means less emphasis on teaching and more strength for what opens to the student the possibility of recognizing in practices what makes sense for his life than what makes a difference for his future as a person (ALMEIDA FILHO, 1999, p. 42, our translation).

The teacher ceases to occupy the main role in the teaching-learning process and becomes an advisor, facilitator, organizer of activities, advisor and analyst of students' needs and interests, a “co-communicator” (GERMAIN, 1993). The student has a greater participation in the learning process and has greater responsibility and commitment in the learning path (autonomy).

The student who begins to study an FL must understand that this language needs to be internalized, as it is a matter of acquiring a new language and using it as a form of expression, a means of communication. This becomes possible when someone appropriates this FL and it starts to be used not mechanically, but reproducing its structures in a creative way. Taking this into account, anyone at the beginning of exposure to an FL uses MT as a support for this new learning, both in relation to the lexicon and the morphosyntactic structures. It takes time for this “crutch” to become unnecessary and a new structure to be built (GOETTENAUER, 2005).

It is in this context that, according to Widdowson (1990), the Communicative Approach to foreign language teaching is defended, centered on communication skills and language interaction. These new trends favored and focused the learner on social interaction. The methods presented as communicative have in common a focus on sense, meaning and premeditated interaction between subjects in a foreign language. Communicative teaching organizes learning experiences in terms of activities or tasks of real interest and/or need of the

student so that he is able to use the foreign language, to carry out authentic actions in the interaction with other speakers-users of that language.

Still on this teaching method, Coracini (1997, p. 156 *apud* DE NARDI, 2007) states that here it is no longer a matter of language acquisition, that is, an unconscious process like what happens with the child who is learning his/her MT. The focus now is on learning, that is, a conscious process of knowledge of a FL, its rules and uses. For the author, “teaching started to be considered as the best way to foster this awareness of the apprentice” (CORACINI, 1997).

According to Galisson (1982), functional or communicative methods, however, are criticized for being rich in theoretical discourse and poor in technology, procedures and exercises; unlike previous methodologies, rich in exercises and procedures and poor in theoretical discourse. It can be said that the didactic proposals after the communicative method are only evolutions and reformulations of the communicative method.

For students to be linguistically competent, they must be provoked to learn. It is important to find strategies that facilitate access to this student. However, for FL teaching methodologies, teaching well is to follow, to the letter, its principles and rules, disregarding the active role of the learner, his objectives, preferences, needs, etc. The same happens with the teacher, who is limited to reproducing this method, with no space to criticize it or expose his preferences (SILVA, 2004).

The action perspective and the multilingual approach

In the 2000s, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages - CEFR speaks of two important concepts that go beyond learning a foreign language: *the actional perspective* and *the multilingual approach*, concepts that need to be discussed in this historical summary of language teaching methodologies.

According to Puren (2009), the *Actional Approach* deals with the perspective of social action, in which the student is considered a social actor. The student needs to be prepared to act in society, through effective (real) or virtual (close to reality) exercises, from the transmission of a message from a statement to the performance of more complex tasks, such as the realization of a common project.

"Acting" according to the communicative method means "acting on the other through the language" (acts of speech). In the action approach, "acting" constitutes a social action in which speech acts are hierarchically subordinate. It is to act together, coactuate. According to Bourguignon (2009), this means proposing a learning-action guide that responds to students'

needs. Therefore, the focus on this teaching-learning process is the group, not the student. The importance ceases to be individual autonomy and becomes the formation of a critical, autonomous individual and responsible and solidary citizen.

In this perspective, language is conceived as an instrument of social action and not simply as an instrument of communication. Students must acquire knowledge in the group (co-acquisition) so that they can be trained to act as plurilingual and pluricultural social actors, capable of adapting or integrating in different societies.

The teacher is responsible for establishing communication between the classroom and the world outside it, conceiving the instruments available on the Internet as supports, as basic instruments of collaborative work (PUREN, 2009). On the internet, students can search for knowledge in an easy way, improve themselves and commit to learning. In addition, the teacher needs to be attentive when selecting the textbook, since many authors classify their books in an action perspective, but they are nothing more than a mixture of approaches, even the most traditional ones. Thus, they classify them for using, in their proposals, words such as "tasks", "project" and "acting in groups".

The evaluation in the communicative approach, as well as in the actional approach, is considered as a way of verifying the student's linguistic-communicative competence. But, in the actional approach, it is also intended to assess general individual and social skills. In both perspectives, the assessment has a formative basis, the work is collaborative and each member of the group has a task to do. Therefore, the responsibility of each member of the group increases. The work of each one is valued and important for the realization of the final product, done by the group.

According to CEFR, the *Plurilingual Approach* points out that as the experience with an individual's language in their cultural context expands from the familiar language to that of the social group and other groups, the individual does not classify these languages-cultures in separate compartments, but they build, above all, a communicative competence, applying, linking the knowledge of the languages and experiences they have with the languages, being, in correlation and interaction.

Thus, to communicate, a person can go from one language to another, with each of the interlocutors using their abilities and exploring the other's to use one language and explore the other. The intention is that each one can use the knowledge of different languages to understand a written text or to communicate orally in unknown and / or never studied languages. This does not mean mastering one, two or three languages separately. The objective here is to develop a

language repertoire in which the knowledge acquired previously is used, in mother tongue or not, to help the learner to solve comprehension problems (MARTINS, 2017).

Intercomprehension between languages emerges as a new language teaching-learning paradigm, seeking to develop strategic skills that can favor understanding through reflection on the functioning of “neighboring” languages. It starts with the family of languages, such as Romance languages, for example; from his native language, the learner moves towards understanding other neighboring languages (ESCUDE, 2010). When the speakers use their own language to communicate, the interaction takes place in a more peaceful and comfortable way, requiring effort from all participants, overcoming the feeling of incapacity that normally occurs when it comes to communication in FL. It is an integrative learning, as one or more languages can be worked on, in addition to adding to the teaching of languages content from other subjects of the school curriculum.

Sousa (2013), among others, points out the benefits of such an approach for Brazilian education. Although research has been carried out in basic education in language classes, there is nothing to prevent this work of “neighboring” languages from being used in other disciplines. For this, it is necessary that there is an insertion of plurilingual practices in the initial formation of teachers. Undergraduate courses must introduce subjects in their curricula that reinforce combined and coordinated teaching and learning for languages, thus contributing to the diversification of teaching, as well as encouraging motivation for the discovery of various languages/cultures.

The multilingual approach, through intercomprehension between languages, in the Brazilian context, can contribute to the learners to develop linguistic and pragmatic knowledge, as well as they can collaborate for the development of their potential as individuals, opening space for the development of a multilingual competence and multicultural (ALAS-MARTINS, 2014). It is a great didactic-pedagogical challenge that does not intend to replace teaching-learning through the four skills, but to consider the dynamics of the valorization of languages and the division of skills as a cognitive resource and not as an obstacle to the learning process.

What is perceived is that, in the action perspective and in multilingual didactics, the emphasis is on the development of cooperative and collaborative work, the rotation of roles and the division of tasks. The classroom is transformed into a knowledge-changing network. In this practice, each one contributes to their individual development and solidarity among all.

The post-method

As can be seen, with regard to the “ideal method” of teaching foreign languages, much has already been discussed. According to Silva (2004), these methods appear to solve teaching problems, and can be applied anywhere and in any circumstance. However, it is known that each class is different, wherever it may be. Each has specific characteristics of students, objectives, intentions, expectations and teachers.

Over the years, methods and approaches have been adapted from the knowledge acquired with previous methods, that is, from research and practice. Thus, new theories are alternating, according to the needs of the teacher, the students, in addition to the teaching process itself. It seems that the theorists who developed these methods know the reality of classrooms and believe that one method can be applied to any other reality. However, as each class has its specificities and particularities, it is the teacher's responsibility, therefore, to make decisions based on their practice, experience with the group, cultural, social context and personal values.

In this context, it is also the responsibility of the teacher to choose the best approach, or even some characteristics of certain approaches, that best suit the group, the context of the classroom. Thus, the method starts to be consulted, in specific cases, as it does not correspond, totally, to daily practice.

For Dewey (1978), learning is considered as an active construction of knowledge through the compromise of ideas in significant contexts, which is one of the premises of the Communicative Approach. And each meaningful context varies according to different spaces. It is up to the teacher to identify these individual contexts, according to their educational reality.

Larsen-Freeman (2000) points out that the problem with methods is the application of one method or another in developing contexts, that is, the fact that the methods are socially constructed and, therefore, cannot be transferred from one context to another. The author also points out that some methods, taken as modern in some parts of the world, generate conflicts in many countries where they are used, due to the values that they carry conflict with local cultures, since they are not neutral, that is, contain the ideologies of the countries in which they are produced and, therefore, are socially constructed. These methods, however, can be easily adapted to different realities. This happens when we, FL teachers, choose to “mix” the methods, adapting them to each context.

In this sense, Pennycook (1989) talks about the mastery of the methods produced by certain countries, which are exported to the whole world and encouraged to use them without

worrying about being culturally appropriate. The author also states that this superiority of some methods should be taken more seriously. This is what can be observed with the Spanish language methods used in Brazil, for example, considered as "best". Most of them are foreign methods, more specifically Spanish, and bring cultural aspects of that country.

Although methods are important, teachers should not be victims of ideological impositions and unable to manage the teaching-learning process. The author proposes to look at the contributions of methods to the formation of language teachers, as this can help them to question such methods and convert them, which will lead them to professional growth, giving them the opportunity to deal with particularities of its students.

This can provide teachers with a basis for them to make decisions about their students and teaching practice. It is suggested that teachers choose a local methodology, as they are the ones who, in contact with students, are sensitive to their needs. Not everything that is imposed by the methods must be worked on. This is reflected in the importance of methods, which are really relevant for teacher formation. However, according to Freire and Shor (2000), the transformation in the classroom is not only a matter of methods and techniques, but also a way of establishing a different relationship with knowledge and reality. On the other hand, the decision on the appropriate methodology is not so easy and teachers need to make reflections and choices, establish a different relationship with theory and practice and learn to reflect in the action and about the action. What really happens is that most teachers have a practice formed by the force of habit, when working mechanically with certain methods.

It is with this view that Kumaradivelu (2001) proposed the so-called *Post-Method*, a three-dimensional system constituted by the pedagogy of: a) *particularity*: adequacy of theoretical knowledge more directed to real situations, in specific circumstances; b) *practice*: the teacher can produce personal theories from the interpretation and application of theories in his practice; c) *possibility*: as a producer of the didactic material appropriate to the context in which it appears, the teacher acts and transforms reality, in addition to participating in a continuous process of self-development, and his classroom environment can be a place for exchanging experiences, doubts, fears and reflections of various theories.

For Silva (2004), in turn, the Post-Method is a combination of theoretical knowledge and the entire context that permeates teaching, always taking into account a preliminary assessment of how the social individual is inserted in the external learning environment, his social condition, affectivity and other physical and social factors that intervene or may intervene in the teaching-learning process, as well as after that process.

In this new conception, the research focuses on the classroom, so that the teacher's approach is built based on a dynamic between the reality of the teacher, his/her students and from the evidence and results of research in the area, whether they are of a theoretical, empirical or pedagogical nature. Thus, the teacher becomes a researcher capable of indicating the extent to which the findings of the theory help his practice. This can enable him to have instruments that contribute to him pointing out alternatives and making adaptations capable of having effects in his classroom (SILVA, 2004, p. 6, our translation).

The Post-Method allows the teacher to create their content program, as well as their work proposal, based on one or more teaching methodologies that best adapt and meet the needs of students in that teaching context. “The teacher together with the student can provide an environment where the foreign language starts to serve as an instrument to promote communication” (SILVA, 2004, p. 8, our translation). In this way, the teacher can create a space for reflection and evaluation about his teaching practice and his attitudes in the classroom.

This new teaching methodology seeks a more appropriate environment for the student's learning, as well as a larger workspace for the teacher who, although aware of the responsibility to know teaching methodologies well, can choose the one that best suits his work in the classroom, providing a more meaningful lesson for him and the students. Therefore, it can be said that the teacher who uses this teaching methodology is autonomous, as he puts into practice a theory, based on his practice, that meets the needs of his context (SILVA, 2004, p. 11).

In teaching based on the Post-Method, the teacher needs to be aware that, if the methodology used is not giving a positive result, it is necessary to seek new strategies that facilitate this understanding by the student. That is, it is a methodology that requires more work from the teacher, but also provides more interesting teaching and generates better results. As Almeida Filho (2007, p. 65) states:

Teaching a L2 means enabling the development of a non-native language that students do not master well or that they master with gaps. When we teach, we are facilitating understandings of content and the target language system itself (ALMEIDA FILHO, 2007, p. 65, our translation).

Final considerations

As stated earlier, this article has proposed to describe the teaching methods of FL, so that one can understand how these methods evolved over the years. It is also worth emphasizing that we believe that foreign language teaching methods must be taken by the teacher as a reference point and must be adapted according to the particular situation or context in which it is being used. Thus, the teacher will use methods and approaches that reflect his principles,

reducing the distance between the theory developed by language scholars and the teaching practice, experienced in their daily lives.

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