

Putting into Perspective the Integrative Approach to English Language Teaching in Kenya

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Abstract

Worldwide, the field of language teaching has in the last decade been going through a revolution with the quest to come up with methodological approaches that can be regarded as efficient to effectively facilitate the language instructional process. This has borne an on-going debate regarding which is the most effective method and in which direction should language educators go with regard to enhancing the language learning process. From this perspective, an examination of language teaching methods points at a period in the world of language teaching methodology where there was a move away from the concept of “methods” deemed to restrict the teacher to a particular set of instructional practices. Born from this awakening, the concept of “eclecticism” is taking root. Eclecticism advocates focus on language teaching procedures rather than language teaching methods. Among the approaches that are taking root in language instruction is the “integration approach” to language teaching. This approach has now taken deep root, a philosophy that informs innovative classroom practice of the language teacher. Given this orientation, our paper presents a conceptualization and an analysis of the integration approach to teaching language. The paper draws its thread of thought from literature on methodology and authors combined experience of ELT of 26 years. The aim of this paper is to provide direction toward successful and informed implementation of the integration approach at all levels of learning as provided for in the education system in Kenya. We offer a description of various forms of integration levels which we believe are likely to enlighten teachers of English in handling problems arising during the implementation process. We are certain that the perspectives raised here will provide a sound background to the understanding of language teaching practice in Kenya borne from the communicative approach, communicative language teaching and notional-functional approach syllabi and philosophies, and the advocacy for post-method approaches in language teaching which all form the basis for the integration approach.

Keywords: Language Teaching Methodology, Integration Approach, Eclecticism, Integration Levels

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