Chapter 6

SUBJECT METHODS (ARTS)

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Learning Objectives

At the end of this chapter, reader should be able to:

i. define terms such as approach, methods, and techniques.
ii. discuss different types of teaching approaches.
iii. expatiate on the various types of teaching methods experts use in teaching humanity subjects.
iv. explain some of the techniques that could be used to teach humanity subjects

Introduction

The term teaching method refers to the general principles, pedagogy and management strategies used for classroom instruction (Teach.com, 2020). One's choice of teaching method depends on what fits one –one's educational philosophy, classroom demographic, subject area(s) and school mission statement. A teaching method comprises the principles and techniques/strategies used by teachers to facilitate learners' learning. These strategies are determined partly on the subject matter to be taught and partly by the nature of the learner. For a particular teaching method to be appropriate and efficient, it has to be in relation with the characteristic of the learner and the type of learning it is supposed to bring about. In today's school, the trend is that appropriate teaching method encourages much creativity. The type of teaching method adopted for usage at a particular teaching-learning experience is largely dependent on the type of skill or information the teacher wants to convey. According to Abiola (2012), when teachers are deciding on their methods, they need to be flexible and willing to adjust their style to suit those of their students. He adds that students' successes in classrooms are largely based on effective teaching methods.

Concepts of Approach, Method and Technique

Teaching approach is a set of theoretical assumption, beliefs, ideas or principles about the nature of learning. For example, teaching is often approached from the psychological perspective of simple to complex in the classroom. Every learner is expected to be introduced to the letters of the alphabet of a language before learning how words are formed. Thereafter, words are combined to form sentences in an approved order. Teaching approach is broader in scope and less procedural.

Teaching method is a systematic, logical arrangement of the steps involved in teaching a concept. It is more procedural and less broad in scope. It is an orderly outline of action the

teacher plans to take. Moreover, teaching technique is a series of steps taken by the teacher to accomplish an immediate objective in every class interaction. This involves the employment of specific tricks and styles customized to students' learning interests. It is a personal way of implementing teaching methods as it is highly individualized to learners' specific learning style.

Types of Teaching Approach

1. Teacher-centred Approach: This considers the teacher as the most critical factor in the instructional process. It sees the teacher as the initiator, the custodian, instructor, dispenser, innovator, implementer, sustainer and the evaluator of knowledge, values and skills, while the learner is considered as a tabula rasa (clean slate) or as an empty bucket on which the teacher makes impression/inscriptions or imparts knowledge, value and skills. This approach is rooted on the theoretical assumption of indoctrination. When you as a language or Islamic Studies teacher employs this approach, you assume the role of an instructor that imparts knowledge, skills or values to the learner without any corresponding efforts from the learner(s).
2. Learner-centred Approach: It opposes the ideal of teacher-centred approach; the learners rather than the teacher are the locus and focus of learning. They are, therefore, at the centre of the instructional process because they are considered as the most critical factor. According to this approach, every learner comes to the learning situation with some experience technically referred to as "entry behaviour". The learner is therefore neither a clean slate nor an empty bucket and must be an active participant in the instructional process or teaching. In this approach, therefore, teaching is more like lighting a fire than filling a bucket, and the teacher must be a guide by the side, rather than being a sage on the stage (Lawal, 2015). The learner has the substantive contribution to teaching activities. The language or Islamic Studies teacher who employs this approach assumes the role of a facilitator or guide that cultivates knowledge, skills or values to the learner.
3. Learning-centred Approach: This combines all the effective aspects of various approaches based on the content and context of the instruction, learners, situation or condition. In the learning-centred approach, the teacher and the student are partners; they are leaders in their own rights, each having something to give and take in the teaching-learning process (Olajide, et al. 2020). It is neither teacher- nor learner-centred; it is the aggregate of the two approaches by considering what is to be learnt as the criterion for the pedagogical tool to be employed.

Methods Used in Teaching Islamic Studies, History, Mother Tongue and Foreign Languages

1. The Direct Method of Language Teaching: This involves using the target L2 (second language) throughout the lesson period (Abiola, 2012). This could be used in teaching any foreign language such as Arabic and some other arts subjects like Islamic studies while teaching the Arabic content in it. Developed in the nineteenth century, the direct method was aimed at aiding child language learning (Olajide, 2000). Corroborating this view, Oladosu (2002) maintained that the method was first introduced to France and Germany by its advocates.

A good example of this method was the story of the sixteenth century French philosopher, Montaigne, who reported how his father had sent him to live with a guardian who addressed him only in Latin in his first year of staying with him, just because his father wanted him to learn Latin. The supporters of this method advocated the active and spontaneous use of the target language in the classroom in order that the child might be induced to learn the grammar of the language well and fast (Olajide, 2000). This assertion lent credence to Abiola's (2012) submission that the direct method released students from the inhibition all too often associated with speaking a foreign tongue particularly at the early stages. Nonetheless, Olajide (2000) lamented that the method wrongly disfavoured the use of the learner's mother tongue in the classroom, where occasional use of the mother tongue would have enhanced language learning.

2. The Grammar-translation Method: This is the translation from L1 to L2. Oladosu (2002) opined that this method reflected its name as it emphasises the study of the syntax and morphology of the Target Language (TL) through the use of the Mother Tongue (MT) as the medium of instruction. It could be used in the aspect of translation of one language into another. For instance, there are topics requiring learners to translate some words, sentences or paragraphs from Mother Tongue/French/Arabic into English and vice versa. In this situation, an outstanding method that could be selected for teaching this content is the grammar-translation method.

This method is best used successfully with students who are highly intellectual and are interested in abstract reasoning. Abiola (2012) maintained that:

Such students try to understand the logic of the grammar presented; they learn the rules and exceptions; they also memorise the paradigms and vocabulary lists. They became reasonably adept at taking dictation and translating foreign language texts into the native language.

It is deducible from Abiola's view that the method is one that favours the teacher most as the teacher does not need to show much imagination in planning his lesson since he usually follows the textbook page by page and exercise by exercise. However, this method has been bedeviled by various demerits. A few of these are highlighted below:

a. There is a great deal of stress on knowing rules and exceptions, but little training in using the language actively to express one's own meaning, even in writing;

b. In an endeavour to practise the application of rules and the use of exceptional forms, the student is often trained in artificial forms of language, some of which are rare, some old-fashioned, many of little practical use. Oladosu (2002) added that the method emphasizes the reading and writing skills and shows little or no concern for the listening and speaking skills.

3. **The Reading Method:** This started with an oral phase followed by the sound system of the language which enabled the student to become accustomed to listening to and speaking in simple phrases (Abiola, 2012). Reading could either be intensive or extensive. For intensive kind of reading, the teacher's supervision cannot be overemphasised. This is because intensive reading is more analytic and is the source of material for grammatical study, for the acquisition of vocabulary, and for training in reading complete sentences for comprehension (Abiola, 2012).

Conversely, extensive reading requires the student to read many pages of unconnected discourse graded to his level of achievement entirely on his own. Also, the focus here is not on grammar, vocabulary, translation, etc. but rather on content of the reading material. The extensive reading system often gives students the opportunity to progress at their own pace. This method could be used to teach all arts subjects such as Mother Tongue, foreign languages and religious studies. The objective of the lesson should be used in determining whether the reading would be intensive or extensive.

4. The Audio-lingual Method: It places emphasis on the teaching of listening and speaking before reading and writing skills. It is a method used in teaching foreign languages where the mother tongue (L1) is disallowed from interfering with the target L2. It is based on the behaviourist theory which postulates that certain traits of humans could be trained through a system of reinforcement. It uses dialogue as the main form of language presentation and drills as the main training techniques. The teacher reads out a passage or dialogue to the learners and then asks them to repeat what they have heard. In chorus, learners repeat each line of the dialogue after it was presented. After several drills, they eventually memorise the verse, dialogue or passage. Thereafter, the teacher and the students switch roles. The main focus here is on pronunciation and correct responses. Thus, trainee teachers may adopt this method when teaching sounds in the different languages based on the subject focused or while teaching Qur'an memorisation and Tajweed.

5. The Situational Language Teaching Method: The proponents of this method are Harold Palmer and A. S. Hornby. They led the group of British linguists that evolved the Situational Language Teaching Method in the 1930s (Olajide, 2000). By the 1950s, the method was widely embraced by British foreign language teaching methodologists (Oladosu, 2002). The theoretical assumption underlying the method was that speech is central to language, with structure being the nucleus of speaking skills. The method involved detailed description of the structure of the language being taught, and the appropriate methodology should be provided alongside the structures (Olajide, 2000). The main criticism against this method was that too much emphasis was said to be given to oral skills, to the extent that the four skills of language, speaking, listening, reading, and writing were approached from oral drills. Oladosu (2002) had earlier asserted that the method emphasizes the spoken language; uses the target language (TL) as the medium of instruction; introduces new language points as situation demands; follows vocabulary selection procedures; grades grammatical items from simple to complex; and introduces learners to the skills of reading and writing as soon as students are sufficiently competent in the use of lexical and grammatical items.

6. The Total Physical Response (TPR): This method is a hybrid of a sort because it evolved from the combination of ideas from some other disciplines such as pedagogy, psychology of learning, developmental psychology, and linguistics. Olajide (2000) posited that the TPR method involved encouraging the learner to employ mainly the motor skill in learning the target language. He added that:

The proponents of the method advocate the promotion of the child's affective domain through games. Like audiolingualism, the TPR method favours the development of

reading comprehension skills before the speaking skills. The TPR method requires its user to develop reading comprehension skills in the learner before the skills of speaking. The TPR method emphasises meaning, rather than form; it requires the user to employ any means to induce the learners.

7. The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): This method emerged as an alternative to the situational language teaching and the audio-lingual methods of teaching an FL (Oladosu, 2002). He added that the approach emphasizes communicative competence as an ultimate goal of FL pedagogy. Olajide (2000) highlighted the major tenets of the CLT method to include:

i. the use of unmemorised dialogue based on communicative functions;
ii. getting the learner to communicate in the target language;
iii. using language meaningfully;
iv. seeking increased communication through the learning process;
v. using drills minimally;
vi. comprehensible use of pronunciation;
vii. consistent encouragement of communicative language use learning activities; and
viii. judicious use of the learner's mother tongue when necessary.

Olajide (2000) however lamented that one major weakness of the method is its mentalist view of language learning, by which product (communicative use of language) is emphasised at the expense of the process (internal linguistic units of language).

8. Learning by teaching: This is a widespread method in Germany which is developed by Jean-Pol Martin (Ann, 2014). The students take the teacher's role and teach their peers. Ann (2014) explained further that this method is very effective when done correctly. Having students teach sections of the class as a group or as individuals is a great way to get the students to really study out the topic and understand it so as to teach it to their peers. By having them participate in the teaching process, it builds self-confidence, self-efficacy, and strengthens students' speaking and communication skills. Students will not only learn their given topic, but they will gain experience that could be very valuable for life.

9. Demonstration: Demonstrations are done to provide an opportunity to learn new exploration and visual learning tasks from a different perspective (Ann, 2014). In this method of instruction, learners view a real or lifelike example of the skill or procedure to be learned (Heinich et al., 2002). They explained further that demonstration may be recorded and played back by means of media such as video. They also mentioned that the objective is not only to simply illustrate how something works, such as the effect of heat on a bimetallic strip, but also for the learner to imitate a physical performance (such as changing the oil in a car) or to adopt the attitudes or values exemplified by someone who serves as a role model.

Corroborating this view, Ann (2014) was of the opinion that a teacher may use experimentation to demonstrate ideas in a science class. A demonstration may be used in the circumstance of proving conclusively a fact, as by reasoning or showing evidence.

10. Discussion: Heinich et al. (2002) posited that discussion involves the exchange of ideas and opinions among students or between students and teacher. Irrespective of whether the class is small or large, it has proved useful at any stage of the learning process. In addition, it has been adjudged an effective way of, before finalizing instructional objectives, assessing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of a group of students —particularly if it is a group/class the instructor has never taught before (Heinich et al. (2002).

11. Drill-and-Practice: In drill-and-practice, learners are led through a series of practice exercises designed to increase fluency in a new skill or to refresh an existing one Heinich et al. (2002). They elucidated further that the use of this method implies that learners have previously received some instructions on the concept, principle or procedure to be practised. They concluded that drill-and-practice is commonly used for such tasks as studying math facts, learning a foreign language, memorising portions of the Glorious Qur'an, building a vocabulary, and mastering some the spellings of some difficult words.

12. Tutorial: A tutor is "someone who gives private lessons to one student or a small group, and is paid directly by them" or "a teacher in a British university or college" (Emmanuel, 2009). According to Heinich et al. (2002), a tutor —in the form of a person, computer software, or special printed materials —presents the content, poses a question or problem, requests a learner's response, analyses her response, supplies appropriate feedback, and provides practice until the learner demonstrates a predetermined level of competency. They explained further that tutoring is most often done one on one and is frequently used to teach basic skills such as reading and arithmetic.

Tutorial is a period of teaching and discussion with a tutor, especially in a British university (Emmanuel, 2009). Heinich et al. (2002) agreed that tutorial arrangements include instructor-to-learner (e.g., Socratic dialogue), learner-to-learner (e.g., tutoring or programmed tutoring), computer-to-learner (e.g., computer-assisted tutorial software), and print-to-learner (branching programmed instruction). The computer is especially well suited to play the role of tutor because of its ability to deliver speedily a complex menu of responses to different learner inputs.

13. Storytelling: Naturally, children love and are inclined towards stories as they make it easier for children to receive and process information. Allah, in suratul Al-A'raf 7:101, points out the significance of storytelling as a viable instructional method of all times.

> تِلۡكَ ٱلۡقُرَىٰ نَقُصُّ عَلَيۡكَ مِنۡ أَنۢبَآئِهَاۚ وَلَقَدۡ جَآءَتۡهُمۡ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلۡبَيِّنَٰتِ فَمَا كَانُواْ لِيُؤۡمِنُواْ بِمَا كَذَّبُواْ مِن قَبۡلُۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَطۡبَعُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ ١٠١
>
> We have narrated to you, O Prophet, some of the stories of those societies. Surely, their messengers came to them with clear proofs, but still they would not believe in what they had already denied. This is how Allah seals the hearts of the disbelievers.

A story-based approach helps to engage young learners with the content, boost their motivation and introduce them to the concepts of religion and language in an engaging way. The storytelling method involved in each lesson is an important activity for children for several reasons: it helps increase motivation, enhances language use, and boosts memory and attentiveness. Storytelling also builds personal emotional attachment, creates positive associations, and durable, long-term learning benefits.

14. Problem solving: A problem is a question or puzzle that needs to be solved (Encarta, 2008). Problem solving involves placing students in the active role of being confronted with a novel problem situated in the real world since lifelong problems can provide the starting point for learning (Heinich et al., 2002). They explained further that students start with limited knowledge; but through peer collaboration and consultation, they develop, explain and defend a solution or position on the problem. It uses reality-based, problem-centred materials that are often presented by media (e.g., written cases, computer-based situations, and videotaped vignettes). They concluded that learners take more responsibility for their learning as they are placed in the "shoes" (role) of someone facing a real-world problem.

15. Gaming: This provides a playful environment in which learners follow prescribed rules as they strive to attain a challenging goal. Heinich et al. (2002) stressed that this teaching method is a highly motivating technique, especially for tedious and repetitive content; it may involve one learner or a group of learners.In an African society such as Nigeria, there are many interesting games which can be classified under instructional games e.g. bojuboju, ayo, tente, etc. (Adegbija, 2000). She added that all games, whether local, standardized, written or verbal have the following similarities and characteristics. Among these, as highlighted by her, include:

i. Conflict: Whether the players like it or not, there should be deliberate illusion of a conflict situation if the game is to be interesting, challenging and educative. A conflict in any game is a point at which every player consciously and mentally engages in a struggle to outplay his opponent at all cost. A conflict can be achieved in a game through a wholesome and active competition among the players.

ii. Control: Before a game can be accepted as an instructional game, there should be rules, regulations, bonds etc. These in a way help to check the excesses of the players. Control further helps to keep the player within the set instructional objectives, thereby making the objectives attainable at the end of the game.

iii. Closure: This refers to when the game is declared finished or ended. All games should have termination rules. For instance, some games end when a winner is declared, when there is foul, when a particular stage or point is reached, etc.

iv. Contrive: This is when a deliberate effort is made to create some elements of artificiality into the game. When this is adequately manipulated, it creates fun and an atmosphere of relaxation while true learning could be taking place. For example, learners could be made to do some manoeuvring in a game in which just simple vocabularies are taught. The artificiality created in a game does not in any way hinder the attainment of the instructional objectives.

16. Simulation: Adegbija (2000) observed that a simulation is pretending to be a mock or to imitate a particular situation. This method involves learners confronting a scaled-down version of a real-life situation. It allows realistic practice without the expense or risks otherwise involved. An instance of simulation is the performance of pilgrimage rites in the school premises, ritual birth given to a Muslim corpse using a mannequin or something similar, changing a flat tyre within the school compound, etc. Simulation may involve participant dialogue (of the kind of prayers to chant while circumambulating the Ka'aba), manipulation of materials and equipment, or interaction with a computer. Role playing is another common example of simulation (Heinich et al. 2002).

17. Discovery: This method uses an inductive or inquiry approach to learning; it presents problems to be solved through trial and error (Heinich et al. 2002). They stressed further that the aim of the discovery method is to foster a deeper understanding of the content through involvement with it. Corroborating this view, Fajemidagba (2004) asserted that:

In discovery, the learner must generate the desired content-end-products or construct missing inter-relationships. Discovery learning may be either meaningful or rote, depending on the kind of relationship (arbitrary or substantive), established between the new and the previously learned content. He maintained further that the discovery method of teaching recommended for teachers of the junior and senior school students is more correctly called ***guided discovery***. In this case, he added, the teacher sets the scenes, cues judiciously, and carefully structures the sequence of events so that the students need not re-invent the wheel. Since instructional media can help promote discovery or enquiry (Heinich et al. 2002), the teacher must consider the characteristics of the learner as well as the match between the new content and the student's existing mental structure (Fajemidagba, 2004) since making content meaningful to the learner is a two-edged sword.

18. The Eclectic Method: eclectic means choosing what is best or preferred from a variety of sources or styles (Microsoft Encarta, 2008). According to Abiola (2012), eclecticism is a method of teaching in which the best aspects of other methods are integrated and used to achieve the educational objectives of a specific programme. This method is predicated on a number of assumptions. Few of these assumptions are as follows:

i. A thorough review of the historical dimension of methods shows that as far back as 1929, Coleman reported that no single method could guarantee successful results. This amount to that no particular method can be comprehensively effective for the inculcation of all the learning skills or the achievement of all educational objectives. It thus seems logical to integrate methods that can facilitate the achievement of spelt-out objectives.

ii. Assumptions about the nature of language which constitute part of the theoretical foundations for methods complement each other since no one theory has succeeded in providing all the expectations required to account for the nature of language. To this end, there is a need for integration at the level of theory just in the same way a corresponding need for an integrated method at the level of practices is paramount.

iii. There is a tacitly understood principle of education that students are motivated partly when methods are varied and that they get bored when a rigid method of teaching is used.
iv. It is counterproductive and educationally dangerous to stick blindly to a particular method since researchers have been unable to demonstrate the effectiveness of specific methods.

Resources for Teaching Islamic Studies, History, Mother Tongue and Foreign Languages

Overtime, resources have been referred to by varying terms (Abiola & Ajibade, 2023). For instance, while Adedimeji (1999) simply termed them materials, Heinich, Molenda, Russell, and Smaldino (2002) and Abdullahi (2005) viewed them to be instructional media. Moreover, Olumorin (2004) and Lawal (2006) referred to them as instructional resources.

Abdullahi (2005) noted that the term instructional media is anything a teacher uses as a medium of communication to transfer messages with an instructional intent. He went further to add that instructional media, in actual sense, should be conceived as a wide range of materials providing realistic images for enriching content and consequently enhancing the educational process. In the same vein, Heinich et al. (2002) submitted that instructional media provide teachers with the tools to engage students powerfully in the learning process. Their examples include video, television, diagrams, printed materials, computers, and instructors. These are considered instructional media only when they carry information with an instructional purpose. Abiola (2012) and Abiola and Ajibade (2023) averred that instructional media help a resourceful teacher to manipulate concepts whenever and wherever possible.

Types of Instructional Resources

Taxonomically, the resources for teaching arts and social sciences subjects could broadly be categorised into human and non-human (Lawal, 2006). He stressed further that the human resources are divisible into school-based and non-school-based. Furthermore, school-based divide into subject-based and non-subject-based resources; while the subject-based resources are teachers of Islamic Studies, History, mother tongue and foreign languages, the non-subject-based are the librarians, typists, laboratory attendants, teachers of other subjects, et cetera. The non-school-based resources are, however, the experts, professionals, et cetera. Conversely, non-human resources are divided into plant and materials. Plant resources are both school-based and non-school-based, just as in human resources. School-based include classroom, language laboratory, et cetera, while the other resource centres e.g. broadcasting house, hospital, stadium, places of worship, etc. are categorised as non-school-based. On the other hand, materials could be audio, visual and audio-visual. This taxonomy is aptly captured in Figure 1.

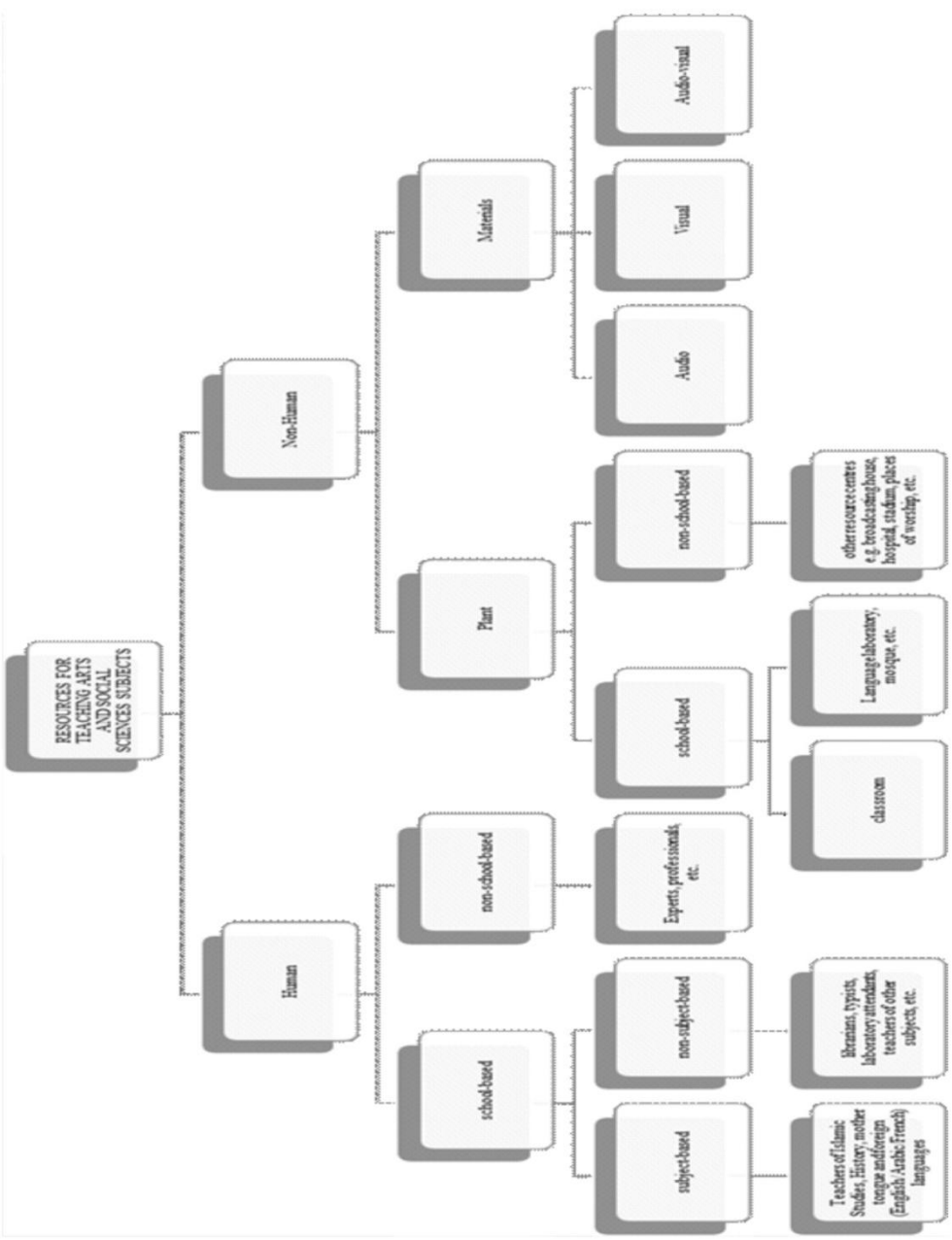


Figure 1. *A taxonomy of resources for teaching English studies.*
Source: Lawal (2006)

Functions of Instructional Resources

Without mincing words, the functions of resources are both inexhaustible and enormously indispensable to teachers in the real teaching process of vocabulary. Abiola and Ajibade (2023) presented the following as some advantages of media in teaching:

a. They help to reduce burden of talk and chalk in abstract form by teachers. They therefore make learning more concrete.
b. They help to bring ideas, objects, figures and other things that cannot ordinarily be brought to the class close to the learners.
c. It saves time and reduces stress on the part of teacher.
d. The teacher properly plans his instruction since he needs to manage the time and

the method to include the use of the machines.

e. It also encourages individual learning because students that have access to the media can use them to learn especially when they have software that is produced as instructional packages.

f. Since these media can be used over and over again, learners can afford themselves the opportunity of re-running the lesson as convenient.

"One of your biggest challenges as a teacher is to get learners actively engaged in the lesson; another is to provide for individual differences" (Heinich et al. 2002:24). Nevertheless, it is important to stress that instructional methods and instructional media are both birds of a feather which flock together on the one hand, but a different kettle of fish on the other hand. Methods are the procedures of instruction selected to help learners achieve the objectives or to internalize the content or message. Media are carriers of information between a source and a receiver" (Heinich et al. 2002).

Oladosu (2000) proclaimed that some of the relevant teaching materials that could be used for the teaching and learning of the listening and pronunciation/speech skills include tapes, cassettes, video-tape-recorders and (digital) language laboratory. Visual aids like real life objects, pictures and video cassettes can also be used to supplement the aforementioned materials so as to make teaching and learning more meaningful and more effective. Having known that no single method of teaching arts and social sciences-related subjects is the best, the teacher should mix his methods in order to achieve and sustain learners' communicative competence. To this end, it is to be noted that virtually any of the instructional resources described throughout this work can be used to implement any of the methods earlier discussed.

Summary

The chapter explores arts as a discipline. In the discussion which centres on the teaching of language and Islamic Studies as humanity courses, the theory, approach, method and technique are expounded as distinct concepts but overlapping in practice or application. It is emphasised that they are the pedagogical tools for achieving the objective of instruction if well selected and used harmoniously and expediently. Hence, it becomes pertinent for teachers of humanities such as Arabic language, English language, Mother tongue, History, and Islamic Studies to equip themselves with functional knowledge and use of the tools as they (the tools) serve as part of their professional characteristics.

Conclusion

In order to be an effective humanity teacher, one has to be familiar with various theories, approaches, methods and techniques such as those discussed in this chapter by identifying where and how to use each set of methods to achieve the noble objective of teaching which is effective learning. One needs to realise that no single theory, approach, method or technique can be used to facilitate learning of concepts at all times.

Review Questions

1. *Write short notes on the following:*
a. *approach*
b. *method*
c. *technique*
2. *Discuss the different types of teaching approaches learnt in this chapter.*
3. *Highlight the similarities and dissimilarities between audio-lingual method and communicative language teaching method.*
4. *Which method(s) could best be used to teach the concept of 'Ibadah? Expatiate.*

Sample Research Topics

- Effect of the Communicative Language Teaching Method on Students' Academic Achievement in Arabic Language
- Assessment of Direct Method and Resources Used by Senior Secondary School English Language Teachers in Offa LGA, Nigeria
- Relative Effect of Teachers' Length of Service and Attitude on Students' Achievement in Islamic Studies
- Relationship between Storytelling Method and History Students' Achievement in Barnawa, Kaduna State

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