

Course description

The intention of the course is to familiarize participants with theoretical and practical considerations of language teaching and learning. We will look at manifold approaches and methods of language teaching: from early 20th century trends to current communicative approaches, as well as a broad range of alternative methods.

We will subsequently examine ways in which different approaches and methods can be utilized in the foreign language lesson in order to afford a rich learning environment. Participants are required to give practical presentations of different teaching methods through short teaching sequences.

We will also take a critical look at traditional dichotomies: explicit versus implicit language instruction, grammar versus communication, foreign language versus mother tongue. The concepts of language awareness, language learning reflection, and learner autonomy will be examined as indicators of a shift in language teaching towards learner-centered approaches.

Required readings

- Richards, Jack / Rodgers, Theodore: *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001 (2nd edition).
- Selected articles and excerpts (see RESOURCES on ONCOURSE).

Assignments

1. Teaching Presentation

You will sign up for presentations of two of the teaching methods/approaches stated on the syllabus – one “alternative method” and one “communicative approach” (they are introduced in the Richards/Rodgers book). The presentation should be limited to 20-25 minutes and should include

- a teaching demo (10-15 mins) demonstrating an example on how to teach according to this method/approach (other participants will be the learners);
- a brief discussion on the benefits and shortfalls of this method/approach, taking into account secondary readings;
- questions or comments for discussion;
- a one-page handout outlining the approach (including questions, comments, etc).

Feel free to set up the classroom according to the spirit of the method/approach you are presenting. If you choose a different location to accommodate your needs, please notify the instructor well ahead of time.

2. Minutes

In order to avoid lengthy note-taking during teaching demos and still retain a valid impression of the proceedings, participants will sign up for alternate minute-taking. You should expect to write the minutes twice, once of an alternative demo, once of a communicative demo.

3. Five Skills

There will be scheduled discussions of the five skills of language teaching (listening, speaking, reading, writing, and seeing). You are required invent three short class activities for each of these sessions based on topics in *Neue Horizonte*. The activities have to be handed in as attachment by 8:00 AM on the morning of the session.

4. Analysis of selected method/approach

You choose a method/approach from Richards/Rodgers different from the ones of your teaching presentation and write a 1500-2000 word essay about it (typed double-spaced with a generous margin). The essay should encompass

- an outline of the approach/design/procedure of the method/approach you have chosen;
- a critical analysis as to its strengths, weaknesses, and applicability in the foreign language classroom.

You are strongly advised to consult sources other than Richards/Rodgers and make use of office hours to discuss your drafts. Any quotations have to be marked clearly. The essay should conclude with a bibliography of the works read and cited. Please refer to the MLA citation guidelines (URL on ONCOURSE).

Participation and Attendance

Active participation in class is the basis for a successful seminar. You are expected to come to class with a sound knowledge of the assigned reading material, together with questions for discussion.

Regular attendance is vital for this course. You are allowed two absences during the course of the semester. Note that this includes absence due to illness. Each additional absence over two will lower your participation grade according to the number of taught sessions. It is your responsibility to make up the work for classes you miss and to be prepared for the next class. If you are going to be absent for a teaching presentation, you must let your instructor know this ahead of time and reschedule. You may not make up presentations if you do not inform your instructor beforehand of your anticipated absence. Extenuating circumstances like prolonged illness, or death in the family will warrant additional excused absences, provided that they are documented.

Grading

Performance in this course will be graded on the basis of your teaching presentation, your preparation (minutes, skills activities), one longer written assignment and your overall participation in classroom discussion. Grade allocation is as follows:

- Teaching presentations 40%
- Minutes and skills activities 15%
- Analysis of teaching method/approach 25%
- Classroom participation 20%

Your final course grade will be determined as follows:

100-93% ▶ A;	92-90% ▶ A-		
89-87% ▶ B+	86-83% ▶ B	82-80% ▶ B-	
79-77% ▶ C+	76-73% ▶ C	72-70% ▶ C-	
69-67% ▶ D+	66-63% ▶ D	62-60% ▶ D-	< 60% ▶ F

Photography / Filming

Digital pictures and/or short films of your practical presentations might be taken. If you do not wish this, please notify your instructor beforehand. Copies of any photos or film clips will be made available to you on request. Should the instructor plan to show any of the digital material from this class in other settings, she will have to obtain your consent first.