Is there a best way in teaching?

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As a Second language learner, I have tried various methods to be a fluent English speaker.

I have learnt lexis, Phonology, grammar, function and discourse thousands of times through

middle school and high school with grammar-translation method. I could get quite high score

from English tests at school. In that class, teacher or students read a passage and teacher gave

us a lecture. Sometimes teacher played an audio. So after class I forgot most of it because

listening and reading technics are not effective ways to students retain what they learned from

the class. I could say simple sentences which I have learnt from classes by audio lingual

method but in real discourse, I couldn’t express my opinion. I felt that I need to learn English

with different method.

One day, I went to an academy someone recommended me. She said that the academy has

their own teaching style and system. So students who study there are very active. But apart

from my expectation, the first impression of the classroom looked very traditional. Because

there were about 50 students in our class. It was a big-sized class. 50 students were sitting in

a row. And it looked teacher-focused class. Usually TTT(Teacher Talking Time) was long and

students answered or read the script. The teacher had an authority. Sometimes teacher

explained us the definition of vocabulary. He seems to be an explainer. But It didn’t take long

to realize that the class is learner-focused.

By audio lingual method, they made us to approach to receptive skill. They used dramas,

pop songs and news. Teacher directed students to repeat the script or sing a song with

emotion and gestures. It was rather say acting than repeating. It looked successful to involve

the adult learners. It worked because they were internally motivated and they could bring

experience or their knowledge. The class was not only focusing on audio lingual method but

also Total Physical Response method. Their system satisfied adult learners who have

Linguistic Intelligence, Visual Intelligence, Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligence and Musical

Intelligence.

The next step in the class was a group activity. Each group had a group leader who

manages the whole activities. A group leader was randomly or voluntarily chosen. I was

picked as a group leader that day. We played some games with grammar and new expressions

and had a group discussion about the topic. In that process I could review and retain the

knowledge by cooperative learning and teaching others. After the group activity, teacher gave

us some error correction. We could know the mistakes and difference between two words

which have similar meaning. The teacher tried to explain in terms of grammar and lexis. So I

could understand them very clearly. I think that learners who have Linguistic Intelligence,

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence, Bodily-kinesthetic Intelligence, Interpersonal Intelligence,

Intrapersonal Intelligence were satisfied in this group activity.

I think the class satisfied leaners’ multiple Intelligences. I enjoyed the singing, acting and

group activities with other students. They used quite various teaching tools and techniques to

involve students to the lesson and they could be active. Both receptive skills and productive

skills were well integrated therefore my retention rate was quite high eventually. And I also

think that their contents (news, pop songs, dramas) were practical to target learners (adult

learners). The contents follow some Andragogy but some does not. And it seems quite

traditional but it has some forms of methodology used in modern classes. In conclusion I

think there is no best way in teaching. In terms of methodology, techniques, tools, contents,

they are all depends on what types of leaners do we teach. Teachers should create the

conditions by mixing their ability and methodology which are suitable to a specific class to

enable them to learn and basically teachers should possess empathy, authenticity, respect

toward their students.