

## English Second Language Learning Models

Language learning classrooms are often typical of three instructional scenarios. A typical classroom historically has a teacher, students and learning materials. Many language learning models can be distinguished by whichever of the three is the most prominent in the classroom.

### Teacher centered model

- 5 This model views the teacher as the most critical feature in language learning classrooms. The teacher is seen as more knowledgeable than students, and thus spends most of the class time transmitting information or explaining things to students. The teacher will talk or tell and the students will listen and learn. The translation model is a common instance where teachers only use the local language to explain grammatical structures or workings of the new language. In this way, students learn about the new  
10 language with little opportunity to use the new language in productive ways.

### Materials centered model

- Within this model the learning materials, textbooks or combinations of textbooks and Cds, assume the primary position in the classroom. When the teacher does little more than follow the text or Cd in a step by step in a step-by-step manner, the material tends to “drive” the lesson. This model amounts to the  
15 teacher only acting in a pause/play mode until the required number of pages are completed. Classic examples are the many varieties of Listen and Repeat, Look and Answer and Listen and Do. Great care should be taken when selecting the learning materials as many varieties of materials can be incorporated to achieve the desired language learning goal.

### Student centered model

- 20 Although this particular model views students as more active participants in their own learning, the teacher still plays a pivotal role in structuring the learning. Here, the teacher and the learning materials become supports as students take charge of their own learning. However, teachers still need to ensure that students do not only participate in, or focus on learning elements that they enjoy and should encourage students to adopt a “whole-language” approach. This is necessary because students,  
25 especially younger ones, may not yet be able to see how all the components of a language work together in an integrated manner.

- Finally, it is not useful to regard any one of these models as superior to the others. There is a place and time when each model serves a unique purpose. Language learning has many components and sometimes teachers do have to tell or explain. For example, it is often best to relay or provide  
30 information in the students’ mother tongue to facilitate or promote participation in learning activities. Materials also play a vital role in the learning situation but should not direct all the learning. Materials should only be an aid to learning. Student centered learning does not suggest that students get to dictate their own learning – they are just seen as more responsible for their own learning.

