

EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENTS OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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Every few years, new foreign language teaching methods arrive on the scene. New textbooks appear far more frequently. They are usually proclaimed to be more effective than those that have gone before, and, in many cases, these methods or textbooks are promoted or even prescribed for immediate use. New methods and textbooks may reflect current developments in applied linguistic theory or recent pedagogical trends. Sometimes they are said to be based on recent developments in language acquisition theory and research. For example, one approach to teaching may emphasize the value of having students imitate and practice a set of correct sentences while another emphasizes the importance of encouraging 'natural' communication between learners. How is a teacher to evaluate the potential effectiveness of new methods? One important basis for evaluating is, of course, the teacher's own experience with previous successes or disappointments.

In addition, teachers who are informed about some of the findings of recent research are better prepared to judge whether the new proposals for language teaching are likely to bring about positive changes in students' learning.