

## *Eclecticism. A Contemporary Construal of Foreign Language Teaching and Learning*

### Eclecticismo. Una interpretación contemporánea de la enseñanza-aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras

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#### Resumen

*La enseñanza-aprendizaje de un idioma extranjero en la actualidad da espacio para reexaminar antiguos métodos, renovarlos y apoyar nuestra enseñanza con las nuevas tendencias y verdades que se derivan sólidamente de la práctica. Una de estas tendencias es la enseñanza ecléctica. Este trabajo tiene como objetivo explorar la base de la enseñanza ecléctica, develar sus potencialidades y proponer vías para implementarla en la clase de lenguas extranjeras. La manifiesta contemporaneidad de sus principios facilita la enseñanza y el aprendizaje. Para alcanzar los objetivos del trabajo, se utilizaron los métodos histórico-lógico, análisis-síntesis, inducción-deducción y abstracción-concreción.*

**Palabras clave:** enseñanza ecléctica; enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras; flexibilidad

#### Abstract

Teaching and learning a foreign language nowadays gives us latitude to revisit old methods, refresh them and buttress our teaching with new tendencies and truths that solidly derive from practice. One such tendency is eclectic teaching. This paper aims at exploring the foundation of eclectic teaching, disclosing its strong points and proposing ways to implement it in the foreign language class. The open contemporariness of its principles facilitates teaching and learning. To bring off the paper's goals, the methods used were historic-logical, analysis-synthesis, induction-deduction and abstraction-concretion.

**Keywords:** eclectic teaching; foreign language teaching; flexibility



## Introduction

Back in 1989, Professor Abbott stated that *there are no royal roads to language*. This epigrammatic assertion, while splendidly metaphorical, epitomizes the essence of what teaching must be and how teachers must intellectually and materially equip themselves to face the challenges of foreign language teaching and learning in the light of contemporary didactics.

With the advent of the groundbreaking communicative approach, novel views surfaced and developed, which led to more flexible, context-aware attitudes towards teaching and learning: “The communicative approach (...) was the turning point to enter the present eclectic era.” (Puren, 2021, p. 29). Old-fashioned styles over-observant of strict behavioral, cognitive, translation, structural, etc. methods—indisputably useful and popular at the time (we were recipients of such methods)—were enriched by state-of-the-art concepts about communication, the status of language as a sociolinguistic “live entity” operating based on communicative functions that reflect real life, and learner needs.

If we assume that communicative functions convey *realistic communication purposes*, that is, purpose-wise situations that mirror life; *notions*, that is, concepts; and *language components*, that is, sound, word, syntax, then we are accepting that language is better taught by capitalizing these assumptions and combining them to attain an end result that has been termed “communicative competence.” It goes without saying that having communicative competence then is *being able to communicate*. The above components of communicative functions are complemented by discourse and strategy, purpose and culture, which stand too as benchmarks of teaching and learning a language.

Therefore, the basic tenet of the communicative approach is, in Richards & Rodgers’ words (1986), *communication*. According to them, learning a language is learning to communicate (cited by Delmastro and Salazar, 2007, p. 26). If so, we are in a vantage position today to contend that, as Abbott stated, the roads to language are as varied, as disparate and as favorable as there are settings, learners and joint approaches to study and teach it.

Delmastro and Salazar (2007, p. 34) see it this way:

An educator’s radical and biased stance in favor of a single approach to the teaching-learning process would be counterproductive rather than beneficial. Such radical position does not leave room for the inclusion of the complexities of foreign language learning, nor does it offer the necessary flexibility for pertinent modifications and adjustments based on group diversity and the uniqueness of the educational circumstances.



Consequently, teaching and learning a foreign language nowadays gives us latitude to revisit old methods, conceptions, approaches, positions, and refresh them buttressing our teaching with new tendencies and truths that solidly derive from practice.

One such tendency is **eclectic teaching**. This paper aims at exploring the foundation of eclectic teaching, disclosing its strong points and proposing ways to implement it in class. The open contemporariness of its principles facilitates teaching and learning. To bring off our goals, the methods mostly resorted to were historic-logical, analysis-synthesis, induction-deduction and abstraction-concretion.

## Understanding eclecticism in teaching

To properly understand eclecticism, it is essential to reexamine, briefly, some of the theories that have emerged and prevailed in the history of teaching foreign languages, which have one way or another left a legacy worth-preserving when pertinence allows.

*Behaviorism*—whose top representatives were Watson, Pavlov, Skinner, Thorndike, Tolman, Carroll—followed the precepts of structuralism, which was the prelude for the audio-lingual methods of the 1950s. It advocated an emphasis on what learners did and was seen externally, disregarding their thinking processes. External mechanical behavior was a signal of accomplishment in learning. Behaviorists viewed learners as basically passive, that is, they were responders to environmental stimuli.

There were obvious teaching effects:

- ✓ The use of exhaustive repetition.
- ✓ The use of drills.
- ✓ Students were asked to identify and repeat model utterances without knowing meanings.
- ✓ New structures were drilled automatically.
- ✓ The use of pattern drills (substitution, transformation and repetition).

We still remember sentences we had to repeat, “There is a cloud in the sky,” and then replace the word *cloud* with *hammer*, for example, and say, “There is a hammer in the sky” or “The pencil is green” / The dog is green.” Not even figurative use of language would fully pardon these pointless drills.



*Cognitivism*—with Bruner, Gardner, Austin, Gagné, Ausubel as key names in the theory—meant a breakthrough in opposition to Behaviorism. Cognitive learning claimed for the consideration of the mental processes in learning. Learners actively analyzed the information and interpreted depending on their background knowledge. Learning, therefore, largely depended on how learners activated and used previously-acquired experiences. This was a crucial advance in teaching.

This theory favored the following tenets:

- ✓ The need for problem-solving tasks.
- ✓ Students need to know what they are doing and how to do it.
- ✓ They should know the objective of the learning tasks.
- ✓ Learning tasks should be meaningful and require thinking.
- ✓ The need for the student's language awareness.
- ✓ Consideration of learning styles and strategies.

Clearly, these tenets paved the way too for what would be the communicative approach in foreign language teaching and learning, with pedagogical implications in which problem solving, awareness, meaningfulness and strategies would permeate the context and purposes of language teaching.

*Humanism*— Hutchinson, Waters, Maslow, Carl Rogers, Knowles—The humanistic aspect of learning humanizes learning since it emphasis feelings, emotions and attitudes, and leads learners to reveal them in their social and personal interactions within learning. Humanistic learning prompted teachers to activate and encourage self-expression on a personal and group levels, bringing to the surface cognitive interests, as well as affective and motivational factors. Contextualization of learning and peer and group interaction on interesting and stirring matters was also a key component of the process.

*Constructivism*—Vygotsky, Piaget, Dewey, Vico, Rorty, Bruner, Jonassen—emerged in teaching as a dialectical assumption and enrichment of previous theories, reassessed and reused taking their positive impact. For constructivists, learning was an active, contextualized process of constructing knowledge rather than acquiring it. They also claimed that knowledge is built founded on personal experiences, that individuals have a different interpretation and comprehension of reality and their own learning, and that they bring, and operate on, their past experiences and cultural backgrounds.

*The Sociocultural Theory*—Vygotsky—emerged in psychology stressing the important contributions that society makes to individual development. This theory stresses the interaction between people and the culture in which they live. This theory focuses not only on how adults and peers influence individual learning, but also on how cultural beliefs and attitudes have import on how instruction and learning take place.



According to Vygotsky, children are born into a culture that offers what he referred to as 'tools of intellectual adaptation.' These tools allow children to use their basic mental abilities in a way that is *adaptive* to the culture in which they live. A very basic example of how cultures create their own symbols and denotations might be that in English we say "tight rope" while in Spanish we say the contrary, "cuerda floja" (*loose rope*).

Vygotsky stressed the essential role that social interactions play in cognitive development. Another important element (which differs, for example, from Piaget's theory: development is largely universal) is that Vygotsky suggested that cognitive development can differ between different cultures. Nonetheless, it must be pointed out that both notions are not inevitably exclusive. While multicultural civilizations entail multicultural variety and influence, human development acquires momentum receiving from the universal platform/matrix, which is singularized and adjusted to each milieu.

Some core concepts in the Sociocultural Theory:

#### The Zone of Proximal Development

According to Vygotsky, the zone of proximal development is the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.

#### Interaction

The communication and exchange of information between individuals, which accounts for learning through *input* (the processes of comprehension and production are involved).

#### Mediation

It refers to levels of help offered by two individuals with higher levels of competence in the language. Mediation is one of the most important concepts and it is only possible through interaction.

#### Internalization

It is the process that allows us to move the relationship between individuals and their context to performance. In language learning, a way of internalization is through imitation practice.



## Feedback

Language learning is stimulated by communicative pressure. Interaction involves a number of components: negotiation, feedback and recasts. Recasts are a subtle way of feedback. Feedback gives learners an opportunity to modify their speech in input. Interactional feedback is an important source of information for learners about success and lack of success in their utterances. To provide adequate feedback the teacher may provide the learners with information about incorrect forms and give additional input.

All of these concepts, as is evident, dictate potential teaching implications:

- ✓ The possibility to organize class interaction activities for socialization and cooperation.
- ✓ The possibility to devise interactive activities where students learn from each other.
- ✓ The possibility to integrate cognitive, metacognitive and educational aspects through learning tasks.
- ✓ The distinction of the role of diagnosis at the initial stages and through the whole process.
- ✓ The possibility to implement task-based learning activities.
- ✓ The consideration of the relation function-form-meaning-context when devising and working with learning tasks.

It can be partially concluded that eclectic teaching and learning was born and developed guided by a dialectical comprehension and creative revision of previous theories. Each theory played its role in the moment and circumstance where it appeared. Every subsequent theory took from its predecessors and created its own epistemological system to explain and exploit its own contributions. That was a long road before reaching the theory under analysis in this paper.

# **Eclecticism in teaching and learning**

## ***Introducing the term***

When we hear the word eclecticism, oftentimes our natural inclination is to think of art even if we know that it has been in man's vision of the world from a matrix philosophical side. Philosophy has consequently influenced the thought of those who follow and apply it. Eclecticism has marked distinct artistic manifestations. It refers to elements from different styles that are combined into one work. For example, in architecture, "Eclectic building involves using structural and design elements and historic features from a variety of architectural styles." (Hitch; Muscato and Blakeley, 2023, n. p.). They say an example is the Basilica of Saint-Vincent-de-Paul in Paris. The church features steel supports incorporated with classical design elements.



In the educational and teaching domain, it has similar characteristics. Eble (1988) proclaimed that he could not conceive of *any one way of teaching that excels all others*. This thought may serve as basis for the analyses made in this item. Eble was already considering that each method has its own worth much in concordance with its temporal but also its contextual provenance.

Hence, the professor was suggesting the idea that the true path to teaching—successfully—is by bringing to the classroom *all needed methods and no lopsided method*. Such mindset takes us to our initial citation from Professor Abbott, who said that the essence of what teaching must be and how teachers must intellectually and materially equip themselves to face the dilemmas of foreign language teaching and learning, is undoubtedly concretized with an eclectic vision.

Puren (2021) analyzes it in these terms: “In the last years the prevailing methodological topic - at least in French as a foreign language- is the multiplication, diversification, variation, differentiation o adaptation of teaching-learning methods, and also in this sense (...) Didactics of Foreign Languages has reached a ‘methods’ fork in the road’.” (p. 14).

First and foremost, let’s concisely look at the term *eclecticism*. Alvero (2008, p. 271) registers it as “Philosophical school that, without being dogmatic, takes from others what it deems reasonable.” This definition permits us to detect two elements of interest:

1. Being eclectic is *not* being dogmatic, that is, not limited or closed to possibilities; it is being flexible and *not* rigid.
2. Being eclectic means studying/adopting alternative sources, tendencies, approaches that may prove useful for our own benefit or improvement, in our case for the benefit/improvement of teaching and learning a foreign language.
3. Being eclectic means making *informed* changes.

Webster’s (1967, p. 262) tells us that *eclectic* (adj.) is 1: “selecting what appears to be best in various doctrines, methods or styles 2: composed of elements drawn from various sources.” This dictionary coincides with the previous definition. It can be indicated that an eclectic stance reflects an eclectic mind open to grasp the best from other sources.

Another definition is: “Method of language education that combines various approaches and methodologies to teach language depending on the aims of the lesson and the abilities of the learners.” (Wikipedia), or “Teaching approach that is not based on a single method (e.g. a task-based teaching...) but draws on several different method principles that are made use of in practice” (Wikipedia).

Besides, it is referred to as “Pedagogical strategy that moves away from teachers following one specific methodology in order to assimilate different existing methodologies and approaches, according to the learners’ needs.” (Lazarus & Beutler, 1993) (cited by Wikipedia). As can be seen, it is broadly defined as a method, approach, strategy, methodology, etc.



## Dissecting the term

Flexibility as a characteristic of teaching is significant in addressing the issue of eclecticism in the field. Olivé (2024, p. 23) explains that “Teachers must be open to change and options. Their flexibility will enable them to accept differences, to choose wisely from alternatives, to restudy critically sources of knowledge, to discern the possibilities and limits of the existing reality.” Professor Leblanc, R. (n. d.) says that it is *not* having a fixed agenda or being rigid, rather being flexible to respond and change.

From these perspectives, we can safely affirm that there will always be a teaching style harmonizing the experience professors and teachers have in their contexts.

This quotation confirms it: “Each teaching method and each methodological procedure has a particular psychological structure, and it is effective when the teacher takes into account psychological aspects in a concrete teaching situation.” (Ayala and Machín, 2021, p. 33).

In our understanding of eclecticism we mention the need to restudy sources of knowledge and we put forth the contention *all methods and no method: that is the method*. Ayala and Machín (2021, pp. 34-35) are emphatic:

Teachers should have access to all methods and ‘build’ their own methods (...) Thus, there is the challenge of training post method teachers (Cadario, 2014). This author states that the big challenge for teacher trainers at the university is to equip future teachers with conceptual knowledge and competences that will allow them to make methodological decisions that suit the different contexts (...) As Cadario very well says, future teachers need to gain access to a big bulk of theoretical knowledge and develop their critical thinking skills to be capable of putting theories, principles, teaching techniques and strategies into the different teaching contexts they will face. Post method teachers must be reflective and critical if they are to become autonomous in decision-making processes and be sensitive, towards their students and teaching contexts and towards their own identities.

With this quote we are entering the realm of the much-debated-on post-method era. What remains certain is that the focus of teaching and learning has evolved greatly these past years. No teacher ought to adhere to one method, to a one-track form of facing a classroom and putting into practice his/her theoretical, experiential and methodological criteria.

Ayala and Machín (2021, p. 37) warn about this:



In the post method era, language educators prefer to use the term methodology which encompasses the system of techniques and procedures based on the teachers' beliefs and assumptions about language teaching and learning. This body or system of techniques, procedures, actions and attitudes must be coherently integrated and organized in order to meet the learning needs of a particular course, group of students and their learning objectives and conditions. A methodology should be flexible enough to adjust the teachers' teaching style and the students' learning styles.

### *Teaching eclectically*

Evidently, to talk about the post-method era, we should start by defining a concept that is central in such analyses, *modern teaching*: "The teaching method which focuses more on teaching the students for improving their intellect behavior by using various new and innovative ideas rather than making them recite the syllabus to clear the examination with the same old style." (Richards, 2021) (cited by Cruz, 2024, p. 4).

*New* entails freshness, renovation of thought and practice, and *innovative* (a synonym of new) presupposes invention, creativity. Creativity itself stands on two pillars: novelty and usefulness. So, a modern lesson today finds effective ground to grow from and aims at successful teaching and learning in teachers whose insightfulness, versatility, plasticity in thinking and preparation will aid them in conceiving and delivering original, all-encompassing, imaginative, context-minding, result-seeking, successful and ingenious lessons.

This is not a said-and-done axiom. To reach this status teachers have to constantly study. Our next quote expands on this idea:

Well-informed teachers are those who grasp all – and lose little – getting the most out of it. They profit from the whole and decide on it sagely. No one can take apart a teacher's well-knitted mind and lesson if it meets the musts of the process and renders palpable results. Yet, who best sums up the relevance of information is Leblanc: 'Good teaching is (...) about doing your best to keep on top of your field, reading sources, inside and outside of your areas of expertise, and being at the leading edge (...) bridging the gap between theory and practice.' (Olivé; Rodríguez and Rodríguez, 2021, p. 137).



It is evident that if the “musts of the process,” the “palpable results” and “being at the leading edge” are combined effectively, conscientiously, the lesson will be fruitful. In addition, eclecticism, carving its way into the post-method era, is to be dealt with as the “Disposition to accept and integrate with the teaching-learning process of foreign languages, coherently and according to plan, methodologies, procedures and strategies of an instructional character, which derive from different approaches, so as to ultimately and efficiently pay attention to individual and group needs that may surface at a given moment.” (Delmastro and Salazar, 2007, p. 34).

An eclectic standpoint in teaching embraces all feasible ways of teaching so the language is learned, so the students learn. The communicative approach and other approaches to teaching and learning, as is for example the *flipped-classroom* one, are not obviated; they are rather subsumed in the eclectic model we are discussing. This is revealed in the quotation that follows:

The principles of a communicative, developmental and action-oriented didactics allow teachers to be effective for designing and introducing community syllabuses to practice, because they reveal a view of language and language teaching-learning that supports authentic classroom procedures, techniques and methodologies oriented towards skill integration and authentic meaningful communicative tasks according to general and specific objectives. (Ayala; Olivé and Ceballos, 2021, p. 285).

All of the elements exposed above are retaken and incorporated in an eclectic comprehension of teaching. Once more, every teaching method is useful as long as it has an effect on learning. Schütz (2007, p. 1) cites Krashen: “The best methods are (...) those that supply 'comprehensible input' in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear. These methods (...) allow students to produce when they are 'ready', recognizing that improvement comes from supplying communicative (...) input, and not from forcing and correcting production.”

In addition, Puren (2021, p. 16) quotes Callamand (1983, p. V): “The chosen approach is not the sole possibility (...) some of our proposals will have to be adjusted to comply with learning objectives and teaching conditions, also to comply with the students’ mother tongue and their sociocultural characteristics.”

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for teaching languages also sets guidelines for teaching today. Ayala; Olivé and Ceballos (2021) relate how unifying the CEFR is when it comes to use all means available to enhance teaching by disclosing that it offers a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses. They say that those syllabuses are a powerful tool to help plan community courses. The authors go on stating that the CEFR is a guide that tells what learners need to be able to do in the foreign language. Finally, they explain that



it describes what language learners need to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to act effectively. For them, this approach also takes into account the cognitive, emotional and volitional resources and full range of specific abilities to be applied by the individual as a social agent.

It can be partially concluded then that in the overall framework of successful eclecticism in language teaching, there are inherent features in the method that can be outlined here:

1. Distinguishing the purposes of each individual method.
2. Being flexible in the choice and application of those methods.
3. Guaranteeing the pertinence and effectiveness of each method.
4. Assessing suitability of each method.
5. Integrating the four skills in communication (listening, speaking, reading and writing).
6. Crossing the one-method limits.
7. Exploiting a broad range of methods and resources for teaching.
8. Considering context, learner needs and interests, objectives, resources at hand.
9. Unraveling the intricacies of assimilating different methods.
10. Creating failsafe lesson/course plans.
11. Keeping the harmony of the whole that is constructed and implemented.
12. Profiting from technology: "The development of an innovative conception (...) and the potential that lies in technology at the students' fingertips, demands an interactive teaching-learning process where creativity and personal search become priorities (...) IT has gradually turned into part and parcel of a classroom—and beyond it—leading to a shift in teaching methodologies." (Rodríguez and Olivé, 2024, pp. 11-12).
13. Reabsorbing dialectically the chief contributions of each method, approach, procedure, etc. so that eclectic teaching channels them and brings about successful learning.

### ***Classroom eclecticism***

It has been made evident through the paper that today's approaches to language teaching have evolved, theoretically and practically, to address the teaching and learning of a foreign language. Below, key points that ought to be kept in mind in the classroom to facilitate eclectic learning:

- ✓ *Attention must be focused on what students have to do.* It means that we must transition from a teacher-centered lesson to a student-centered one. It should be clarified that there may be moments and stages in a lesson when the teacher stands under the spotlight. Yet, such status will opportunely shift to the actual protagonists. Olivé; Rodríguez and Mora (2021 p. 132) say that "You should keep your lesson on the student-centered mode. Student-centered lessons involve them more, they glue and



engage them personally to the tasks. Also, student-centered lessons provide much practice on their side, much dynamics from the true protagonists of the activities: they will always be the ultimate *raison d'être* of the process."

- ✓ *The learning process has to be at the center*, not the product, which will be adequately polished eventually. According to Ayala (2017, p. 14), this shift is known as "... move from product-oriented to process-oriented instruction."
- ✓ Following Vygotsky's doctrines, *the social nature of learning is decisive in learning* and is accompanied then by the students' individualities, which are boosted in a positive social environment.
- ✓ *Diversity among learners is to be reckoned with*, as well as the proper handling of differences "as resources to be recognized, catered to and appreciated." (Ayala, 2017, p. 14). These two quotations validate the above:

Today's University fosters an alternative, active, developmental education supported by a pedagogical conception of diversity and equity. It presupposes educative, systemic, continuous and permanent processes where the lesson is the main organizational form, as it is considered the pedagogical stage with greater possibilities for organizing and systematizing teaching objectives. It is in the lesson where the appropriation of contents and skills takes place, together with values formation and students' cognitive and professional interests (Ayala; Ceballos and Olivé, 2021, p. 221); "University curricula apply a methodology (didactics) for higher studies that takes from traditional and contemporary views on teaching, whose corpus is an optimized version of both to improve learning. The teaching of English as a major enters the realm of integration of methods, styles, notions" (Olivé, 2024, pp. 32-33).

- ✓ *The need to create meaningful, purposeful links between classroom-discussion dynamics and the world dynamics outside the classroom*. In our case, "The social role and responsibility of education in the matter – a task of society as a whole (...) On this ground, education must focus on the particular contexts in which professionals operate." (Olivé; Pérez and Rojas, 2021, p. 239).
- ✓ *The prerogative of seeing learning as a process for life*. The old-fashioned notion that students have to learn to pass an exam must remain in the past. Students live in society and communities, so: "The role of education to prepare people so they face the challenges of life, co-existence, conservation of resources and post-modernity issues (...) [Education] aims at forming men and women so that society can operate and progress." (Olivé; Zúñiga and Rodríguez, 2021, p. 253).
- ✓ *All methods are valid as long as they successfully contribute to learning*. Their dialectical and innovative harmonization following the canons of eclectic teaching, will always improve learning as an individual, social and endless process: "Eclecticism allows not only adapting methods and procedures to different teaching environments, it also makes



possible approach fluctuations that randomly emerge in a teaching-learning process (...) Eclecticism, however, must be solidly based on profound knowledge of foreign language teaching alternatives." (Delmastro and Salazar, 2007, p. 35).

- ✓ *Eclecticism by logical extension implies too the consideration of selectivity, functionalism and meaningfulness.* Making adequate didactic choices and decisions with an open outlook, will give us the chance to aim at accomplishment in teaching, which will echo in learning. Selectivity means discernment (reflection, good judgment) of what is best, functionalism means paying attention to the roles specific elements of a system or structure fulfill within an overall arrangement, and meaningfulness speaks of the significance of the aspects treated and introduced in teaching.

It stands to reason that eclecticism is not a straightjacket. It is the logical evolution of thought and practice in education, in foreign language teaching. Puren (2021, p. 19) cites Antier, Girard and Hardin (1972, p. 76), who propound the idea of *coherent eclecticism*: "So far from being a term of disparagement or reproach it implies the deliberate choice of all things which are good, a judicious and reasoned selection of all the diverse factors the sum of which may constitute a complete and homogeneous system."

There seems to be no ironclad opposition to this line of reasoning. Dialectically speaking, if eclecticism hinges on the well-grounded molds of *choosing what is good* and *selecting wisely and rationally*, we can look at it as a healthy option and implement it with our minds set on productively confronting the teaching and learning challenges before us nowadays.

## Conclusion

All in all, eclecticism in teaching foreign languages stands as an objective solution to the need for methods and stances that actually face and help optimize learning. It can be deemed vital from a holistic angle. Eclecticism is a "vessel" wherein methodologies, theories, hypotheses, perceptions, attitudes "melt into a whole."

Eclecticism applies to methods, styles, approaches, outlooks, attitudes always searching for alternatives that satisfy the requirements of the teaching-learning process. As Delmastro and Salazar (2007) propound, the eclectic posture taken has a constructivist, multi-methodological and syncretic foundation. They say it adjusts to the complexities of a postmodern, dynamic and ever-changing society. And they add that it is within this posture that we observe the pluralist character that fosters and facilitates the integration of knowledge in its multiplicity.



It is with this open, ever-adapting mind-frame that teachers, professors, researchers—and students—must give free rein to their teaching and learning goals. A particularly fitting thought in an eclectic bearing will always be to “think outside the box”—always getting feedback from what is in the box—so we imbue our lessons and furnish our students with the tools and inspiration to prompt their mental processes and capacities within and beyond classroom walls, and assist them in growing as individuals in a full-speed-ahead society. Classrooms have to replicate, inventively, today’s world, and prepare students to match up to its pressing, multifarious demands.

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## Conflict of interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

## Author Contribution

Miguel Ángel Olivé Iglesias (principal author): Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing- Original draft preparation, Writing- Reviewing and Editing.

Guillermo Ronda Velázquez: Methodology, Writing- Original draft preparation, Writing- Reviewing and Editing.

Julio César Rodríguez Peña: Methodology, Writing- Original draft preparation, Writing- Reviewing and Editing.

