



TESTING DESIGNER METHODS RELEVANCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY TEACHING IN MOROCCAN SECONDARY EDUCATION

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Abstract:

The current study investigates the relevance and viability of five teaching methods in the 21st-century teaching context. They are usually referred to as 'Designer Methods', and those are Suggestopedia, The Silent Way, Community Language Learning, Total Physical Response, and The Natural Approach. These methods are relics from the recent past that witnessed the proliferation of different teaching approaches and methods. They have left a plethora of practices that promised, according to advocators, impressive results. The goal here is not to resurrect them but to show that maybe they have never been put to rest. The current study is therefore intended to find out whether these practices are still in use in English language classrooms and, once confirmed, to measure the frequency of their use. After conducting a survey questionnaire that targeted high school teachers of English language in the city of Marrakesh in Morocco, the relevance and viability of these methods through their inherent practices, based on the collected data, proved undeniable. The study has shown that teachers still use some teaching techniques that originate from these five methods.

Keywords: The Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning (CLL), Total Physical Response (TPR), the Natural Approach

1. Introduction

In English language teaching, much ink has been spilt over teaching methods during the last century. Some authors (Celce-Murcia, 2014; Brown, 2007; Richards and Rodgers, 1986) focused on providing an extensive record of these established methods; others (Prabhu, 1990; Stern, 1990; Allwright, 1993; Kumaravadivelu, 2003) were critical of their existence, thereby questioning their effectiveness and usability. Yet, there is a paucity of evidence about their viability and relevance in the Moroccan teaching context. These methods still live in books of pedagogy and teacher-training programs, but do they still live in our English language classrooms, nowadays? In methodology courses, teacher-trainers usually provide a comprehensive account of notable teaching methods that the

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past century has witnessed. However, their practicality, usefulness, effectiveness and relevance have not been discussed enough or have never been put to the test in our teaching context. The intended goal here is to explore the relevance of five teaching methods, especially those that saw the light in the 70s and 80s, usually referred to as Designer Methods. These methods are the Silent way, Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning, Total Physical Response, and the Natural Approach. Their creators drew an idealistic conceptualization of their implementation. Each method came out with a bundle of teaching practices that harmoniously mesh with the general assumption about language teaching within the parameters determined by the designers. It is therefore important to investigate whether these established methods and their practices are still viable and relevant in the 21st-century teaching context. Participants in this study are English language teachers working in both private and public high schools in Marrakesh.

The present study is structured as follows: firstly, to put the readers into context, a succinct description of these five methods along with their respective techniques is presented. Secondly, the research method used for collecting and analyzing data is delineated. Finally, the analysis and discussion of the major findings are displayed.

2. Designer Methods

During the 1970s and 1980s, the English language teaching domain witnessed an unprecedented burgeoning of teaching methods. *“There was a good deal of hoopla about the ‘designer’ methods”* (Brown, 2015, p.23). This term was coined by David Nunan in 1989 as a way to describe the proliferation of methods that characterized the two decades. Unlike Audiolingualism in the United States and its counterpart, Situational Language Teaching in England, these alternative methods were not accepted as mainstream standard approaches to language teaching. Their emergence came as a reaction against traditional grammar-based methods since there was a growing interest in the communicative aspect of the language (Richards and Rodgers, 2014). They were usually created and defined by individuals who, in turn, trained practitioners who subscribed to their methods and eventually helped to spread them (Celce-Murcia, 2014). Their existence produced additional insights into the English Language Teaching (ELT) domain though most of these methods were not rooted in theories of language teaching and learning. It is worth noting that each of these established methods promotes a set of techniques and procedures that are congruent with their general philosophy. Their principles have drawn the attention of some ELT practitioners; nevertheless, their popularity has waxed and waned since their inception (Richards and Rodgers, 2014). Before gauging the relevance of the five methods in English language classrooms, it is important to provide a short description of the five methods and an account of their practices.

2.1 The Silent Way

The Silent Way is a language teaching method invented by Caleb Gattegno. It adopts a traditional grammatical and lexical syllabus and transitions systematically from controlled to freer practice. It has adopted cognitive rather than affective arguments to construct its theoretical foundation and views the learner as being an active agent in the learning process. As its name suggests, it is based on the premise that teachers should reduce their talking time to the minimum possible, and learners should conversely do most of the talking in class. This method in its application is characterized by a problem-solving, creative and discovering activity. Through the implementation of collaborative learning practices, learners are encouraged to focus more on the process of solving language problems.

Like all methods, some justifiable criticisms have been expressed against the Silent way method. It has been observed that teachers who claim their subscription to this method are too distant to help learners develop communicative competence. Normally, learners constantly require support, guidance and overt correction that teachers in this framework seem to neglect (Brown, 2007). There might also be long periods of silence which generally cause a feeling of awkwardness and raise learners' affective filter. Additionally, it has come under attack for its limited bank of practices which, after a few lessons, requires varied techniques to level up to learners' expectations.

For a systematic presentation of the language, the following practices are implemented. Larsen-Freeman (2000, pp. 68 – 69 – 70) has outlined some of them which are cited below:

Practices	Descriptions
Sound-color chart	The chart has blocks of color, each one stands for a sound in the target language. By pointing to blocks of color on the chart, teachers help pupils construct syllables, words and sentences.
Teacher's silence	The teacher provides the minimum necessary help and then is silent.
Peer correction	Cooperative learning is fostered in the classroom. Learners are required to help each other when facing language problems.
Cuisenaire rods	The teacher in this methodological framework makes use of Cuisenaire rods in the presentation, practice and production phases. The rods are versatile and can be applied to represent different realities.
Self-correction gestures	The teacher uses sign language as a technique to encourage self-correction. For instance, they may use their hands and fingers to help learners spot errors and immediately correct them.
Word chart	The charts used here contain functional words whose letters are colored to help learners with their pronunciation.
Fidel charts	This color-coded Fidel charts are meant to help learners associate the sounds of the language with their spelling.
Structured feedback	Pupils provide teachers with their observations and comments on lessons. Their feedback serves as an eye-opener to guide teachers' future actions.

On the basis of this description, it can be said that this method views teaching as being subordinated to learning (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 54). What counts here is to see the relevance of these practices in the current Moroccan teaching context.

2.2 Suggestopedia

Suggestopedia, also called Desuggestopedia, adopts an affective-humanistic approach to language teaching and learning. The Bulgarian psychiatrist-educator Georgi Lozanov was behind bringing this method into use. He argues that the human brain has the faculty of handling a number of information, provided that the conditions for learning are adequate enough. For him, *“people are capable of learning much more than they give themselves credit for”* (cited in Brown, 2007, p.27). To optimize learning, Suggestopedia mainly hinges on its practice of certain principal features, namely classroom arrangement, equipment, decoration, music, and the authoritative presence of the teacher. In its application, it has for goals to eradicate all mental blocks or feelings of inability to learn a language. The novelty here is *“the importance of desuggesting limitations on learning”* (Brown, 2007, p.27). This can be achieved through the use of praise and encouragement to learners. Still, like all established methods, Suggestopedia has fallen short of expectations. The startling results which the advocates of the method promised were highly questionable. The physical classroom comfort that is deemed necessary for the implementation of the method is not always available. Another major problem raised by Scovel (1979, pp. 260-261) in his review of this method is its focus on *“teaching memorization techniques and is not devoted to the far more comprehensive enterprise of language acquisition.”* Below is a description of some techniques used by teachers to implement this method (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, pp. 68 – 69 – 70).

Practices	Description
Classroom set-up	The teacher has to embellish the classroom to create a pleasant and relaxed atmosphere.
Peripheral learning	Posters having grammatical information are placed on the classroom walls. At their ease, learners tend to internalize grammatical points without being the subject of study.
Positive suggestion	The teacher is held accountable for targeting learners’ conscious and subconscious minds to obliterate all mental obstacles which impede the learning process.
New identity	A fictional identity is developed in the target language. Learners have new names and occupations in the classroom environment.
Role play	Learners are assigned roles to perform in the target language with which they need to identify
First concert (active concert)	With copies of dialogue in their hands, pupils listen to the teacher’s slow and dramatic reading accompanied by the sound of classical or Baroque music.
Second concert (passive concert)	Without script this time, pupils only listen to the teacher reading the dialogue at a normal rate with musical accompaniment.
Primary activation	Fully engaged, learners cheerfully reread the dialogue out loud, either in groups or as individuals.

Creative adaptation	Learners are engaged in a variety of activities, namely games, dancing, singing and dramatizations. What counts here is the communicative aspect of language rather than the form of its linguistic message.
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All the techniques mentioned above are peculiar to Suggestopedia model of teaching. Accordingly, it is absolutely essential to find out the relevance of these techniques in our classrooms.

2.3 Community Language Learning

Charles A. Curran who is a specialist in counseling and a professor of psychology developed a method, called Community Language Learning. It is a typical example of an effectively oriented method. Learners in such a conceptual framework are perceived as a group in need of therapy and counseling. The traditional roles attributed to language teachers and learners are reworked. Teachers can stand for advisors, assistants and mainly counselors. As for learners, they are viewed as clients in the language classroom. A large body of Community Language Learning practices is described as “*humanistic techniques*” (Moskowitz, 1978). Moskowitz defines these techniques “*as those that blend what the student feels, thinks and knows with what he is learning in the target language*” (cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.90). In this regard, learning takes place only when a group of learners indulge in an interpersonal relationship in which all members are highly valued. Therefore, an empathetic behavior seems to govern the teacher-learners bond.

Community Language Learning (CLL) has been solicited for adopting an effective approach to language teaching; nonetheless, it has fallen short of expectations. The counselor-teacher can sometimes be non-directive. In his review of the method, Brown (2007) comments that “*supportive and assertive direction from the counselor could strengthen the method*” (p.26). CLL has been severely criticized for its total dependence on an inductive teaching of the target language. Learners usually need explicit and instantaneous feedback to build on their metalinguistic knowledge. However, subscribers to CLL seem to undermine the importance of explicit instruction. The frustration learners might face in the first phases of their instruction can be redeemed when teachers simply implement deductive strategies.

Community Language Learning advocates adopt a number of practices that resonate well with the method. They can be outlined as follows (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, pp. 102 – 103 – 104):

Practices	Description
Recording learners' conversations	Pupils' generated language is recorded to help them become responsible for their own learning. By listening to their own productions, learners make associations between meaning and a particular target language utterance.
Transcription	Pupils' recorded target language conversation is transcribed as the teacher proceeds into writing the native language equivalent under the target language words.
Reflective listening	Learners listen to their own voices practicing a conversation on the recorder or to the teacher reading the transcript.

Reflection on experience	Pupils are given sometime during the lesson to reflect on the language learning experience, themselves as learners, and their relationship with their peers.
Human computer	A learner chooses some part of the transcript to practice pronunciation. Through repetitions of phrases or words, pupils imitate the teacher's model.
Small group tasks	Learners are asked to write sentences with words on the transcript in groups and share them with the rest of their classmates. Pupils learn better and more quickly when getting information from one of their peers. For this reason, collaborative learning is encouraged in Community Language Learning.

To respond appropriately to learners' linguistic growth, Community Language Learning has tried to adopt the above practices. It is important to see if these techniques are viable and still relevant in our teaching context.

2.4 Total Physical Response

Total Physical Response was developed by James Asher, a professor of psychology at San Jose State University, California. The method, in its application, centers on matching up the speech with actions. In this conceptual framework, physical activity constitutes a major practice in teaching languages. The theoretical grounding of Total Physical Response brings into play different disciplines, namely Developmental Psychology, Learning theory, humanistic pedagogy, and Palmer's teaching procedures. For Asher, the process of second language learning is a mere simulation of a child's first language acquisition (cited in Richards and Rogers, 2001, p.73). To address their progeny, parents' speech is characterized by the use of commands to which children react physically before they develop the ability to respond verbally. In addition, Asher engages learners in game-like activities which contribute to lowering their anxiety and fostering a positive attitude towards learning (ibid).

Total Physical Response, as seen with all conventional methods, is no exception. Several applied linguists have expressed their dissatisfaction with TPR. It is claimed that its success is limited to the beginning cycle of language instruction. As learners develop language competences, they gradually phase out the method and deploy other activities as in almost any other communicative language classroom (Brown, 2007, p.31). This explicitly implies that the method in its application requires supplementing to compensate for its limitations. *"Asher himself has stressed that TPR should be used in association with other methods and techniques"* (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p.285). It has also been criticized for the lack of spontaneity in its use of the theatrical nature of language learning.

Total Physical Response in its practical application draws on various techniques which resonate with its theoretical orientation. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000, pp. 115 – 116 – 117), TPR practices can be outlined as follows:

Practices	Description
Using commands to direct behavior	Through the use of commands, learners perform actions to show their comprehension of the message. To make sure that pupils understand the meaning of the commands, the teacher begins by modeling the situation first before learners carry it out.
Role reversal	The teacher steps out of his/her position as an instructor and joins the rest of the class to perform actions orchestrated by the pupils themselves. Still, learners are not forced to speak the target language until they are ready.
Action sequence	A lot of daily activities or operations can be reduced to a short action sequence that pupils are instructed to perform. Not more than three connected commands are performed at a time.

2.5 The Natural Approach

In defining the Natural approach, it is important to mention that the approach was developed by Tracy Terrell, a teacher of Spanish language, in 1977. His philosophy of language teaching comes from his experience teaching Spanish classes. Terrell in this approach attempts to implement “naturalistic” principles proposed in early studies of second language acquisition. In a concerted agreement, Terrell collaborated with Stephen Krashen, an applied linguist, who has provided a theoretical foundation for the approach. According to Krashen and Terrell (1988), the Natural approach is based on principles outlined as follows: a) comprehension precedes production. Learners should be exposed to comprehensible input through the focus on receptive skills (listening and reading). Writing and speaking as productive skills are delayed to a later stage. b) Production emerges gradually and happens in stages. *“The students are not forced to speak before they are ready. In addition, speech errors which do not interfere with communication are not corrected”* (Krashen and Terrell, 1988, p.20). c) The course syllabus emphasizes communicative goals rather than grammatical structures. d) Activities carried out in classrooms should be an impetus to reduce learners’ anxiety and lower their affective filter. Richards and Rodgers explain that in the Natural Approach, *“there is an emphasis on exposure, or input, rather than practice; optimizing emotional preparedness for learning; a prolonged period of attention to what the language learners hear before they try to produce the language; and a willingness to use written and other materials as a source of comprehensible input”* (1986, p.129).

Activities used in the Natural Approach context are usually borrowed from other existing methods, namely Total Physical Response, Direct Method and Communicative Language Teaching (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). These techniques can be sketched out as follows:

Practices	Description
Using commands to direct behavior	Through the use of commands, learners perform actions to show their comprehension of the message.
Mime, gesture and context	In eliciting questions and answers, teachers use mime, gesture and context as a leverage to make their input comprehensible.
Group work activities	Learners are usually put in groups to share information and complete communicative tasks.

Use of visuals	The instructor uses pictures from magazines, for instance. The whole set is introduced to the class, and the teacher usually focuses on one single item or activity in the picture.
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The activities should provide interesting content to keep learners' focus on meaning rather than form, introduce new vocabulary, foster a sense of group belonging and harmony and, finally, give comprehensible input for acquisition. As stated earlier, the activities deployed for the acquisition of language do not mainly pertain to the Natural Approach but originate from other methods. Richards and Rodgers confirm that "*there is nothing novel about the procedures and techniques advocated for use with the Natural Approach*" (1986, p.136). In addition, the input theory has fallen short of expectations. Some applied linguists like Swain (1985) have observed that comprehensible input alone is not enough to guarantee a satisfactory level of language proficiency. It has been claimed that "*language production (output) forces learners to move from comprehension (semantic use of language) to syntactic use of language*" (Gass and Mackey, 2015, p.184). Output is also important to establish automaticity which refers to "*the routinization of language use*" (ibid, p.185).

3. Research Methodology

The purpose of the current work is to investigate the relevance and viability of Designer Methods in English language classrooms at different institutions in Marrakesh. Participants in the current study are 112 English language teachers working in 68 public and private schools in the city of Marrakesh and its suburbs. They have been selected in a "*simple random sampling*" fashion (Creswell, 2014, p.161). Based on official statistics obtained from the regional academy of Marrakesh, there are currently 332 English language teachers employed in the public sector in Marrakesh but no official number to identify those who work in the private. However, it is important to note that the vast majority of public-school teachers work in private schools as part-timers. A case in point is the American Language Center of Marrakesh which employs one hundred teachers; 65% of them come from public schools. This explains the fact that the number of participants in this research is representative of the target population and therefore statically reliable for a quantitative study. 61.6% of the target sample are males and 38.4% females with different years of teaching experience.

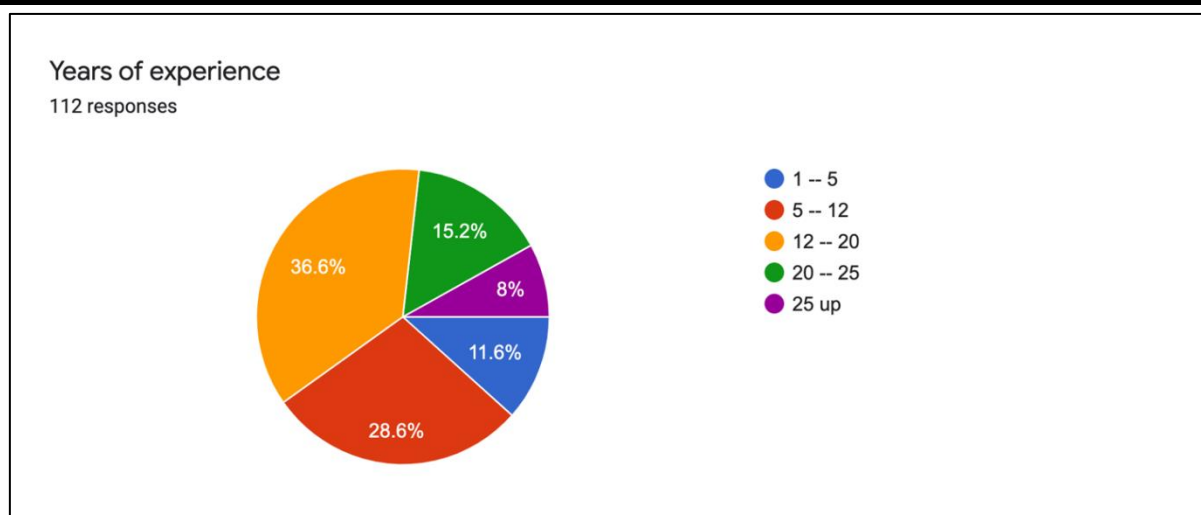


Chart 1: Displaying years of experience of the target population

A big number of our respondents have gathered considerable teaching experience. As Table 1 shows, only 11.6% of the target population have had less than 5 years of experience. Almost one-third have spent more than 12 years in classrooms. Most of them generally received formal training in teacher-training centers. Only 4.5% of our participants do not hold any teaching diplomas or certificates. The rest (95.5%) have all been trained and therefore know about 'Designer Methods' from their teaching methodology courses and/ or in-service training and conferences.

The questionnaire that has been designed to collect information about the subject matter has been randomly sent out via Google Forms to a large number of individuals from the target population. The goal is to increase the probability of giving the target sample an equal chance of participating in the study, and that is definitely important to ensure generalizability and representativeness. The reception of responses began January 20th at 10:27 and ended February 9th, 2022. The questionnaire consists of close-ended questions and therefore lends itself to quantitative data analysis. It comprises three main sections. The first one gives factual information about participants mainly their years of experience, the school where they teach English, and whether they received formal training or not. Section two focuses on finding out whether classroom practices, which are originally prescribed, as claimed by their designers, to ensure effective and appropriate implementation of the five methods, are relevant or irrelevant in our teaching context. In the same section, the frequency of these techniques in the teaching practice is measured once their relevance is affirmed. The last section explicitly asks the target sample if the methods under study are still viable or could not resist the test of time.

To examine whether the five methods are relevant and viable in our teaching context or completely lost popularity, we have designed questions that measure participants' knowledge about these methods. They are purposefully asked to recognize classroom practices that are still applicable and relevant to their teaching environment. The study does not focus on examining the influence of the philosophical bearings of

these methods on English language teachers but rather on the techniques that are used as teaching instruments to achieve learning goals. These practices have been taken from Diana Larsen-Freeman's account of teaching methods (2000) and put in the questionnaire to find out the ones that remain relevant in the 21st-century teaching context.

3.1 Data Analysis

Close-ended questions have been formulated and addressed to our participants to find out whether they think that the Natural Approach, Total Physical Response, Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia and the Silent Way through their practices still perdure to this very day or are no longer in use in our teaching context. The survey questionnaire, which has been designed to glean information about the above methods, consists of three sections. The last one is meant to explicitly ask our respondents about Designer Methods by offering them three responses to choose from -- yes, no and no idea. The statistics obtained from the current study are revealing and lead to drawing valid conclusions.

The study shows that the Silent Way seems less popular than the rest of the approaches. 16% of teachers have no idea about the method. About half of them assert that it is no longer viable, and less than 31.25% think completely the opposite. Suggestopedia does not differ much from the Silent Way when looking at the graph below. Over 49% think that the method is still viable, less than a third say it is not applicable, and only 11.6% hold no opinion about it. Though the percentages of suggestopedia and The Silent way are low in comparison with other methods, teachers do recognize them and confirm their existence in our teaching context. Nonetheless, The Natural Approach, Total Physical Response and Community Language Learning are more recognizable within our pool of teachers. On the top of the scale comes Total Physical Response with 89 respondents who claim that the approach still exists in our teaching context, 13.39% have an opposite opinion, and only 3.57% have no idea. Following TPR comes Community Language Learning with a high percentage of teachers (about 72.32%) that think that the method is still applicable, less than a quarter respond negatively, and 4.46% do not know. As for The Natural Approach, 72.32% of our respondents answer with Yes, 13.39% with No, and the rest have no idea.

Through looking at the figures in the chart, it is evident that Designer Methods though the percentage rate for their existence in our teaching context differs from one method to the other still remain viable according to our respondents. The natural approach, total physical response and community language learning seem to have more prevalence than the silent way and suggestopedia.

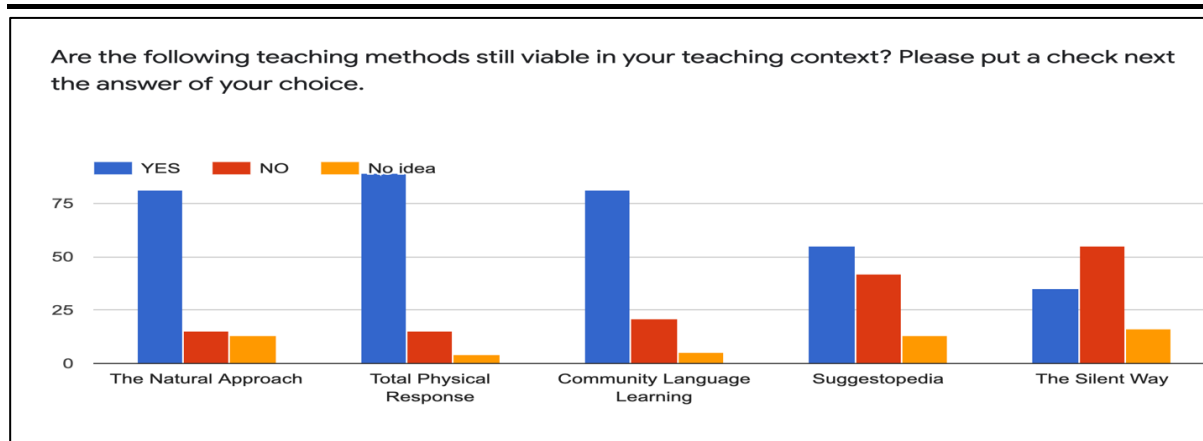


Chart 2: Showing the viability of Designer Methods

To dig deeper into the matter and to know in terms of techniques the ones that teachers recognize as relevant to their teaching practice, another question has been raised. These classroom techniques are initially produced to materialize their creators' views of how language should ideally be taught, and they generally represent a procedural model for a systematic presentation of the language. The following question is therefore meant to gauge the relevance of these practices. It might either confirm or refute the result obtained from the aforementioned point. As opposed to the first question which is attitudinal, this one is behavioral as it touches on classroom techniques that teachers utilize to help teachers achieve the lesson aims and learning outcomes. The question displays all the techniques that are claimed to be subservient to these methods and requires teachers to identify if these techniques are usable in their teaching context, thereby corroborating their relevance.

Table 1: The Percentage of Designer Methods' Classroom Practices

Practices	Relevant (%)	Irrelevant (%)	The method
Sound-color chart	36.6	48.21	Silent Way
Teacher's silence	72.32	13.39	Silent Way
Peer correction	87.5	0.89	Silent Way
Cuisenaire rods	25.89	58.92	Silent Way
Self-correction gestures	75.98	9.82	Silent Way
Word chart	67.85	16.07	Silent Way
Color-coded Fidel charts	25	58.92	Silent Way
Structured feedback	78.57	7.14	Silent Way
Classroom set-up	75.89	10.71	Suggestopedia
Peripheral learning	60.71	21.42	Suggestopedia
Positive suggestion	73.21	9.82	Suggestopedia
New identity	35.71	41.07	Suggestopedia
1 st & 2 nd concert	14.28	62.5	Suggestopedia
Primary activation	53.57	25	Suggestopedia
Creative adaptation	66.07	12.5	Suggestopedia
Recording learners' conversation	37.5	46.42	CLL

Transcription	40.17	44.64	CLL
Reflective listening	67.85	15.17	CLL
Reflection on experience	74.1	6.25	CLL
Human computer	26.78	54.46	CLL
Small group tasks	80.35	4.46	CLL
Using commands to direct behavior	77.67	11.6	TPR & The Natural Approach
Role reversal	66.07	16.07	TPR
Action sequence	51.78	27.67	TPR
Mime, gesture and context	79.46	7.14	The Natural Approach
Group work activities	82.14	2.67	The Natural Approach
Use of visuals	78.57	6.25	The Natural Approach

The table shows that most of the respondents generally confirm the relevance of these practices though the numbers differ proportionately from one method to another. For the Silent Way, Cuisenaire rods and colored-coded fidel charts are less popular among English language teachers. More than half of the target sample do not use these techniques in their classrooms. Peer correction seems to receive the highest percentage with 87.5%, and that implies that the method still survives in the Moroccan teaching context thanks to the continuing relevance of its practices. Although it deploys different techniques for its implementation only two practices, classroom set-up (75.89%) and positive suggestion (73.21%) scored a bit high. About 62.5% think that 1st and 2nd concert is irrelevant and no longer used in teaching English. Community Language Learning however through the use of small group tasks and reflection on experience continues to assert its survival. As a major practice of TPR, using commands to direct behavior seems to keep the method relevant and alive in classrooms with 77.67% of users. The statistic proves that the Natural Approach has more popularity and relevance than the rest of the methods. With no exception, all the practices (mime, gesture and context, group work activities, use of visuals and using commands to direct behavior) that the method recommends for its implementation reach significantly high percentages (see Table 1). To dig deeper into the matter, our respondents are asked to decide on the frequency of these practices in their teaching context once asserting their relevance. The research reveals that of 27 teaching practices, eleven are highly frequent according to our participants. Table 2 displays the frequency of the most frequently used Designer Methods' practices.

Table 2: The Percentage of Frequency of Teaching Practices

Practices	The percentage of frequency (-- %)	Rank
Use of visuals	46.42%	1
Group work activities	33.03%	3
Mime, gesture and context	34.82%	2
Using commands to direct behavior	17.85%	9
Small group tasks	33.03%	3
Reflection on experience	23.21%	5
Positive suggestion	20.53%	7
Classroom set-up	22.32%	6
Structured feedback	17.85%	9

Self-correction gestures	18.75%	8
Peer correction	30.35%	4

The Natural Approach practices, as the table shows, hold the highest ranks in terms of frequency of use, followed by CLL in the second position. The Silent Way comes third, Suggestopedia fourth and TPR the last. It is also worth mentioning that most of the techniques that are still relevant in the Moroccan teaching context belong to the natural approach.

4. Discussion

Designer Methods as initially conceptualized by their creators raised the teaching/learning enterprise to another level of sophistication by infusing multidisciplinary research findings into their overall make-up (Brown, 2014). Each of these methods, according to their creators and advocators, promised an optimization of English language learning. Nonetheless, they were heavily attacked for their failure to produce the intended results and meet both learners' and instructors' expectations. Their existence thus depends on instructors' personal experiences and experimentations with some of these techniques. In our teaching context, the five methods in this study have never been institutionalized or endorsed by the Moroccan ministry of education, yet most English language teachers studied them in ELT methodology courses in teacher-training programs. This explains why the vast majority of the respondents have recognized Designer Methods along with their practices. Though they are outdated and heavily criticized by distinguished scholars (Prabhu, 1990; Stern, 1990; Allwright, 1993; Kumaravadivelu, 2003), Designer Methods, through the continuing use of their practices, remain viable and relevant in the 21st-century teaching context.

The study shows that nine of the techniques which stem from Designer Methods are highly frequent and applicable to our teaching context. Their adoption in the present time is probably not motivated by the philosophical beliefs of their designers, but rather by mere compliance with the exigencies of the teaching context and teachers' educational background. The use of visuals is undoubtedly an important practice that teachers frequently use in their lessons to convey meaning and make input comprehensible (Krashen and Terrel, 1988). The value of the practice is enormous, and that is statistically proven here. Using mime, gesture and context as teaching practices seem to occupy the second position on the scale (see Table 2), and that of course shows the crucial role these three pedagogical tools play. Interestingly enough, the difference between these practices and group work activities in terms of statistical findings is minimal with an average of 1.76%. This explains the fact that the practice is apparently relevant to the present day and fits well in our teaching environment. Another practice that appears to maintain its popularity among English language teachers is peer correction. Due to the value given to feedback and learner-centeredness in the 21st-century teaching, the percentage that proves its high frequency is no wonder logical. Most of the aforementioned practices are

deployed to render the learning operation student-oriented. Though the remaining practices, in comparison with the above, appear to be low in terms of percentage, they rank among the top ten highly-frequent classroom techniques.

The study further shows that these Designer Methods have also yielded practices that are irrelevant and incongruent with the new tendencies of the present era. Most of them belong to the Silent Way, Suggestopedia and Community Language Learning. For instance, 62.5% of our respondents claim that 1st and 2nd concert is no longer applicable, albeit pivotal for Suggestopedia's advocators. Playing Baroque music to control human heartbeats and set up the general mood for learning does not seem to attract practitioners in ELT (Richards and Rodgers, 2014). Other practices like Cuisenaire Rods and Color-coded Fidel Charts appear to meet the same destiny since the majority of teachers do not use them anymore. They are extremely important to the Silent Way but are no longer useable in teaching English language. They remain as artifacts of the method era. Conversely, TPR and mainly the Natural Approach produced applicable practices which have resisted the eroding nature of time and proved relevant to this day. Five techniques cited as epitomes of the two methods (Larsen-Freeman, 2000) receive the highest percentages in terms of relevance and frequency of use. The study thus reveals that Designer Methods, which are heavily attacked by theorists in ELT, are still viable and relevant in the 21st-century teaching. Their relevance resides in the pertinence of some of their practices.

5. Conclusion

The current study has investigated the relevance and viability of Designer Methods in teaching English language in public and private schools in Marrakesh, Morocco. To this end, a quantitative method through the use of a survey questionnaire has been adopted to collect and analyze data. One hundred and twelve teachers of English language participated in the study by filling out a questionnaire that has electronically been sent to them through emails and WhatsApp. The research has revealed that the vast majority of English teachers asserted the relevance of The Silent Way, Suggestopedia, CLL, TPR and The Natural Approach in their teaching context. In terms of teaching practices, some of them have proven to be generally applicable and highly frequent in teaching English language. As shown, both TPR and particularly the Natural Approach offered teachers a lot of classroom techniques that have resisted the test of time and have therefore been used to meet learners' needs in 21st-century teaching and learning.

The statistical information obtained here has given valid evidence for the relevance and viability of Designer Methods in the Moroccan teaching context. Yet, by digging deeper into the matter, the research can take another dimension. Conducting a qualitative study will definitely result in providing depth into the matter by giving a voice to teachers who constantly use 'Designer Methods' practices in teaching English language. Approaching the research problem from this angle will definitely give us a glimpse of the reality that stands behind the relevance of some of these teaching methods with their

respective practices. The shift in methodological perspective can help us find out instructors' reasons and motivation for appropriating these old practices in their own teaching. The findings, obtained from conducting quantitative research, provide highly revealing insights into the issue albeit limited. The research inspires a sequel to complete the missing pieces of the puzzle and to better understand the causes that brought about such results.

Conflict of Interest Statement

By the following, I declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

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