The Natural Approach
Natural Approach: Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell developed the "Natural Approach" in the early eighties (Krashen and Terrell, 1983), based on Krashens’ theories about second language acquisition.

This acquisition-focused approach sees communicative competence progressing through three stages: (a) aural comprehension, (b) early speech production, and (c) speech activities, all fostering "natural" language acquisition, much as a child would learn his/her native tongue. Following an initial "silent period", comprehension should precede production in speech, as the latter should be allowed to emerge in natural stages or progressions.
Overview

- In the Natural Approach the teacher speaks only the target language and class time is committed to providing input for acquisition. Students may use either the language being taught or their first language. Errors in speech are not corrected; however homework may include grammar exercises that will be corrected.
Overview

• Goals for the class emphasize the students being able to use the language "to talk about ideas, perform tasks, and solve problems." This approach aims to fulfill the requirements for learning and acquisition, and does a great job in doing it.

• Its main weakness is that all classroom teaching is to some degree limited in its ability to be interesting and relevant to all students.
"Language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules, and does not require tedious drill."

Stephen Krashen
The Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis

- Language acquisition (an unconscious process developed through using language meaningfully) is different from language learning (consciously learning or discovering rules about a language) and language acquisition is the only way competence in a second language can develop.
The Natural Order Hypothesis

- Grammatical structures are acquired in a predictable order and it does little good to try to learn them in another order.
Input Hypothesis

- People acquire language best from messages that are just slightly beyond their current competence: \( i+1 \)
The Monitor Hypothesis

- Conscious learning operates only as a monitor or editor that checks or repairs the output of what has been acquired.
The Affective Filter Hypothesis

The learner's emotional state can act as a filter that impedes or blocks input necessary for language acquisition.
“The best methods are therefore those that supply 'comprehensible input' in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear. These methods do not force early production in the second language, but allow students to produce when they are 'ready', recognizing that improvement comes from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production.”

Stephen Krashen
Theory of Language

- The essence of language is meaning. Vocabulary not grammar is the heart of language.

- It emphasised “Comprehensible Input”, distinguishing between ‘acquisition’ – a natural subconscious process, and ‘learning’ – a conscious process. It is argued that learning cannot lead to acquisition. The focus is on meaning, not form (structure, grammar).
Theory of Language

- Natural Approach: Reflecting the cognitive psychology and humanistic approach prominent in the field of education at that time, the Natural Approach shifted the culture of the language classroom 180 degrees and brought a sense of community to the students by their sharing of the experience of learning the same language together.
Design: Objectives / Syllabus

- **Objectives**
  Designed to give beginners/intermediate learner communicative skills. Four broad areas; basic personal communicative skills (oral/written); academic learning skills (oral/written)

- **Syllabus**
  The syllabus for the Natural Approach is a communicative syllabus. Based on a selection of communicative activities and topics derived from learner needs
Types of learning techniques and activities

- Comprehensible input is presented in the target language, using techniques such as TPR, mime and gesture.

- Group techniques are similar to Communicative Language Teaching.
- Learners start to talk when they are ready.
Learner roles:
Focused on meaningful and vocabulary

- Should not try and learn language in the usual sense, but should try and lose themselves in activities involving meaningful communication.
Teacher roles:
Teachers should provide "comprehensible input“ (I+1)

- The teacher is the primary source of comprehensible input. Must create positive low-anxiety climate. Must choose and orchestrate a rich mixture of classroom activities.
Roles of materials

- The world of relia rather than text books. Visual aids are essential
- Schedules, brochures, advertisement, maps, books of level appropriate to the learners.
Procedure

These are the steps to follow in planning a lesson using the communicative or natural approach to second-language teaching:

- Presentation of a situation or context through a brief dialogue or several mini-dialogues, preceded by a motivational activity relating the dialogue to learners’ experiences and interest. This includes a discussion of the function and situation: People, roles, setting, topic and the level of formality or informality the function and situation demand.
Procedure / Process

- Brainstorming or discussion to establish the vocabulary and expressions to be used to accomplish the communicative intent. Includes a framework or means of structuring a conversation or exchange to achieve the purpose of the speakers.

- Questions and answers based on the dialogue topic and situation: Inverted, wh- questions, yes/no, either/or and open-ended questions.
Procedure / Process

- Study of the basic communicative expressions in the dialogue or one of the structures that exemplifies the function, using pictures, real objects, or dramatization to clarify the meaning.

- Learner discovery of generalizations or rules underlying the functional expression or structure, with model examples on the chalkboard, underlining the important features, using arrows or referents where feasible.
Procedure / Process

- Oral recognition and interpretative activities including oral production proceeding from guided to freer communication activities.

- Oral evaluation of learning with guided use of language and questions/answers, e.g. "How would you ask your friend to _______________? And how would you ask me to _______________?"
Procedure / Process

- Reading and/or copying of the dialogues with variations for reading/writing practice.

- To complete the lesson cycle, provide opportunities to apply the language learned the day before in novel situations for the same or a related purpose.
Conclusion

The Natural Approach adopts techniques and activities from different sources but uses them to provide comprehensible input.

Language Acquisition

Language Processing
The use of the term ‘Natural Approach’ rather than ‘Method’ highlights the development of a move away from ‘method’ which implies a particular set of features to be followed, almost as to ‘approach’ which starts from some basic principles which are then developed in the design and development of practice in teaching and learning. It is now widely recognized that the diversity of contexts requires an informed, eclectic approach.
Summary of The Natural Method

Acquisition

- Curriculum
- Instructional Strategies
- Teacher Motivation
- Classroom Learning Environment
Quick Review for The Natural Method

Theory of language

- The Communicative view of language is the focus behind the Natural Approach. Particular emphasis is laid on language as a set of messages that can be understood.
- Language is a vehicle for communicating meanings and messages
- Communicative approach
- The focus on meaning not form
- Vocabulary is stressed (Lexicon)
- Formula I + 1
Quick Review for The Natural Method

Theory of learning - The Natural Approach is based on the following tenets:

- Language acquisition (an unconscious process developed through using language meaningfully) is different from language learning (consciously learning or discovering rules about a language) and language acquisition is the only way competence in a second language occurs. *(The acquisition/learning hypothesis)*
Grammatical structures are acquired in a predictable order and it does little good to try to learn them in another order. (The natural order hypothesis)

People acquire language best from messages that are just slightly beyond their current competence: i+1 (The input hypothesis)

Conscious learning operates only as a monitor or editor that checks or repairs the output of what has been acquired. (The monitor hypothesis)

The learner's emotional state can act as a filter that impedes or blocks input necessary for language acquisition. (The affective filter hypothesis)
## Quick Review for The Natural Method

### Design: Objectives
- Specific objectives depend on learners’ needs, skills and level.

### Syllabus
- Typical goals for language courses or particular needs and interest of students topics and situations

### Learners’ Roles
- Processor of comprehensible input.
- Pre-production stage
- Early production stage
- Speech emergent phase
- Learner to learner interaction encourage in pair & small group
- Guesser - Immerser
Quick Review for The Natural Method

Teachers’ Roles
- Primary source of comprehensive input
- Creates atmosphere - learner centered
- Facilitator - Orchestrate classroom activities
- Actor – props user

Types of learning techniques and activities
- Comprehensible input is presented in the target language, using techniques such as TPR, mime and gesture.
- Group techniques are similar to Communicative Language Teaching.
- Learners start to talk when they are ready.
Quick Review for The Natural Method

Procedure

- The Natural Approach adopts techniques and activities from different sources but uses them to provide comprehensible input.
- Language is a tool for communication
- Language function over Linguistic form
- Comprehension before production - task

Assessment

- Communicative effectiveness. Fluency over accuracy. Task oriented.
- No error correction unless errors interfere with communication