

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD AND COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

Both Grammar Translation Method and Communicative Language Teaching have played key roles in English Grammar Teaching. Which is better, Grammar Translation Method or Communicative Language Teaching? This paper directs to compare the ability to be controlled and practicability of these two approaches and find out which one is more able to be agreed on for English Grammar Language Teaching. The result showed that teaching in the structure of the Communicative result Approach is better than Grammar Translation Method in English Teaching language. The Communicative Approach gives special consideration fluency and the Grammar Translation Method is related to accuracy. Fluency and accuracy are the main for English learning. So the best way to improve the situation is combined both methods in teaching English Grammar.

Key words: Grammar Translation Method, Communicative Language Teaching

INTRODUCTION

In language teaching Method is essential. It links theory to practice. The CLT approach has led to major changes such ways, in which language is taught and learnt. CLT aims to make “communicative competence” for the goal of language teaching and to develop procedures for teaching the four language skills, including Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. On the other hand, the main aim of the Grammar Translation Method is learned a language in order to read its literature to gain from mental discipline and intellectual improvement. In this method, reading and writing skills are more focused than listening and speaking. The Grammar Translation Method originated from the practice of teaching Latin. In the early 16th century, Latin was the most widely studied foreign language because of its prominence in government, academic and business. However, the use of Latin then dwindled and was gradually replaced by English, French and Italian. The origins of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) are to be found in the changes in the British language teaching tradition dating from the late 1960s. Until then, Situational Language represented the major

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British approach to teaching English as a foreign language. The primary reason for comparative study is the explanatory interest of teaching used as a guiding principle. From these methods, one anchors the design of teaching plans, learning activities, instructional materials and evaluation techniques. It is quite notable that the methods are proportionate to the performance of the students. It is used to explain new items and to enable comparison between the foreign language and the native language.

The title of the study is ‘A Comparative Study on Grammar Translation Method and Communicative Language Teaching’. There are five methods in English language teaching such as Grammar Translation Method (GTM), Direct Method (DM), Audio-Lingual Method (ALM), Situational Language Teaching (SLT), and Bilingual Method (BM), and three main approaches such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Structural Approach (SA), Communicative Approach and Constructive Approach. Among all, the modern Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and the classical Grammar Translation Method are the methods and approaches used commonly in teaching English Language. The aim of this approach is to develop learners’ four basic language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) in English.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

The aim of this study is to examine the comparative study between Grammar Translation Method and Communicative Language in teaching language. To achieve this aim, the objectives of this study are, to know the advantages and disadvantages of GTM and CLT, to learn the characteristics of GTM and CLT and to investigate how language functions effectively on EFL learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Related Researches into Grammar Translation Method and Communicative Language Teaching. The related researches are as follows:

- (1) **Stern, H. H., (1992)**. According to the author, “Issues and Options in Language Teaching” indicates “a contrastive analysis, just as the comparative linguistics studies, is indeed very important for the second language learner. Therefore, translation in one or another can play a certain part in language learning”.
- (2) According to the Principles of **Brown H.D.,(1994)**, Language Learning and Teaching, states “It does virtually nothing to enhance a student’s communicative ability in the language.”

(3) According to **Cunningham, C., (2000)**, “Translation in the Classroom is a useful Tool for Second Language Acquisition” indicates “while there may indeed be some negative effects from using translation, there is a place in the learning environment for translation can contribute to the students’ acquisition of the target language, at all levels”.

(4) According to the paper of **Austin J Damiani, (2003)**, “The Grammar Translation Method of Language Teaching” states “As a teacher, I liked using the grammar translation method because I could assume the intelligence of my students; I could talk to them like the intelligent people that they are, and we could talk about the grammar and vocabulary that I was teaching. In another method, I would have had to use simple language and familiar phrases to communicate in the target language, and even then, I could not be sure that my students knew and understood what it was that they were saying.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A comparative study to find out the similarities, differences, usefulness, drawbacks, weakness and strengths of the Grammar Translation Methods and Communicative Language Teaching’s findings will be supportive for the Business English teaching in the respective academic year of University of Co-operative and Management, Thanlyin.

ANALYSIS: COMPARISON OF TWO TEACHING METHODS

Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) are two methods commonly implored by language teachers in the classroom setting. These methods are guiding principles that equipped the language teachers in their challenge to transfer language skills to non-native students. The comparison of these two methods shows learning a language effectively through theory versus the meal world. Communicative language teaching makes use of real-life situation that necessitate communication. The teacher sets up a situation that are likely to encounter in real life. The real-life simulations change from day to day. Students’ motivation to learn comes from their desire to communicate in meaningful ways about meaningful topics. Grammar Translation Method of studying a language that approach it first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of the knowledge to the task of translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language. It views language learning as memorizing rules and facts in order to understand and manipulate the morphology and syntax of the foreign language. Furthermore, grammar is taught deductively that is by presentation and study of grammar rules which are practiced through translation exercises. Communicative Learning Teaching

approach claims to focus on all of the components of communicative competence. Communication required certain functions such as promising, inviting and declining invitations within a social context. So, communicative competence is the goal of CLT.

THE GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD

The grammar translation method is a method that derived from the traditional method teaching of Ancient Greek and Latin. In Grammar Translation Methods, students learn grammatical rules and then apply them by translating sentences between the main language and the native language. The two main purposes of grammar translation methods are to be able to read and translate literature written in the source language and to further students' general intellectual development. It derived from the practice of teaching Latin. In early 16th century, students learned Latin for communication, but when the language died out, it was studied purely as an academic field. When teachers started teaching other foreign language in the 19th century, they used the same translation-based approach as had been used for teaching Latin. The overall concept of grammar translation has been criticized since few verifiable sources support the existence of such a method until the 19th century. Users of foreign language want to note things of their interest in the literature of foreign languages. Thus, the grammar translation method focuses on reading and writing and conducts the students' native language. Grammatical rules are learned deductively; students learn grammar rules by rote, and then practice the rules by doing grammar drills and translating sentences to and from of the sentences being translated than to their content. When the students reached advanced levels, they may translate the texts from the native language to foreign language. Tests often involve translating classical texts.

APPROACH OF GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD

In GTM, the application of grammar and correct sentence structure is emphasized. The target language permits them to discover interchangeable words and phrases more effectively rather than a verbal teaching method. Assessment on grammar rules and translations may not be quite difficult to set up. The emphasis on Class activities or learning games is not absolutely necessary, since the students can directly change their language to another language without much effort. The language teachers may not be generally proficient in English and they can train their students to learn English using Grammar Translation Method, owing to the fact that the essence is not just the skills but the grammar as well as translation to another language. The key features of the Grammar Translation Method are as follows:

- Much vocabulary is taught in the form of list of isolated words.
- The intricacies of grammar of explanation are given.
- Grammar rules are provided and instruction focused on the form and inflection of words.
- It begins with reading texts early.
- In grammatical analysis, the content of texts are explained as exercises.
- Only drills are exercised and translate the disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother tongue.

DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

The objective of Grammar Translation Method is to enable students to read foreign language. In this method, students are given the reading material and they need to analyze the grammatical structures. They also need to translate the meaning of the vocabulary word by word and get the meaning of sentences. Finally, the teacher asks the learners to practice structure and vocabulary and then completes some written exercises. The main objectives of the Grammar Translation Method are as follows:

- To enable the students to read, write, interpret, and translate the target language literature.
- To make the students aware of their native language structure and vocabulary.
- To improve the students' reading, writing, and translation skills through rote learning of vocabulary and grammatical rules of the target language.
- To enhance the students' general mental disciplines.

The Grammar Translation Method follows a Structural Syllabus since the primary focus to master the grammar rules and vocabulary of the target language.

The main principles of Grammar Translation Method are as follows:

1. Translation interprets the words and phrases of the foreign languages in the best possible manner.
2. The phraseology and idioms of the target language can best be assimilated in the process of interpretation.
3. The structures of the foreign language are best learnt when compared and contrasted with those of the mother tongue.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

In the Grammar Translation Method, the teacher is the sole authority in the classroom as he controls and determines everything such as the content, tasks, etc. Furthermore, the teacher also provides the students with correct answers/feedbacks when they make errors. The students are passive receiver of knowledge as they blindly follow whatever the teacher instructs them to do. The students are rarely allowed to start any interaction with the teacher. Whatever interaction occurs it is generally initiated by the teacher. The role of teaching/learning/instructional materials according to this method is to provide literary texts and encourage students to practice translation exercises. The texts also incorporate some vocabulary lists and grammar rules to memorize for the students and develop their reading, writing and translation skills rather than listening and speaking. The classroom procedure also includes a presentation of a grammatical rule, followed by a list of vocabulary and, finally, translation exercises from selected texts. Another activities and procedures of GTM are as follow:

- Testing the skills of students' reading comprehension from the text;
- identifying the words of antonyms and synonyms in the text;
- memorizing vocabulary selected from the reading texts;
- forming sentences with the new words;
- recognizing and memorizing cognates and false cognates;
- practicing fill-in-the-blank exercises;
- writing compositions from a given topic.

ADVANTAGES OF GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD

The target language explained quickly the phraseology. Translation helps students to deeply understand abstract meaning of foreign words and complex sentences structures. Systematic grammatical knowledge develops students' clear grammatical concepts, exact understanding of words and translation capacity. Extensive reading and recitation of original works cultivate students' reading and writing abilities. Teachers' labor is saved and Communication between the teacher and the learner does not cause linguistic problems. Learning gets easy as the conduction is done in the native language. Students feel comfortable as the mother tongue is used to teach any foreign language and they are free to ask the questions in between.

DISADVANTAGE OF GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD

It is an unnatural method. The formal order of learning a language is listening, speaking, reading and writing. That is how the child learns his mother tongue in natural surroundings. GTM starts with reading thus, the learning process is reversed. Speech is neglected. The Grammar Translation Method targets on reading and writing and neglects speech of the words. Thus, the students who learned English through this method fail to express themselves adequately in spoken English. Even the students at the undergraduate levels feel shyly to communicate through English. It has been observed that when English is taught through this method, learners listen to the mother tongue more than that of the second language. In this language learning involves students fail to acquire the habit of speaking English and exact translation is not possible. Actually, the nature of translation is a difficult task and exact translation from one language to another is not always possible. A language is the result of various customs, traditions, and modes of behavior of a speech community to community. There are several lexical items which have no synonyms in another language. It does not give a pattern to practice. Students can learn a language only when they internalize its patterns to the extent to form their habit. But the Grammar Translation Method attempts to teach language through rules and not by use. Researchers in linguistics have proved that it is not possible to speak any language entirely by rules. In fact, language learning means acquiring the certain skills that can be learnt through practicing and not by just memorizing rules. Low translation standards are caused by grammatical techniques which force the learners to deduce sentences from a multiplicity of rules and exceptions. Moreover, there is a little or no attention to pronunciation. This method neither approaches nor encourage the student's communicative competence.

THE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING METHOD

Communicative Language Teaching is an approach to the teaching of second and foreign languages that emphasizes the interaction of both the meaning and the goal of learning a language. It is also referred to as communicative approach to the teaching of foreign language or simply the communicative approach. Communicative Language Teaching marks the beginning of a major paradigm shift in language teaching in the twentieth century. The origin of CLT is to be found in the change in the British language teaching traditions dating from the late 1960s. This was a response to the criticisms of American linguist Noam Chomsky. British applied linguists saw the need to focus in language teaching in communicative proficiency rather than on mere structures. Language learning does not

take place in a vacuum, and therefore needs to be taught in real life contexts to be effective. Communicative Language Teaching adds the dimension of language functions such as apologizing, persuading, negotiating and conveying information that are vital for interaction with others. It enables learners to use language for communicative purposes in situations with others, and to be aware of the appropriate language to use according to levels of formality, tone, context, topic, and non-verbal behavior.

APPROACH OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

Communicative Approach to language teaching includes several distinct aspects. Two of them are mention here. These aspects mean that language teaching and learning become far more than a series of grammar lessons and vocabulary lists. For language teaching and learning to be truly communicative, it must not only be in context, but used to convey ideas, preferences, thoughts, feelings and information in a way that is addressed to reach others. Approach of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is as follows:

1. An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language. There is also an awareness of variation in language use rather than simply attention to the language.
2. The authentic texts are also included in the learning situation.
3. In learning, the provision of opportunities focuses not only on language but also on the Learning Management process. Communicative tasks are achieved through the language rather than simple exercises on the language.
4. The enhancement of the learners' own personal experiences is important in contributing the elements to classroom learning. There is an emphasis placed on students' initiatives, rather than simply on teacher-centered directions.

An attempt to link classroom language activities outside the classroom. These five features of CLT show that teachers are very interested in the needs and desires of their learners as well as the connection between the language that they taught in their class and the usage outside the classroom. Under this definition, any teaching practice helps students to develop their communicative competence in an authentic context and gives beneficial form of instruction. Thus, CLT often takes the form of pair and group work for negotiation and cooperation among learners in the classroom. Besides, fluency-based activities encourage learners to develop their confidence and their role-plays in which students can practice and develop language functions, as well as judicious use of grammar and pronunciation focused

activities. CLT enables students not only the abilities of reading, listening and speaking, but also communication.

DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

The objective of Communicative Language Teaching is to gain the communicative competence through the language learning. It claims that language teaching should emphasize on the expression meaning and purpose of language, and choose teaching contents according to the needs of students. First, teachers need to clarify why the learners are learning second language, what topics are they interested in and what role they want to play in some real situations. Next, it is necessary to know what vocabulary, language structures and functions learners need to know, in order to achieve their purposes. These structures and functions will form the basis of the syllabus. Objective – enable students to read foreign language. Asking them to practice structure, vocabulary and to complete some written exercises.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER AND THE STUDENT

Communicative Language Teaching is a learner centered method, in which teachers act as needs analyst and task designers, while students play a role of negotiator and the object of learning. Explaining the grammar rules and the vocabulary in the first language of the students. Ensuring that they can answer any grammar or vocabulary questions from the students. Pay careful attention to teacher's explanations and corrections, memorize rules and vocabulary lists and carefully do the practice tasks the teacher sets.

We must understand that in this approach, the main purpose is to learners begun to acquire a second language in a social context for them being able to understand and then produce the language. In this method, the learners and teacher have the next roles:

- **Learners:**

The learner is a negotiator between the self, the learning process and the object of learning. He becomes a negotiator between his own learning process between the interaction with his classmates and finally between the activities that are develop inside the classroom. In other words, the learner should contribute as much as he gains in the classroom, learning in an independent way. He also has to be cooperative in the process of learning.

- **Teachers:**

The teacher has two main roles:

1. *Facilitator*: he facilitates the communication process between all participants in the classroom and a guide between students, activities and the text being use.
2. He acts like an *independent participant* within the learning teaching group. He must get involve with his students has a learner as well as a guide.

Other secondary roles are:

- *Needs analyst*: the teacher must know the needs of his learning group and give response to this needs that can be found through informal conversations or other most formal ways like assessment.
- *Counselor*: In this role, the teacher is expected to exemplify an effective communicator seeking to maximize the engaging of speaker intention and hearer interpretation through feedback.
- *Group process manager*: is the teachers' responsibility to organize the classroom as a setting for communication and communicative activities. The teachers need to monitor the group activities to encourage the student and suppress the inclination to correct errors.

ADVANTAGES OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

Communicative Language Teaching is an emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language. The provision of opportunities for learners focuses not only on language but also on the learning management process. The communicative tasks are achieved through the language rather than simple exercises on the language. An enhancement of the students' own personal experiences important contributing elements to classroom learning. There is emphasis placed on students' initiatives, rather than simply on teacher-centered directions.

DISADVANTAGES OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method focuses on fluency but not on accuracy. The approach does not focus on error reduction but instead creates a situation where learners are left using their own devices to solve their communication problems. Moreover, there is no text and grammar rules are not presented. Thus, they may produce incoherent, grammatically incorrect sentences. CLT is difficult to be implemented in an EFL

classroom due to the lack of sources and equipment like authentic materials and native speaker teachers as well as large size of the classes. In addition, suitable classrooms are not available that can allow for group work activities and teaching aids and materials. So, the classroom arrangement is nonstandard thus students are expected to interact primarily with each other rather than with the teacher and the correction of errors may be absent or infrequent. It pays insufficient attention to the context in the place where teaching and learning take place.

The CLT approach is great for intermediate student and advanced students but for beginners, some control practice is needed. Students with low levels of proficiency in the target language may find it difficult to participate in oral communicative activities and when the examination is based on the grammar, communicative fluency may not be appropriate.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Nowadays, the Grammar Translation Method is a traditional method for foreign language learning. The target language is translated into the mother tongue. Grammar Translation Method focuses on reading and writing. CLT is a student-centered approach than any other methods. From both GTM and CLT teaching learning process, there are five elements that are very conflicting between these two methods. **The first one** is mother tongue that in GTM, the students are taught by using the mother tongue. It means that the teacher facilitates students in teaching learning process of target language uses the native language. Additionally, whatever the teachers teach and the students learn about the target language, they reflect the target language to their mother tongue and vice versa. In comparison, CLT actually uses the foreign language in teaching learning process and mother tongue is not allowed in teaching learning process to communicate each other.

The teacher facilitates the students to get the target language by using the target language as the tool of interaction and communication. **Secondly**, the vocabulary is memorized in GTM by translating it to the native language. This way is used to make the students know the relevant meaning and useful in the target language. In language learning, CLT method gives the instruction to the students to acquire the vocabulary of target language by not using the native language. Furthermore, the teacher instructs the students to acquire the vocabulary through real world contexts. One example is using real picture. **Thirdly**, GTM method highlights that the learners need to understand the grammatical rules before producing a sentence. In the other word, the students are taught the grammar deductively to produce a sentence systematically. Additionally, based on the observation on some teaching learning

process, it can be seen that the students are afraid to speak English in daily life because they do not often to use the language for communication. They have a hesitation on their pronunciation and may be on the dialect that they have in the native language gives an influence on their target language. This approach is very different with CLT since CLT method emphasizes the teacher teach grammar inductively or through retrospective approach. Furthermore, CLT encourages the students to communicate each other by using target language without focusing on grammatical rules. In so doing, they focus on the students' willingness to communicate with the target language. This way will make the students enjoy the lesson, and they do not hesitate and are not shy to produce the language. It is same with how they acquire the first language or mother tongue. But one of the problems is that they will get the error in grammar if the teacher is not able to teach grammar at the end of the lesson. **The next** is about the material. In GTM method there is no instruction using the authentic material. The authentic material is a systematic book from the teachers. In this case, the learners do not get familiar with the social language and when they are asked to use or realize their knowledge to the social or daily context, they do not have the capability to do it. But one of the positive things from this side is the bad thing from outside of the classroom does not enter to the students' mind. So, they are awaked from the bad attitude that the authentic material brings from outside of class. In comparison, the CLT Method usually uses the authentic material to make the students familiar and understand the real context of the subject given. Additionally, it is very beneficial for students because at the end of the learning process they will join with the social life and they need the real context to be one of the social member's lives. But in this side the teacher has to filter the material carefully so the inappropriate thing does not enter to the students' mind or attitude. **The last** but not least is the purpose of the study. In GTM method, the students are not encouraged to communicate in the target language but in CLT method, the students are emphasized to communicate each other for the daily and teaching learning activities. On the other hand, GTM method focuses the students to analyze the language rather than to use the language. In contrast, the CLT method forces the students to use the language rather than to analyze the language. Additionally, the goal of language learning process is to enhance the students' ability to communicate in the target language.

CONCLUSION

From the comparison above we could find out that all the two teaching methods have advantages and disadvantages. As the oldest way of teaching, Grammar Translation Method seems out of date gradually in many aspects. In modern ELT era, student-centered style is more favored by both teachers and learners. In this developing age, it is definitely necessary to learn English as an International language. Therefore, Communicative Language Teaching is becoming more attractive all over the world. With the development of learning teaching study, there must be more new theories about teaching methodology, and adopting a most suitable method in real teaching is the basic obligation of teachers.

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