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RESEARCH ARTICLE

COMPARISON BETWEEN GRAMMAR & TRANSLATION METHOD & COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) are the most common methods used for teaching a foreign language or second language. Both the methods have been revolutionary & far reaching throughout the history. The history of language teaching methods has seen many fluctuations at one point one particular method or approach has dominated with the passage of time it faded away Celce-Murcia, M. (Ed.) (1991). At present Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method claims to be one of the best available second language teaching methods since it make use of real life situations Council of Europe. (2001b). My present assignment not only discusses strengths, weaknesses & the characteristics of these two language teaching methods but also their historical background.

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INTRODUCTION

There has been a debate in defining the terms of approach, method, and technique. These are two perspectives one is of Edward M. Anthony's (1963) and the other is of Richards and Rodgers's (1982). Edward M. Anthony (1963), differentiated between a philosophy of language teaching, at the level of theory and principles, and a set of derived procedures for teaching a language, by proposing a model in his article "Approach, Method, and Technique" To him there is a hierarchical model organized in three levels: approach, method, and techniques. In the first level, which is the highest and the most abstract one, lies the approach, which is defined as the guiding assumptions of language and language teaching and learning; in the second level, lies the method, which is defined as a plan for teaching based on the guiding assumptions (approach); and, in the third level, the techniques, which are procedures to put the plan for teaching (method), based on the guiding assumptions (approach) into practice. Therefore, according to Anthony, teaching techniques are procedures to put into practice a teaching plan (method) which is based on guiding assumptions on language and language teaching and learning (approach).

Richards and Rodgers's (1982) in "Method, Approach, Design and Procedure" Proposed an analysis of Anthony's model. He claims that Anthony's model lacks a framework for a systematic description and comparison of methods. Thus they proposed a different model setting the concept of method as the overarching term under which lie the concepts of approach, design and procedure from Richards and Rodgers's (1982) perspective. I have used the word method for both the above mentioned approaches

The pattern of this assignment is at first I have discussed historical background then principles, characteristics strengths & weaknesses.

Material and Methods

2. The Grammar Translation Method

It is also called classical method because once it was used for teaching classical languages i.e. Latin & Greek Chastain (1988) cited in Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). The idea behind promulgation of this method was that the study of the grammar of target language would familiarize with the grammar of their native language.

Austin J Damiani (2003) in his paper "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 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."

This method has remained popular in language pedagogy even after the arrival of new methods. Even today this method is practiced in many countries. (Eugene McKendry)

2.1 Characteristics of GTM:

Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000) in his book titled "Techniques & principles in Language Teaching" discussed the following principles:

The purpose of this method is to read literature of foreign language hence literary language is superior.

The second goal is to translate target language into native language.

Importance is given to reading & writing on the other hand speaking & listening is neglected.

The role of teacher is authoritarian.

The students are passive in the classroom.

Grammar is taught deductively.

Learners memorize native language equivalents for target language vocabulary words.

The interaction in the classroom is from teacher to students.

Vocabulary & grammar is focused.

Prator and Celce-Murcia (1991), listed the following major characteristics of Grammar-Translation Method:

Target language is used meagrely & classes are taught in the mother tongue.

Vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words.

Long & difficult explanations of the intricacies of grammar are provided

Classical texts are used for reading.

The context of texts is almost neglected.

Drills are exercises in translating disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother tongue.

Pronunciation is not given importance.

Source : Celce-Murcia, M. (Ed.) (1991). Teaching English as second or foreign language. Boston: Newbury House

Jack C. Richards & Theodore S. Rodgers in their famous book "Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching" (2006) discussed the following main principles of GTM:

Translation interprets the words and phrases of the foreign languages in the best possible manner.

The phraseology and idioms of the target language can best be assimilated in the process of interpretation.

The structures of the foreign language are best learnt when compared and contrasted with those of the mother tongue.

2.2 Pros & Cons of the Grammar-Translation Method:

The Advantages of the Grammar-Translation Method:

The biggest advantage of this method is understanding of the phraseology (expressions & phrases) i.e. abstract words, idioms, phrases, metaphors, similes etc. since translation is possible in this method. Hence students can have better understanding of complicated concepts.

This could be one of the reasons that this method is still prevalent & practiced in some parts of world. The language of student & teacher does not hamper communication gap. Since students are taught in their mother tongue, they can comprehend well. This method is useful from this aspect that students are taught grammatical rules deductively.

Consequently, student's comprehension & ability to write correct sentences improves. Students are taught books in their mother tongue they may have a better command than other students. Close reading of literary texts fosters reading & writing abilities. This method requires few specialized skills on the part of teachers so any one can teach.

2.3 Disadvantages of Grammar Translation Method:

Students do not participate actively in the classroom.

Communication is not much focused.

Very little attention is paid to content.

The focus is made on translation which is sometimes misleading.

Brown H.D. (1994), in his *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*, states "It does virtually nothing to enhance a student's communicative ability in the language.

2.4 Historical Background

Celce-Murcia, M. (2001) believes language teaching in second language have undergone many changes. According to Howatt, Anthony P. R., and H. G. Widdowson (1984). This method began in Germany or Prussia at the end of 18th century Reached reached to impregnable status (ibid). Prior to this Latin & Greek had the status of lingua franca Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). Furthermore education was imparted in these languages. With the passage of time it rose to prominence & by the Mid-Nineteenth century German scholars such as Karl Plötz and Johann Seidenstücker supported this method Howatt, Anthony P. R., and H. G. Widdowson (1984). It remained dominant from 1840s to the 1940s (ibid).

This method is not abolished fully yet critics believe that the teaching of this method is carried out until today in many parts of world Escher (1928). In the final decades of the nineteenth century this method was attacked & criticized a lot & not considered suitable for foreign language teaching. Celce-Murcia, M. (2001)

2.5 Criticism

This method is criticized on various grounds Marks, (2008) cited in Brno (2009) discussed spoken language is more important than reading & writing. This method lacks these skills. Secondly it has graded grammatical syllabus thus students cannot acquire language straightway. Memorization & translation is highly objectionable. Learner & speakers use mother tongue mostly which is detrimental for language learning.

3 The Communicative Language Teaching Method

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is one of the new approaches. The aim of this approach is to develop learners' four basic language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) in English. Hossen, M. T. (2008). This approach claims to focus on all of the components of communicative competence, because the language is seen as a means of communication. Communication required certain functions such as promising, inviting & declining invitations within a social context Wilkins (1976). Knowing when & how to say what to whom. such observations brought Communicative Approach. Widdowson (1990). communicative competence is the goal of Communicative Language Teaching.

3.1 CLT Defined:

Linguists and educationists have defined CLT differently. Some of the common definitions are:

William Littlewood (1981), Communicative Language Teaching means systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combining these into a more fully communicative view

According to Richards & Rodgers, 2001 Communicative Language Teaching is best considered an approach rather than a method. It refers to a diverse set of principles that reflect a communicative view of language and language learning and that can be used to support a wide variety of classroom procedures.

According to Wikipedia, encyclopedia, "Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach to the teaching of second and foreign languages that emphasizes communication or interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language".

3.2 Historical Overview of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):

In the late 1970's educationists observed that students could produce sentences accurately but could not use them appropriately Widdowson (1978). During the 1980s and 1990s approaches emerged which concentrated on the fundamentally communicative functions of language and language classrooms were characterized by attempts to ensure authenticity of materials and pragmatic, meaningful tasks. In fact CLT came into existence, as a result of dissatisfaction with the Grammar Translation and Audio-lingual Methods, Hossen, M. T. (2008).

Communicative competence was a concept introduced by Dell Hymes (1966) which was redefined by many authors. Hymes original idea was that speakers of a language have to have more than grammatical competence in order to communicate effectively in a language. Michael Halliday has also made contributions in the development of CLT. Celce-Murcia, M. (1991).

3.3 Characteristics:

There are a lot of interpretations of CLT, but the following interconnected characteristics are given by Brown (2001: 43) provide a useful overview:

The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide

Students are provided opportunities to focus on their own learning process through an understanding of their own styles of learning .

Students use language productively and receptively, in a communicative class.

Fluency and accuracy are mandatory for communicative class.

Learners are engaged in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes rather than aspects of language .

Classroom goals are given importance .

Brown (2001)

One of the most important characteristics put forward by David Nunan (1991) in his famous book titled "Language teaching methodology". These five attributes are:

In this approach an emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.

Authentic texts are introduced in the class.

The focus was not only on language but on the learning management process.

Emphasis is placed on students' initiatives, rather than simply on teacher-centered directions.

3.5 Classroom activities used in CLT :

Role play

Interviews

Information gap

Games

Language exchange

Surveys

Pair work

Learning by teaching

4 Conclusion:

The Grammar & Translation Method has now become obsolete to some extent. It was originally meant for teaching dead languages. It ruled Europe in the 19th century. With the arrival of new method every time the previous method is forgotten. On the other hand,

The goal of communicative Language Teaching is to achieve communicative competence through the activities of authentic learning. Learners are involved in real life communicative problems. The best thing is in the entire process students negotiate with each other. It concludes that this approach is more effective than the Grammar & Translation Method.

A total of 18 post-partum anoestrus buffaloes belonging to villages around the college of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry, Mhow were selected for the study. These buffaloes were per rectally explored twice, ten days apart to confirm ovarian activity and genital status and were divided into 3 equal groups.

Water is absolutely essential for life, it is undoubtedly the most precious natural resource on our planet (Igbinosa et al., 2012). The quality of water available and accessibility to a community has great impact on their living standard and wellbeing; those global and local efforts are widespread at ensuring adequate provision of clean and safe water to the growing population (DWAF, 2003). It is in the quest to supply Zaria community with potable water that the Galma dam was constructed.

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