
TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN PAKISTAN AT SECONDARY LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this paper is to compare the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and Direct Method (DM) and to determine which method is most effective for teaching English language at secondary level. For this purpose, we took 35 secondary schools of District Khanewal and randomly selected 200 English teachers as a sample of this study. We collected data from sampling population through a structured questionnaire. Our results show that mostly teachers use GTM method during teaching of English language due its convenience and time saving. It is useful for large classes and meet the demand of examination. In contrast, Direct Method is difficult to use because it needs trained and skilled teachers. However, it develops fluency and improve pronunciation. However, we conclude that no single method of teaching English as a foreign language could guarantee to achieve hundred percent results.

Key Words: - English as a second language, Grammar Translation Method, Direct Method.

1.INTRODUCTION

At secondary level teaching English to the student is a controversial issue because at this level dropout rate of the student is very high due to poor knowledge of this language and lack of understanding capabilities. This issue is not only a matter of concern for the academicians but also for the policy makers and politicians as well. Although English is an international language and is

an effective means of acquiring knowledge of different discipline and research going on around the world, yet it is one of the main hindrance for those who could not understand it and lack of command over it. In Pakistan, the number of English language students is increasing rapidly day after day. A large number of institutions are providing facilities in teaching and learning English as a second foreign language at all levels. Many newspapers are being published in this Language and about all media channels are broadcasting English news daily [1]. Teachers used different methods such as Grammar Translation Method, Direct Method, and Pictorial Method to convey their ideas or transfer knowledge to the students at school and college levels. These methods play very important role in direct and indirect communication. [2]. However, learning English as a foreign language increase the failure rate of the students and it is one of the main causes of high dropout ratio at Middle, Matric, Intermediate and Graduation level in Pakistan Many students left their education on account of not. understanding English language [3].

1.1 Main Research Question

Our main research question/problem is as under:

“Teaching English as a second language in Pakistan at Secondary Level: A case study of District Khanewal-Pakistan.”

1.2 Principles of Grammar Translation method

Grammar translation method is not new one. This method was known as traditional method in the teaching of classical languages. Initially it was used for helping students in teaching literature. The study of the grammar of English language was assumed helpful for students in learning the grammar of the native language [4]. Teachers mainly focus on reading a text from English language to explain grammar rules and vocabulary. Moreover, it is believed that teaching a foreign language helps the students in developing their minds. It also generates creativity. In GTM, total authority in the classroom is in the hands of teacher. The students follow the instruction of the teacher. Teacher plays an active role in this method. In this method teacher enables the students to translate the target language into their mother tongue. Students are taught vocabulary and grammar rules with the help of examples and asked them to memorize specific sentences or phrases. The students memorize foreign language words to learn vocabulary.

1.2.1 Advantages of GTM

Advantages of the grammar translation method are stated as under: -

The student learns his mother tongue in his early years from his parents and teachers. However, learning a foreign language is a difficult process. It can only be learned through formal education. Teacher used grammar translation method to convey the meaning of words, sentences and phrases as well as explain ideas. It is an easy method for teaching English as a foreign language. In this method, the student learns from known to unknown. This method helps in vocabulary building. Different and lengthy explanations are avoided to enable students to memorize words and sentences to build vocabulary.

1.2.2 Disadvantages of GTM

GTM is an unnatural method of teaching. In this method, teacher starts teaching with the reading of the text while naturally a child acquire language by listening. All children learn their native languages first by listening and then they speak, read and write later. While in GTM reading comes first and then listening is carries out. Therefore, it is an unnatural way of teaching a second language. This method totally ignores speaking skill. No attention is paid to improve the skill of the students. Teachers mostly focus on reading and writing. They mostly communicate their ideas in native language. They used native texts, sentences, words and symbols to explain specific English words, ideas, idioms and phrases [5].

1.3 The Direct Method

GTM dominated for a long time in teaching of English discipline but some scholars strongly challenge its validity. A formal movement was launched in the end of 19th century. The scholars criticized it for its ineffectiveness in teaching. It was substituted by practical method known as the “Direct Method.” From 1882 to onwards there had been a spate of publications on the subject. Beginning with pamphlets and articles, the new consciousness developed into writing substantial works [6]. Professional associations and civic societies were set up to promote the new ideas notably the international phonetic association (IPA), an association of French teachers constituted in 1886. The IPA developed and popularized the principles of Direct Method. [7].

1.3.1 Principles of Direct Method

The basic principles of DM are given as under;

In Direct Method, teachers want that the students must learn to communicate in the foreign language and they have command over it. They try to build their speaking power. They desire that the students should not passive. Both teachers and students should play active role in teaching-learning process. They should communicate with each other in English language. Similarly, the

students should communicate with one another in this language so that they may be able speak English language just like their mother tongues. More emphasize is given speaking and listening while less attention is paid on reading and writing. Students also study the geography of the area where language is spoken. Circumstances and history of the speakers is also studied and knowledge about the speakers who speak the language. The focus is on vocabulary building rather than having command over grammar. In the beginning all four skills are focused, yet more focus is on oral work. Reading and writing occur on the base of speaking skill. Speaking skill is emphasized.

Both Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method are important to teach English. To make teaching English more effective teachers use both methods according to the situation and knowledge level of the students.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The first teaching method prevalent in the 19th century was the GTM. Teachers commonly used GTM during teaching. The teachers translated the sentences in the lessons and instructed the students to write their own sentences with the help of grammar. It means that students become able to write complete sentences. In the GTM method, the written form is considered most important aspect of teaching methodology. After this method, a number of other methods were introduced later. Direct Method was one of them. [8]. In direct method a teacher must be creative and must inspire the students also; the teaching must be effective and give a good output [9]. Direct method was later revised, leading to the development of another method named audio-lingual method that emphasized on pronunciation, pattern drills and conversation with no use of grammar and translation [10]. In this method, the students are encouraged to repeat a word they listen or to act as they are instructed through a movie or video. The students are taught to perform a situation they learn by audio-lingual devices. This approach is similar to the direct method of teaching but it is the most complicated methodology of teaching because the students will always try to understand and get the acquisition [11]. Some years after, another method known as “communicative approach’ was developed. In this approach, the students are allowed to communicate with one another and talk about different aspects of their lives for the purposes generating creativity so that they may be able create something without the help of others. The communication approach is the most perfect and precious method for learning a foreign language. When the students talk with one another and discuss different issues they will try to speak fluently and have no problem in

expression of their ideas [12]. The direct method avoids the use of mother tongue in order to learn the target or second language from the very beginning. Therefore, translation does not take place. The method teaching by rules is termed as GTM and the method teaching by oral activity is termed as direct method. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, GTM was dominated teaching foreign language in Europe and other countries. Some researchers referred it to as grammar method or grammatical method. The grammar translation method was originally the tool of teaching classical languages especially Latin. Since these languages did not serve as medium of oral communication the aims of teaching then were to provide students with the ability to read and understand literary works and to train their intellectual power rather than to develop communicative skills. [13] The GTM, however, devoid of a strong theoretical basis. It mostly relies on this assumption that the objectives can be achieved through a deductive teaching process in which the learning rules was followed by their logical application in translation exercises. [14] In view of the objectives of the classical language program and of the broader objectives of educating students and developing intellectualism among them, the GTM was perhaps not appropriate. When modern languages become more common in school, curriculum of the GTM is not only used in the communication of different aspects of language but also to explain themes of modern poetry [15].

2.1 Distinction of the study

The present study is distinguished because no researcher has so far carries out research to compare the above two teaching methods. Another important feature of this study is that it is conducted in District Khanewal, which is a backward area of Pakistan. About 70 percent of schools included into this study belong to rural areas of this District. The objective of this study was to investigate what teaching methods are being used in these schools in teaching English Language and what types of problems are being faced by the students and teachers in the study of this foreign language. Furthermore, Primary data has been used in this empirical research. It is hoped that this study will give practical insight to policy makers to make decision which method of teaching is more effective and in which areas one of these method should be applied.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

Several research studies are conducted and completed year after year but in most cases very little attention is paid to very important area relating to research, and that area or dimension is namely

as research methodology. The consequences of this ignorance are in the form of endless word spinning and quotations. Thus, it is very necessary for those who are concerned with research to design and adhere suitable and appropriate methodology for improving the quality of research. The methodology differs from problem to problem, yet the basic approach towards research remains the same

3.2 Sample of the Study

Our study sample consists of secondary school teachers. We selected 35 secondary schools from the list taken from District Education Officer’s Office Khanewal for data collection. The total sample comprised of 200 teachers, who were the 40% of the total population. We took sample randomly.

3.3 Data Collection

As the research was descriptive in nature, we used survey method for collection of data. For this purpose, a questionnaire containing 20 questions was constructed. All questions were close-end and based on two-point rating scale to analyze the measure the attitude of teachers regarding teaching methods. The author personally visited different schools and distributed questionnaires among the teachers. The ratio of returning questionnaire was 100%. All questionnaire was found accurate so we include them into the analysis.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is an ongoing activity, which not only gives answers of questions but also helps in decision-making. In order to analyze data, we first arranged it in tabular form. Then we started analysis step by step. Now we show the results of our study in the tables.

Table 1: Knowledge about various language teaching methods

Statement	Response	F	%
Knowledge about various teaching methods.	Agree	200	100%
	Disagree	0	0%

In table 1, data shows all teachers have knowledge about the teaching methods.

Table 2: Improvement of pronunciation of the students.

Statement	Response	F	%
Direct method of teaching English improves pronunciation of the students.	Agree	178	89%
	Disagree	22	11%

The data given in Table 2 shows that 89 percent teachers agree that direct teaching method improve pronunciation of English words among the students while 11 percent disagree.

Table 3: DM develops fluency in speaking English language

Statement	Response	F	%
DM develops fluency in speaking English language.	Agree	180	90%
	Disagree	20	10%

Table 3 data shows that 90 percent teachers agree that direct method develops fluency in speaking English language.

Table 4: Abstract ideas can be taught through GTM.

Statement	Response	F	%	
GTM is commonly used Method at secondary level in Pakistan	Agree	172	86%	
	Disagree	28	14%	

Table 4 shows that 80 percent teachers agree that GTM is commonly used at secondary school level.

Table 5 Teaching of abstract ideas through GTM

	Statement Response	F	%
Abstract ideas can be taught through GTM.	Yes	164	82%
	No	36	18%

Table 6: Students remain active in direct method

Statement	Response	F	%
Students remain active in direct method	Yes	186	92%
	No	14	8%

This table 6 describes that 92% Of the teachers were agreeing that the students are active while using direct method while 8 percent were disagreeing.

Table 7: GTM develops the habit of cramming without understanding.

Statement	Response	F	%
GTM develops the habit of cramming without understanding	Yes	98	49%
	No	102	51%

Table 7 shows that 49% of the teachers were agree while 51% of the teachers were disagreed.

Table 8: Explaining concepts to the Students by using DM

Statement	Response	F	%
All concepts easily be explained to the students by using DM	Yes	90	45%
	No	110	55%

The table 8 shows that 45% of the teachers are not in favour of the statement.

Table 9: GTM is easy to use

Statement	Response	F	%	
GTM is easy to use	Agree	164	82%	
	Disagree	36	18%	

The data shows that 82 percent teachers are agreed that GTM is easy to use for communicating the real means of words.

Table 10: DM develops spoken fluency

Statement	Response	F	%	
DM develops spoken fluency	Agree	190	95%	
	Disagree	10	5%	

This table shows that 95% of the teachers responded in yes while 5% of the teachers did not favour the statement.

Table 11: Accuracy is emphasized in GTM

Statement	Response	F	%	
Accuracy is emphasized in GTM	Agree	132	66%	
	Disagree	68	34%	

Table 10 describes that 66% of the teachers responded that grammar translation method emphasizes accuracy.

Table 12: GTM facilitates correct writing in English

Statement	Response	F	%	
GTM facilitates correct writing in English	Agree	158	79%	
	Disagree	42	21%	

Table 12 tells us that 79% of the teachers were agree that GTM facilitates correct writing while 21% of the teachers were disagreed.

Table 13: Do our social environment Support to GTM

Statement	Response	F	%
Our social environment is supportive for GTM	Agree	185	86%
	Disagree	15	14%

Table 13 showed that majority of the teachers were agree that our social environment support to GTM.

Table 14: GTM is suitable for large classes

Statement	Response	F	%
GTM is suitable for large classes	Agree	162	81%
	Disagree	38	19%

Table 14 showed majority of the teachers were in favour of that GTM is suitable for large classes than any other method particularly DM.

Table 15: Trained teachers are available to use Direct Method.

Statement	Response	F	%
Trained teachers are available to use direct method.	Agree	96	48%
	Disagree	104	52%

Table 15 describes that that 48% of the teachers were in favour of the statement. On the other hand, 52% of the teachers showed disagreement with statement.

Table 16: Direct method of teaching English improves comprehension of the students

Statement	Response	F	%
Direct method of teaching English improves comprehension of the students	Agree	102	51%
	Disagree	98	49%

Table 16 shows that 51 percent teachers are agreed that direct method improves comprehension of the students while 49 percent are disagreed.

Table 17 Grammar translation method is Time saving

Statement	Response	F	%	
Grammar translation method is time saving	Agree	76	88%	
	Disagree	24	12%	

Table 17 describes that 88% of the teachers are agreed that Grammar Translation method is time saving while 12 percent were disagreed with this contention.

Table 18: Direct method makes teaching English easy and interesting.

Statement	Response	F	%	
Direct method makes teaching English easy and interesting.	Agree	102	51%	
	Disagree	98	49%	

The data in the table 18 shows that 51 percent of respondents agreed that direct method is easy to teach English, communicate real meaning of words, and sentences while 49 percent of the respondents showed disagreement. Here is slight disagreement between two groups of respondents.

Table 19: A student learns second language in less time by using direct method

Statement	Response	F	%	
A student learns second language in less time by using direct method	Agree	74	37%	
	Disagree	126	63%	

Table 19 shows that 37% of the teachers were agreed that direct method is time saving while 63 percent of teachers were disagreed.

5. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

We carried out a comparative study of GTM and direct method (DM) in teaching English as a foreign language at secondary level to find out which of these two methods is comparatively suitable and effective in learning-teaching process of English language in Pakistan. For this purpose, we studied GTM, DM, and their effectiveness. Merits and demerits as well as principals

of these two methods were discussed. We have also studied previous different research studies in order to know other authors used these methods. GTM is an old and traditional method, which is being used since the time of Erasmus. In this method, foreign or second language, which is being taught, is translated into native language to understand the linguistic patterns of foreign language (English).

The linguistics facts of foreign language are explained in the native language. This method of teaching is suitable for large classes and the teachers are mostly used it. This method is convenient than any other methods especially direct method. On the other hand, direct method emphasizes on oral work. Native language is not used during teaching of direct method. Teachers mainly focus is on listening and oral practices. Grammar is used per requirement of the situation, not as a part of this method.

In Pakistan, teaching English as a foreign language is much more difficult for the teachers because here learners first learn Urdu. Urdu is taught in schools. Most of the Pakistani students have Punjabi, Saraiki, Balochi, Pushto, Sindhi as their first or mother tongues and they are well-versed in their use. They have to learn Urdu and English as a second language. Whatever the situation and circumstances would be Pakistani students have to learn English as a second language at secondary level in Pakistan because it is a compulsory subject.

We developed a questionnaire to find out the results about the teaching methods. The questionnaire was comprised of 19 questions in which one question was general question about the knowledge of the teaching methods. On the other hand, rest of the 18 questions were related to specific about teaching methods. It is interesting to mention here that during the survey it was noted that most of the teachers do not have specific knowledge of GTM and DM but they are using them unconsciously. Majority of respondents were agreed that direct method (DM) improves pronunciation and fluency of English. The students were also found active while using direct method. It was also noted during the study that teachers having command over direct methods are not available in required number. As this method is easy, most of teachers is used it during teaching of English language.

The empirical evidence shows that abstract ideas can be conveyed easily in GTM vis-à-vis DM. Similarly, GTM is easy to use and time saving method of teaching English. The evidence also shows that GTM also match with our examination system as well as for large classes. Our social

environment also supports to GTM because most of the people are not need to speak English but they have to understand and interpret it in real sense.

6. CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, we conclude that Grammar Translation Method (GTM) is more suitable keeping in view our existing social environment although it is traditional. But it is convenient and time saving. In contrast, Direct Method (DM) is difficult; its use requires specific skill, which can be developed through formal training, and teaching experience. As trained teachers in English language are not available in required number, therefore, it is convenient to apply GTM to transfer knowledge to the students. Furthermore, GTM focuses on building writing skill because the students will have to undergo all written examination in English language. If they are poor in writing English, they could not good grade in the examination even if they have good communication skill or speaking power. Similarly, after completing education, the students will have to use English language in all official communication because English is an official language in Pakistan. Thus, GTM is more important than DM.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Language skill development programs should be launched to upgrade the knowledge and skill of teachers about different teaching methods.
- Teaching methods should be used according to the student's needs and social context.
- Additional syllabus should be included into curriculum for teaching English at secondary level regardless of the demand of our examination system.
- Teachers should be trained so that they may be able to teach the students according to current market demand and needs of higher education.

8.LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

This study is specific because it is conducted in specific area of District Khanewal and its sample size is 200. However, its results can be generalized and author can take benefit of it by expanding its sample size and taking into account the need of their areas.

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