

**APPLYING THE GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD AND
COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH IN TEACHING ENGLISH GRAMMAR**

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Abstract

The Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and Communicative Approach have been widely used approaches in grammar teaching for many years. Which approach is better to apply in teaching foreign grammar - Grammar Translation Method or Communicative Approach? Firstly, this paper aims to explore the history of two approaches and describe the meanings of both of them. Secondly, the paper looks briefly to find out which one is more suitable for teaching by analyzing the results of an experiment that was held in a secondary school.

For the experiment, two classes were selected and taught "Present Simple and Present Continuous" using the Grammar Translation Method and Communicative Approach, respectively. The grammar proficiency of the two classes was the same according to pre-test results taken before the experiment, and there was no difference between them. However, the post-test results showed that the class that applied the Grammar Translation Method made a significant rise in grammatical competence compared to the other group that applied the Communicative Approach. The results evidenced that the Grammar Translation Method is better than the Communicative Approach in grammar teaching.

Keywords: Grammar Translation Method, Communicative Approach, grammar teaching, approach, pre-test, post-test.

Introduction

1.1 The history of the Grammar Translation Method and the Communicative Approach

It is known that "grammar is a set of rules that define how words are combined to change to form acceptable units of meaning within a language" (Penny Ralph, 2000). It serves as the key that enables effective communication, evidences clarity, accuracy, and coherence in both spoken and written forms. For these reasons mentioned above, it is crucial and, at the same time, hard work for teachers to teach the grammar of target language. To achieve the aim, teachers use several methods, two of which are being discussed: the GTM (Grammar Translation Method) and the Communicative Approach.

The Grammar Translation Method is not new. It has had different names, but it has been used by language teachers for many years. At one time, it was called the Classical Method since it was first used in the teaching of the classical languages, Latin and Greek. Earlier in the 20th century, this method was used for the purpose of helping students to read and appreciate foreign language literature (Chastain Kenneth, 1988). In contrast to the Grammar Translation Method is the modern Communicative Approach. This approach originated in Europe in the 1960s, and

began spreading to other countries in the 1970s. “ The Communicative Language Teaching stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use English for communicative purposes and attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching” (Howatt,1984). From this time, this type of method has been widely used to teach L2, which aims to teach and learning only for communication and real-life interaction, focusing more on listening and speaking that develops the fluency of learners.

1.2 Importance of the paper

Teaching students the grammar of the target language to develop their L2 proficiency has always been a central discussion for educators. In my country, Uzbekistan, only the Grammar Translation method has been applied in educational institutes. In recent years, scholars in my country begun taking into account students’ communicative competence, because Grammar Translation Method solely focuses on reading and writing skills of language learners that resulted passive use of target language in real-life situations at the end of the day. As the Audio-Lingual, Direct Method and Communicative Language Teaching Approach came to the field of methodology, scholars in Uzbekistan searched for more student-centered methods to improve student engagement in lessons and their communicative competence, which the communicative Approach would help with. For the above reasons, this paper aims to determine which approach (GTM or CLT) is more suitable for EFL classes.

Methodology

Steps in the experiment

The first step aims to select students according to their abilities, and whether they can make significant progress in grammar learning after lessons. The second part is to identify a particular grammar topic to teach whether the topic is appropriate for the English proficiency of students. At the final process it is important to organize a fair and valuable assessment system to make statistics correct and to see the real distinction among students’ grammar progress.

1.2 Pre-test

In order to identify what pupils know about “Present Simple and Present Continuous” and to see their overall English proficiency before the experiment. The test includes 10 multiple-choice questions on a targeted grammar topic, that each question is 1 point.

Present simple or present continuous?

1. Maria _____ (work) for a TV station.
2. At the moment she _____ (travel) in the Sahara Desert.
3. Dan _____ (love) wild animals.
4. He _____ (not visit) Alaska at the moment.
5. Marta _____ (not live) in Africa.
6. She _____ (stay) in Africa at the moment.
7. Dad usually _____ (cook) dinner.
8. My parents _____ (go) to Italy every year.
9. My sister _____ (walk) to school every day.
10. We _____ (have) lunch now.

1.3 Post-test

Post-test is used to examine pupils' grammatical competence after the experiment. The post-test consists of two parts, the former being gap gap-filling activity, the second being multiple-choice questions. The test includes 20 questions and pupils should earn 20 points in total. Filling the gap activity follows the method being used.

Present Simple or Present Continuous

Complete the sentences using Present Simple or Present Continuous:

Every day, she _____ (walk) to school.

Right now, he _____ (read) a book.

They always _____ (play) soccer on Saturdays.

Look! The cat _____ (climb) the tree.

We _____ (go) to the park every Sunday.

At the moment, I _____ (write) a letter to my friend.

My brother _____ (eat) breakfast every morning.

She _____ (watch) TV at this moment.

He usually _____ (do) his homework after school.

They _____ (swim) in the pool right now.

1.4 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was conducted with the advice of English department after the experiment to know the attitude, reactions, and individual opinions about the experiment, methods, materials, and techniques applied during lessons. The questionnaire was spoken-based instead of a special written format that pupils freely answered questions like;

What do you think about the conducted lessons?

Which part of the lesson do you like?

Is it appropriate the applied method appropriate for you?

1.5 Specialized Materials

According to the methods, each group use different kinds of materials. For example, the group that applies the Grammar Translation Method uses literature texts to translate, handouts, and a board to write grammar rules. In contrast, the second group, which applies the Communicative Approach, uses authentic materials, MPs, screens, visual and contextual materials, cards, and language apps (Duolingo).

Results

From the results of the materials above, the major findings of the experiment could be summarized as;

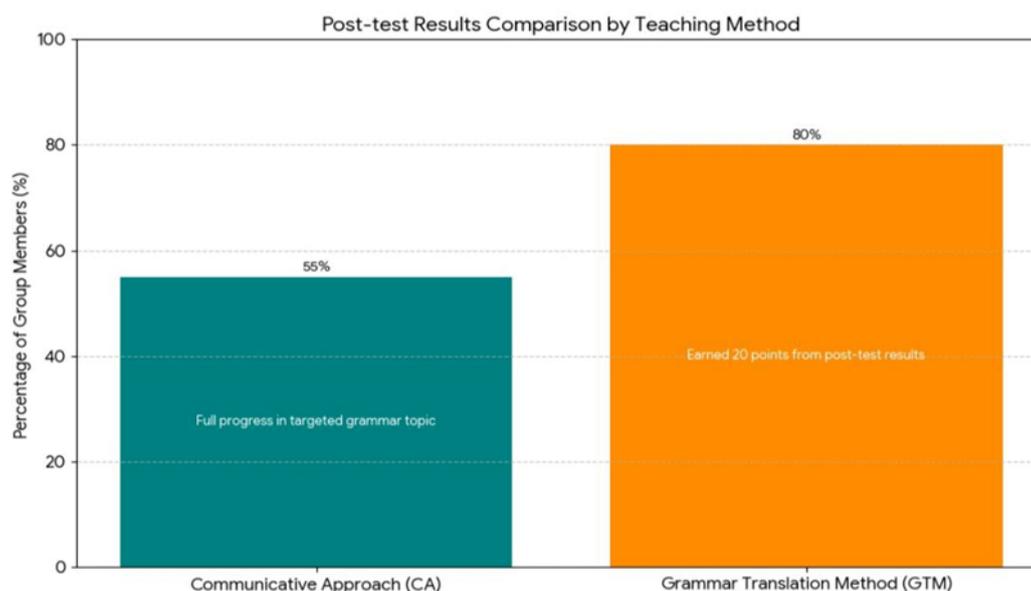
Learners under the experiment made significant progress in their grammar competence with the help of the methods.

After the experiment, the learners who applied the grammar translation method earned higher points compared to another group of learners.

The Grammar Translation Method is more effective compared to the Communicative Approach.

After the questionnaire was held and all raw data were collected, the statistics were made with the help of the English Department of the school by checking the tests and handouts, and recording the answers to identify the proportion of beneficial results. Actually, post-test results examined whether pupils made any significant progress from lessons conducted, and the questionnaire played an important role in examining results by answering the questions about whether pupils welcomed the method used during lessons.

The results showed that both groups made noticeable progress in their English proficiency. According to pre-test results, 45% members of the two groups answered correctly to 6/10 questions, and only 10% members gave full correct answers to 10/10 questions. After the experiment, 55% group members of the Communicative Approach made a full progress in the targeted grammar topic. In contrast, the results for members of the group of Grammar Translation Method made a considerable distinction as compared to the Communicative Approach results, with illustration, 80% of pupils in this group earned 20 points from post-test results.



Results and Conclusion

As Penny says, without grammar, words hang together without any meaning or sense. To be able to speak clearly and understand a particular language, people should be familiar with the grammar structure of the particular language. To achieve this, teachers come to help, and when teachers teach grammar to students and language learners, they not only teach the grammar but also train students to express themselves in that target language and fulfill their expectations the learnt language gives. No matter in which way students are taught grammar, they should use the language not only in written form but also in spoken form, which this paper discusses. According to findings, the Grammar Translation Method is more suitable when it comes to the accuracy of students when they use grammar. However Communicative Approach makes a

considerable improvement in the fluency of students as this approach is mostly speaking-based. All in all, because accuracy and fluency are the main targets of Foreign Language, the best way to improve the general capacity of students in target language is combining the two approaches in classrooms to achieve higher results.

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