

**“Analysis of Teaching and Learning of English Language through Grammar Translation Method – Causes of Low Performance – A Field Study”**

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Grammar Translation method focuses on learning the rules of grammar and their application in translation, vocabulary is learned through direct translation from the native language and is taught in the isolated word lists. Target language is used scarcely. Similarly readings are translated directly, discussed in the native language and applied in the production of sentences through translation from one language to the other. Little or no attention is paid to the pronunciation.

Language learning at the primary stage is crucial to not only meaningful learning in all subject areas but also to the learner’s emotional, intellectual, cognitive and social development. A child with poor language background remains a poor learner and poor performer in all areas unless specially helped in language skills. Teaching and Learning of English language as a second language has become a major concern in the present time. Teaching English as a foreign language refers to teaching English to those students whose first language is not English. It is being taught from Class 1 in most of the states and Union territories on the demand of the parents who realize that the knowledge of this language will increase employment opportunities at the national and international level and is learnt in a region where English is not the dominant language

Martin Luther was opposed to the use of excessive drills on rules for producing sentences. Instead of memorizing rules for the production of sentences, he asked for the actual production of sentences themselves as appropriate exercise to learn a language.

“English” is a term that can refer to various dialects, including British, American and many others. Obviously, those studying English in order to fit into their new country will learn the variety spoken there. However, for those who do not intend to change countries, the question arises of which sort of English to learn. Even for children studying at home, the choice may be made for them in that private language schools or the state school system may only offer one model. The children studying in India are more likely to learn British English with a number of problems such as:

1 The difficulties that learners face in the study of English are a consequence of the degree to which their native language differs from English. Language learners often produce errors of syntax and pronunciation as a result from the influence of their L1, such as mapping its grammatical patterns inappropriately onto the L2, pronouncing certain sounds incorrectly, and confusing items of vocabulary. This is known as L1 transfer or “language interference” These transfer effects are stronger for beginners.

2 English languages do not have more individual consonant sounds than most languages. In English 24 consonant sounds have their distinct phonemic sounds. The inter dentals, /t/ and /d/ sounds written with ‘th’ are common in English as (three, thin, thing, through; and this, that, the, there) are relatively rare in other languages. The distinction between /b/,/v/and/w/causes problems for learners of English language in Punjab as there is no distinct corresponding sound of the phoneme/w/ in

regional language. Similarly vowel sounds in Received Pronunciation has twelve monophthongs (pure or single vowel sounds), eight diphthongs (double sounds) and two triphthongs (triple vowels).

3. The syllable structure causes problems for many learners. English allows for a cluster of up to three consonants before the vowel and four after it.

4. The existence of silent letters in words is also a major problem that the students while learning other language do not face. Why these letters are silent, when do they remain silent are the questions that perplexes the students at all stages of learning.

5. Similarly stressed and unstressed syllables also cause many difficulties. Native speakers frequently replace almost any vowel in an unstressed syllable with an unstressed vowel, often schwa. (E.g. where are you from?) From has a distinctly pronounced short 'o' sound but when it is unstressed, the short 'o' reduces to a schwa (e.g. I'm from India.) In some varieties the syllables and, en, in, on and un are pronounced as homonyms. Only Native speakers can usually distinguished between an able, enable and unable but this is very difficult for inexperienced learners.

The Grammar Translation Method is not the natural way of learning language. In it English is learnt through the medium of mother tongue. The child first thinks in his mother tongue and then translates his ideas into English. His mind works like a catalyst in which concoction of different ideas and sounds is taking place. When these ideas come out they lose originality. In this method, while teaching text book, the teacher translates every word, phrase and sentence of English into the mother tongue of the child. Similarly the students are required to translate sentences from their mother tongue into English language. In the process the child loses his free expression of thought in English. He fails to learn English throughout his academic career. The grammar is taught deductively in our schools i.e.; by oral presentations and with the help of grammar rules. Rules are first mastered and then applied in learning language. This over emphasis on rules creates problems for the students.

Hewett states (1984:131)"Grammar Translation are actually not the distinctive features of GT, since they were already well accepted as basic principles of language teaching. What was new was the use of invented, graded sentences rather than authentic literary texts in order to make language learning easier."

This method encourages word to word translation which altogether is not possible in learning any language. Speaking or any kind of spontaneous creative output is missing in the curriculum. Students often fail to speak or even write a few lines in the target language. There is no scope for original writing. The students totally become dependent on the mother tongue and they carry this habit even to the higher classes. The main reason is that it binds the language into rules of grammar. The student knows only the rules and fails to apply those rules at the time of writing and speaking.

Broadly speaking this method has proved a stumbling block in learning English language in real sense. Thus the present study aims to know the problems of the students and teachers and to recommend the derived measures for the future learners of the foreign language and the policy makers.

The analysis of the teaching and learning of English language through Grammar Translation Method has been made by actually visiting the randomly selected schools of District Hoshiarpur through careful observation.

According to Prator and Celce-Murcia: 4”Teaching English as a Second Foreign Language” (1979:3) the key features of the Grammar Translation Method are as follows

- \*Classes are taught in the mother tongue with little active use of the target language.
- \*Much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words.
- \*Long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given.
- \*Grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words.
- \*Reading of difficult classical text is begun early
- \*Little attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis
- \*Little or no attention is paid to pronunciation.

The analysis of various schools is as follows:

No of teachers	Name of the school	Teaching experience in years	Teaching method	Use of Mother tongue		Teaching Grammar	Use of English language(Speak/Communicate) in the classroom
				Y	N		
			DM/TM			Rules/Examples	y/Rarely/N
1	GHS Dihana	22	TM	Y		Rules	Rarely
2	GHS Narunangal	12	TM	Y		Rules	Rarely
3	Do	11	TM	Y		Rules	N
4	Do	13	TM	Y		-	Rarely
5	GSSS Bassi Kalan	09	TM	Y		Rules	Rarely
6	Do	18	TM	Y		Rules	Rarely
7	GSSS Jandoli	32	TM	Y		Rules	Rarely
8	GHS Chaggran	13	TM	Y		Rules	Rarely
9	Do	06	TM	Y		Rules	Rarely
10	GHS Nangal Shahidan	16	TM	Y		Rules	Rarely
11	GHS Kharar Accharwal	30	TM	Y		Rules	Rarely
12	GSSS Bham	11	TM	Y		Rules	-
13	GMS Jattpur	15	TM	Y		Rules	Rarely
14	Do	08	TM	Y		Rules	Rarely
15	GSSS Ispur	13	TM	Y		Rules	Rarely

(Table-1) D-Direct Method    T-Translation Method    Y-Yes    N-No

If we analyze the table we will see that despite having a lot of teaching experience (though in years only) in the field of education and in teaching of English language, the teacher's are not well trained and dedicated. They use English text book only in the classroom. They stick to the old methods of teaching and are not aware of the new innovative techniques and strategies. They translate each and every word of the English text in the mother –tongue of the child in the classroom. This process hampers the free and actual learning of the English language.

This information is gathered after personally visiting the schools under study and audio-video recording of the teaching methodology of the teachers in the actual classroom.

**CLASS-WISE ACHIEVEMENT REPORT OF THE STUDENTS IN ENGLISH SUBJECT (IN NUMBERS)**

S r	St d	Year	House Exam. Dec		House Exam. Dec		No of St who got 0-20marks		No of St who got 21-40 marks		No of St who got 41-60 marks		No of St who got More than 60	
			Pass	appea r	pas s	appea r	H.E	A.E	H.E	A.E	H.E	A.E	H.E	A.E
1	Vi	2005	141	527	170	515	175	133	122	117	33	39	30	35
2	-	2006	145	568	176	559	157	114	110	118	26	52	33	42
3	-	2007	162	541	176	511	167	143	106	102	47	43	41	43
4	-	2008	114	475	159	466	168	99	107	125	30	46	36	37
5	-	2009	121	445	134	402	141	108	103	89	28	31	26	30
		Tota l	683	2556	815	2453	808	597	548	584	164	211	166	187
1	Vii	2005	166	524	191	479	105	80	140	124	40	51	32	35
2		2006	165	516	213	496	106	77	133	133	52	49	41	35
3		2007	142	481	188	480	119	77	117	157	43	47	30	35
4		2008	152	501	170	499	119	78	117	147	25	38	41	32
5		2009	125	469	136	408	113	67	110	135	32	25	29	33
		Tota l	750	2491	1011	2362	562	379	617	696	192	210	173	170

If we analyze this table we will find that 2556 students appeared in house examination in selected schools, out of which only 683 got pass marks in English. Similarly 2453 students appeared in annual exams and only 815 students got pass marks in vi class in the year 2005. The number of pass students from 2005 to 2009 was very nominal and it was due to the inappropriate teaching methodology of the teacher. Same is the case with class vii students.

A critical and careful analysis of English language teaching - learning in the country reveals the fact that the learners achievement is not satisfactory and the factors responsible for this state include non - availability of standard textbooks at reasonable prices, lack of clear cut goals, shortage of well trained and dedicated teachers, lack of suitable teaching -learning technical resources, unrealistic evaluation system and dearth of innovative techniques and methods to handle English should be taught as a language effectively in actual classroom situation . English should be taught as a language not as a subject and the teacher has to be competent in the basic language skills by going through latest materials and attending various training programmes on English language English has acquired the status of living and breathing language used for national and international communication. So the dedication on the part of the teacher is essential because lack of commitment destroys everything.

Teacher need to become more aware that listening has a great importance in learning English language. Attentive listening with the repetition of sounds of letters pronunciation of words by the teacher in the classroom is an effective way of teaching these items. Asking simple questions, narrating stories, reciting rhymes, using simple commands, using linguistic realia and modals, using pre recorded material and using transactional activities could help in improving the performance of the learners.

Writing in English should be simple, straight forward and plain, he should have a good command and conscious knowledge of the grammatical structures of the language, and should be at home with grammatical terms used to describe the structure. Pupils should start with print script and then move on to the joined script called cursive script.

The teacher's reading habit has great influence on his pupil's reading skill. It serves as model for them. He should have clear voice and should be energetic and enthusiastic so that the class will come alive in his presence. He should involve all the students in the drills and exercises.

Aptitude, motivation, attitude and empathy (to put oneself into another's shoes) are a few of the traits which seem to have something to do with the success in training another language. Emphatic persons will be favorably predisposed to learning language in a natural environment.

Students should be given ample opportunities for practice in English. Greater emphasis should be laid on free expression including discussion. Students may be divided into small groups and given an interesting topic to discuss. They should be encouraged to converse in short and simple sentences.

Telephonic conversation could be an effective way of developing conversational skills in upper primary students. Noise in language classroom is a very positive indication of communication taking place but should be controlled and under observation of the teacher.

Speaking skill needs to be developed. Children should be taught in heterogeneous classes, setting them into ability groupings and the learners has to be tested separately and individually. Oral proficiency test should be incorporated in the syllabus for the promotion of the child to the next class. At present there is no reliable feedback