Volume 21 Issue 9
Originally issued as G3

Global Journal of human-social science: G
Linguistics & Education
Volume 21 Issue 3 Version 1.0 Year 2021
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
Publisher: Global Journals
Online ISSN: 2249-460X & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

Incorporation of GTM and CLT: An Effective Way to Teach & Learn English in Bangladesh

By Asif Al Matin

Begum Rokeya University

Abstract- The two very prominent methodologies are GTM and CLT in the education system in teaching & learning English in Bangladesh. To show the importance of the combination of these two phenomenal methods is the purpose of this paper. In Bangladesh GTM is commonly used for a long time, and at present CLT is also a very famous method. In this paper, the two methods are elaborated clearly in effective teaching and learning of English in Bangladesh. The study focuses on GTM and CLT in respects of achieving four skills, accuracy/fluency, teaching-learning process, handling the students' feelings and emotions, the role of the native language of students, the language skills that are emphasized, and the way of teacher's response to students' errors. Though CLT is the more beneficial method nowadays GTM also has some positive things to offer. Based on the data and findings, this paper has also presented some suggestions for effective teaching and learning of English in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Grammar Translation Method (GTM,) Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Target Language (TL).

GJHSS-G Classification: FOR Code: 200302



Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

© 2021. Asif Al Matin. This is a research/review paper, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 Unported License http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/), permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Incorporation of GTM and CLT: An Effective Way to Teach & Learn English in Bangladesh

Asif Al Matin

Abstract- The two very prominent methodologies are GTM and CLT in the education system in teaching & learning English in Bangladesh. To show the importance of the combination of these two phenomenal methods is the purpose of this paper. In Bangladesh GTM is commonly used for a long time, and at present CLT is also a very famous method. In this paper, the two methods are elaborated clearly in effective teaching and learning of English in Bangladesh. The study focuses on GTM and CLT in respects of achieving four skills, accuracy/ fluency, teaching-learning process, handling the students' feelings and emotions, the role of the native language of students, the language skills that are emphasized, and the way of teacher's response to students' errors. Though CLT is the more beneficial method nowadays GTM also has some positive things to offer. Based on the data and findings, this paper has also presented some suggestions for effective teaching and learning of English in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Grammar Translation Method (GTM), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Target Language (TL).

I. Introduction

This paper is a comparative study of two prominent language teaching methodologies, Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The Grammar Translation Method is still used in quite a lot of institutions worldwide and the Communicative Language Teaching is perhaps today's most popular instructional method all around the world. It should be pointed out that the labels GTM and CLT do not refer to two fixed sets of instructional frameworks whose principles have been formally and permanently codified by their founders or proponents. GTM is a term used by specialized authors in their reviews of the history of Applied Linguistics (e.g Brown, 1994) to describe the oldest documented form of L2 teaching in history. CLT, on the other hand, does indeed assign meaning-based methodologies explained by its many proponents and supporters. However, it has been useful over the last 30 years or so to loosely describe teaching methods that share a common core of pedagogic principles. In the discussions of views on how elements of each method could be combined to produce an incorporated teaching methodology which, has prospective for learning in Bangladesh.

Author: Assistant Professor, Department of English, Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur, Bangladesh. e-mail: asifalmatin@gmail.com

II. Literature Review

a) Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

This method is based on the Classical Humanistic educational philosophy, which views teaching as the passing-on of a body of knowledge from one generation to the next; not as the passing of skills necessary to function effectively and independently in the real world in a way which is beneficial for society. In this educational paradigm, language is taught as something to know, as a set of rules and words to memorize rather than an instrument to use in a real-life communicative context.

As the name suggests, this instructional methodology focuses generally on the explicit teaching of grammar to assure the mastery of the morphology, syntax and the other mechanics of the target language (TL) is the key to effective L2-acquisition. In its purest form, this methodology will follow a Structural Syllabus (White, 1998) that is a syllabus in which each unit of work centers around a core grammatical structure. The teaching of lexis usually co-occurs, but holds a secondary function and receive less emphasis and recycling within a typical lesson.

The typical GTM based classroom sees the teacher as the 'dictator' of learning and the students as the passive recipients of his/her input. The learners usually commit lexical items to memory by rehearsing wordlists and are testing on their ability to recall them totally out of context. Pronunciation is taught throughout parroting, and the learners typically are taught phonetics and practice reading the phonetic transcriptions of words found in the dictionaries and textbooks. L2-writing tasks consist of: (a) translating words with the dictionary or (b) writing model sentences over and over again, manipulating their morphology or syntax to obtain formally corrected (but not necessarily meaningful) output.

Moreover, current psycholinguistic research has established that language is a complex cognitive skill involving a series of psycho-motor sub-skills (de Bot, 1992) and that performing these sub-skills effectively is a function of the power-law of practice (Anderson, 2000). Since a language is processed through four different modalities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), each of them governed by various processes, it is flawed to presume that what is learned by writing or

© 2021 Global Journals

reading can be effectively used by the other two modalities.

It should also be pointed out that apart from very few studies (e.g., Lighbown and Spada, 1992), most experimental research in the effectiveness of explicit grammar teaching has yielded little evidence that it works (Brown, 1994; Ellis, 1994, Macaro, 2003). The same applies to error correction research (Truscott, 1994).

Finally, in GTM, students are frequently assessed based on the number of errors in their output. The teacher/assessor has a predetermined target language model, and the learners' translation, utterance, or compositions are evaluated based on how deviant they are from that model. This encourages the learners to prioritize the development of accuracy over fluency and may inhibit risk-taking (a valuable learning strategy – Brown, 1994). Moreover, teacher response, which is result based does not help the students improve the skills (i.e. the process) involved in the execution of the target task. Teacher feedback, to be helpful, needs to identify the issues relative to the various processes involved in task performance, identify the flaws, and advice the learners on how to address those issues.

b) Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

CLT has altogether different objectives to GTM as it rests on diametrically opposite educational philosophy and epistemological assumptions. In fact, unlike GTM, it prioritizes teaching skills rather than knowledge (Littlewood, 1994). Moreover, this approach is based on Social Constructivism, a pedagogical philosophy that aims at empowering the learners with the tools which allow one to function effectively in society (White, 1998). Consequently, in CLT, L2-grammar understanding becomes a secondary concern; language use across the four core skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing takes priority because conveying and understanding messages is what makes one get by in the real world.

CLT's epistemological premises rest on the Skill-theory postulate that language is a complex goal-orientated cognitive skill made up of sub-skills that are acquired after extended practice (Anderson, 2000). CLT translates this postulate into its instructional practice as follows: (a) since 'goal-orientated' implies that language has to be used for a purpose, learning activities must have a clear and tangible communicative goal; (b) since each skill involved in language reception and production has to be automated to be acquired, the CLT teacher must give learners plenty of opportunities for practicing all four skills.

CLT is also based on cognitive models of L2 acquisition which hypothesize that declarative knowledge about the L2 and procedural knowledge are two different abilities. Thus, acquiring declarative knowledge does not automatically lead to being able to use the L2. Unlike GTM, CLT aims at obtaining productive learning effect from all the students in the classroom (Littlewood, 1994). They all have to take part in the tasks-in-hand. This entails that the teacher, to practice speaking, must set group-work tasks that involve interpersonal negotiation of meaning; thus, the students talk to each other rather than to the teacher (as happens in the traditional L2 classroom).

Consequently, unlike the GTM teacher, the CLT teacher does not spend most of the session at the front of the classroom. S/he sets the students communicative activities designed to practice the target lexis, morpheme, function, phoneme, etc., and then goes around HELPING the students, FACILITATING their learning. The proponents of the CLT approach (e.g Littlewoods, 1984) reiterate the concept that the CLT teacher is a facilitator not a dictator of learning. In this capacity, s/he abdicates part of the responsibility to the students as they have to manage the group-work activities set.

This 'facilitator' role also involves a different approach to error correction. The proponents of the CLT approach criticized the GTM for being too intolerant of error (Edge, 1992). 'Facilitating' the development of oral and written fluency calls for a different attitude to error, one which recognizes that correcting every single error a student makes can be harmful to their self-esteem and to the development of fluency (especially if the teacher's correction interrupts their speaking). Thus, the CLT teacher corrects the learners selectively, prioritizing certain errors over others. Since CLT concerns itself with functioning effectively in real life, it gives priority to errors that impede meaning (Walz, 1982). Frequency and Irritability of errors, (respectively how often and how irritating they can be to the interlocutor/reader) are the next most significant condition adopted in selecting which errors to correct (Brown, 1984).

Krashen (1981) and other educators have stressed the importance of avoiding correcting learners' output altogether in the belief that to motivate learners one has to let them talk and write at length and without any interruption. This stance is accepted by strong CLT approaches (Prabhu, 1987). Most CLT instruction still supports the use of correction but emphasizes giving the learners fluency-orientated instruction where the learner's recourse to survival communication strategies such as Coinage (coining new words), Approximation (using words close in meaning to the target word), Paraphrase, Foreignization (adapting an L1 word to make it sound L2-like) is not only accepted but even encouraged as they often allow an individual to put the intended message across effectively (Macaro, 2003).

Its m2ain weakness relates to the fact that prioritizing communication and fluency development, it does not emphasize grammar sufficiently. Thus, learners often develop a pidgin ridden with grammatical flaws at morphological and at grammatical level. Because the

© 2021 Global Journals

teacher corrective involvement is selective and focuses mainly on errors that impede understanding, learners' mistakes often become automated and consequently difficult to eradicate. Also, the scarce focus on grammatical knowledge does not assist the learners increase the metalinguistic and analytical skills necessary for L2-students to learn grammar independently and to produce and comprehend texts that contain sophisticated syntax. In other words, whereas it may train students to successfully cope at survival and basic conversational level, it may fail to prepare the learners for communication in professional or academic contexts where accuracy and sophisticated language and register are required.

III. Discussion and Analysis

a) Achieving Four Skills through GTM and CLT

Language learning is not only concerned with acquiring knowledge (about grammar and pronunciation systems, for example) - it is not just something we learn about. Rather, it is a skill or a combination of skills. So, students need meaningful, interactive practice in the skills to learn to use the language. (Gower, Phillips, and Walters 1983, p. 85) Traditionally, we speak of four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In the Grammar-Translation Method, the primary skills to be developed are reading, and writing. Little attention is given to speaking and listening (Larsen-Freeman 2004, p. 16). It happens because GTM does not emphasize the ability to communicate in the target language, where speaking and listening is required (Richards, Platt, and Weber 1985, p. 126). But the CLT Method is concerned with equal attention to all four skills. Speaking and listening, along with reading and writing get parallel importance. "…such an approach assumes that language teaching will reflect the particular needs of the target learners. These needs may be in the domains of reading, writing, listening, or speaking, each of which can be approached from a communicative perspective." (Richards and Rodgers 2001, p. 163) The proponents of CLT argue that in the traditional methods a learner's speaking and listening ability could not be flourished.

b) Teaching and Learning Process

From both GTM and CLT characteristics of teaching-learning process, there are some contrasting elements between the methods. Firstly mother tongue is used in GTM to facilitate the teaching-learning process of the target language using the native language. Additionally, Harmer (2007: 63) said that 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 uses the native language in teaching-learning process but in certain words (Brown, 2007: 49). Mother tongue is not allowed for all the communications in teaching-learning process. Secondly, the vocabulary in GTM is memorized by translating it to the native language. This way is used to make the students know the relevant meaning and use in the target language (brown, 2007:19). In another way, CLT gives instruction to the students to acquire the vocabulary of the target language by not using the native language as the reflection. Furthermore, the teacher instructs the students to acquire the vocabulary through real-world contexts (Brown, 2007:46). Thirdly, in terms of the grammar, GTM method emphasizes that learners must understand the grammar before producing the sentence of text. The students are taught the grammar deductively (Harmer, 2007:63. Larsen-Freeman, 2011:18. Brown, 2007:19). This approach is very different from CLT since CLT emphasizes the teacher teaches grammar inductively or through a retrospective approach (Thomspson, 1996). Furthermore, this CLT encourages the students to communicate with the target language without focusing on grammar first (Larsen-Freeman, 2011:115. Hiep: 2005:4). In so doing, they focus on the students' willingness to communicate with the target language and check or revise the students' grammar after producing the language. Fourthly, in GTM there is no instruction using authentic material. All the materials are from the teacher or a systematic book. In comparison to that, the CLT usually uses the authentic material to make the students familiar and understand the real context of the subject given (Hiep, 2005: 5). And finally, it is the purpose of the study. In GTM the students are not forced to communicate in the target language but in CLT the students are emphasized to communicate in the target language for the teaching-learning activities. GTM gets the students to analyze the language rather than to use the language (Celce-Murcia, 2001: 6). In contrast, the CLT has the students use the language rather than analyze the language (Larsen-Freeman, 2011: 115).

c) Handling the Students' Feeling and Emotion

GTM is very classical and the teacher does not care with the students' feelings and emotions because in this method there is no principle related to this. In contrast, CLT is one of the modern methods in which the students and the teacher are considered partners in learning. From one of the observations in the CLT classroom, the students are found to be diligent to study because in this method the students are motivated by the teacher to get the objective (Brown, 2007: 49). Furthermore, in this method there is good cooperation between the teacher and the students, the security of the students is enhanced so that the students can learn conveniently, focus, and happiness.

d) The Role of Native Language of Students

In GTM the role of the native language is very important because it uses the native language or L1 to understand the target language. Surprisingly, whatever

© 2021 Global Journals

the learners learn about the target language they will reflect it to their native language (Celce-Murcia, 2001:6. Brown, 2007:19. Harmer, 2007:63). Furthermore, while studying grammar, the teachers and the students try to understand the grammar by using the native language. The teacher explores the grammar of the target language by using the native language and most of the teaching-learning processes is done by using the native language. To compare, in CLT is using the native language but in certain words i.e. to emphasize the word, to know the meaning of the word since. Normally, all the teaching-learning process is acted by using the target language (Thompson, 1996. Harmer, 2007:69. Brown, 2007:46-47). Hence, the goal of this method is to familiarize the students with the target language as well so that they can communicate contextually and well.

e) The Language Skill that is emphasized

There are four skills those have to be mastered by the learners in language competence and performance. They are listening, speaking reading, and writing. As information, listening and reading are receptive skills. Then, speaking and writing are productive skills (Harmer, 2007: 270 and 275). In GTM, the skills that are emphasized are reading and writing. It means that the students merely get one skill how to get the information and one skill how to produce and deliver the information. In contrastively, in CLT method the four skills are taught according to the sequence to the students from the beginning of teaching-learning process. In this method, they get the competence and the performance completely since they use the language in their class and influence their daily life to use the language even though there are many mistakes.

f) The Way Teacher Responds to Students Error

In GTM, accuracy is considered to be a necessity (Harmer, 2007: 63). The teacher will directly revise the students' errors. This way might be good because the students know their mistakes directly. On the other side, CLT is such a method where the teacher permits the students' errors but the teacher will guide the students to analyze and revise their errors (Brown, 2007:47). To sum up, both CLT and GTM methods respond to the students in different ways, GTM is directly and CLT is indirect. Both of the ways have their advantages and disadvantages.

IV. Conclusions and Implications for L2-Pedagogy

In conclusion, we can say that the two methodologies are very different in their philosophy, goals, and the way they conceptualize language acquisition. CLT appears, at least in theory, as a more effective method because it aims at preparing the learners for effective interaction in the real world. However, it does not focus learners on accuracy as much as it should. This is particularly counterproductive in acquisition-poor learning environments where the learners' exposure to the target language is minimal.

Unlike students learning the L2 in an L2-speaking country, learners receiving instruction in acquisition-poor environments do not have many opportunities to internalize grammar subconsciously through frequent exposure; for the latter type of learners error correction and focus on L2 morphemes are crucial to learn accurate syntax.

Moreover, current theories of second language acquisition posit that noticing is often crucial to L2 learning (Schmidt, 1990). Noticing refers to the process whereby the learners realize that a structure works differently in the L2 system compared to its L1 equivalent. This realization, which often marks the beginning of L2 acquisition, is not fostered by strong meaning-based methods like CLT. Explicit grammar instruction on the other hands, promotes Noticing, especially when it presents students with bilingual input illustrating the usage of the target L2 structures.

Thus in Bangladesh, GTM and CLT should be incorporated within an eclectic syllabus with a variable focus where functions and notions are still prioritized over form. In a seminal article that every language teacher should read, Lighbown and Spada (2008) provide very interesting suggestions as to how this can be done through both inductive and deductive approaches.

The teachers should find creative ways to teach grammar through communicative activities. There should be habit-forming activities involving negotiation of meaning in the context of learner-to-learner oral or written activities. Translations also should be used, if sparingly, to focus learners on grammatical, lexical, and stylistic accuracy. Also, as Conti (2001, 2004) maintains, instruction should emphasize on self-evaluating skills to ensure that learners become more effective editors and auditors of their output.

References Références Referencias

1. Anderson, J.R. 2000. Cognitive psychology and its implications (5th edition). New York: Worth Publishing.
2. Brown, H.D. 1994. Principles of language learning and teaching (3rd edition). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
3. de Bot, K. 1992. A bilingual production model: Levelt's 'Speaking' model adapted. Applied Linguistics. 13(1): 1-24.
4. Edge, J. 1989. Mistakes and correction. London: Longman.
5. Ellis, R. 1994. The study of second language acquisition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

© 2021 Global Journals

6. Eysenck, M.W. and Keane, M.T. 1995. Cognitive psychology: A Student's Handbook (4th edition). Hove: Psychology Press.
7. Ferris, D.R. 1999. The case for grammar correction in L2 writing classes: A response to Truscott (1996). Journal of Second Language Writing. 8(1): 1-11.
8. Krashen, S.D. 1981. Second language acquisition and second language learning. Oxford: Pergamon press.
9. Lightbown, P. M. and Spada N. 1992. How Languages are Learned. (2nd Ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
10. Littlewood, W. 1984. Foreign and second language learning, language acquisition research and its implications for the classroom. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
11. Macaro, E. (2003) Teaching and Learning a Second Language: a guide to current research and its applications. London: Continuum
12. Pienemann, M. 1984. Psychological constraints on the teachability of languages. Studies in Second Language Acquisition. 6(3): 186-214.
13. Polio, C. 1997. Measures of linguistic accuracy in second language writing. Language Learning. 47(1): 101-143.
14. Prabhu, N.S. 1987. Second language pedagogy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
15. Walz, Joel. 1982. Error correction techniques for the foreign language classroom. Washington: Centre for Applied Linguistics
16. White, Ronald V. 1998: The ELT Curriculum: Design, Innovation and Management. London: Blackwell. Applied Language Studies. Editors: Crystal & amp; Johnson.

© 2021 Global Journals