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A Contrastive Study of Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method in Teaching of English Language to Primary School Pupils

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Abstract--There have always been different methods of teaching and learning of English language and throughout the years these methods have changed and improved. The Grammar Translation Method is one of the first and the main methods in teaching and learning of English language. This method enables the learning through the translation of various texts and the study of grammatical rules, which is its main activity. Moreover, in a class where Grammar Translation Method is used the target language is used less while the students are mainly taught in their national language, i.e. L1. Therefore, since this method was less effective in preparing the learners to use the target language communicatively, a new method was introduced. Thus, the Direct Method became used and popular among learners and teachers.

Keywords---audiolingual method, communicative language teaching approach, direct method, grammar translation method, natural approach.

Introduction

The main purpose of the usage of Grammar Translation Method is to be a great support for students aiming to learn a new language, as it is very productive in learning vocabulary, grammar rules and structures (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Moreover, through the idea of translating one language into another both grammatical rules and vocabulary knowledge are emphasized while learning is facilitated (Fish, 1980). Contrary, the Direct Method stimulates the usage of English language mostly and focuses mostly on oral language and intensive speech practice.

Furthermore, while through the Grammar Translation Method vocabulary is taught through various lists of selected words and the structure of tenses is taught through rules, while the teachers translate each word and phrase in the text into L1 of the learner (Cevik & Spahiu, 2015). Therefore, the process of translating several sentences required by the students is essential, as a contrastive study of the target and the L1 provides great understanding of structure of in both of the languages. In The Direct Method the learners are connected directly with the target language without translating into the native language (Gatt-Rutter, 1973; Saylag, 2012).

The Grammar Translation Method according to Vienne (1998), will in addition to grammar structures and vocabulary also raise awareness regarding the cultures of both languages. However, despite all the benefits that this method has, on the other hand the exposure the students to the target language is limited, as the L1 is the centered language in this case. Nonetheless, Damiani (2003), clearly notes that this method enables teachers to speak to their students in their intelligence level, whereas when other methods are used in the target language teachers have to use rather simple language so that the students can understand what is being said (Cordero, 1984; Danchev, 1983). The Direct Method on the other hand aims to create a direct connection between experience and expression, as according to this method the learners should primarily think in English. Moreover, there should exist no intervention of the L1 in the process, so this idea aims at developing an instinctive positive language sense in the learners (Ur, 1996; Vermes, 2010).

Both of the methods are commonly used in the schools. However, while the Grammar Translation Method limits the achievement of fluency in the target language, the Direct Methods offers maximum exposure to the target language.

Research and Methods

The Grammar Translation Method and the Direct Method are used seriously by the teachers in teaching English language (Chen, 2003; Feryok, 2008; Mowlai & Rahimi, 2010). English language is being taught from the first grade to high school as an obligatory subject in the schools, while various methods and techniques are used on aiming to learn this language in the fastest manner (Duff, 1996; Ellis, 1992).

Therefore, this master thesis apart from the theoretical framework will also provide specific and relevant information on the Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method opinions, attitudes and preferences regarding these methods (Menguc & Ozanne, 2005; Zadeh, 1983; Harman & Jones, 2001). Having in mind this reality, we can make these assumptions:

- Firstly, knowing that English language is an international language, we have to assume that the students nowadays need to speak English. Therefore, they should learn it.
- Secondly, the students who are being exposed to the Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method consider them as great methods in learning

English language. Although they might share different opinions and attitudes towards each of the above-mentioned methods.

- Finally, knowing the fact that English language can be learnt through various methods the students should choose wisely. Accordingly, the students should know more about their learning style.

We do not know whether the aforementioned assumptions describe the real situation in the field. In fact, a great number of studies have already been carried out regarding the role and importance of Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method internationally, yet we may say that very little was done in the past to reveal the exact situation regarding Albanian pupils in general (Spahiu & Spahiu, 2018). Therefore, the research part of my thesis will be dealing with getting as much information as possible to provide data that prove these assumptions right or wrong (Fischli et al., 1998; Harmer, 1991). Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method are among the most used methods in teaching and learning English language, while the first one is widely used in the process of teaching and learning a new language as it requires few to none specialized skills on the part of teachers and students because they speak primarily in their native language (Spahiu & Spahiu, 2016). While the second method seeks the pupils to be more independent and to think and express themselves in English language as their most used language in the classroom.

Moreover, being an English teacher, I can confirm that these two methods are among the most used ones, while the Grammar Translation Method is frequently used as commonly teachers attempt to explain a foreign word/phrase by saying the same equivalent in L1 (Xiu & Xeauiyin, 2018; Griffen et al., 2021). The Direct Method is especially used in promoting the target language in the most efficient way and also stimulate the more talented pupils who are almost fluent in English language (Malmkjær, 1998; Newson, 1998).

Nonetheless, teachers are undoubtedly aware of all the great and very effective teaching methods, however when it comes to the fact of implementing them in their English classes or classes in general Albanian teachers have to take into account many difficulties that present themselves, such as the large class size, insufficient resources, examination and inspection pressures, and learners' worries about the limited information that they might have on grammar (Suryasa et al., 2019). Therefore, the study will focus on the role that Grammar Translation Method and the Direct Method have in the chosen group of pupils and also their teachers' perspective on it (Spahiu, 2013; Spahiu, 2021).

Moreover, apart from the detailed presentation, opinions, benefits and limitations on the Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method itself, the main objective of this research is to highlight the attitudes of a certain group of Albanian pupils regarding the usage of this method in their English language classes among their teachers (Stern & Allen, 1992). The study will focus on a group of about sixty students from a Primary Schools.

Research questions

The main purpose of this study is to find out what the attitudes of students regarding the Grammar Translation Method and the Direct Method used in their English language classes are and their beneficial they consider this method and its outcomes.

Research question 1: What are the main teaching methods used by the teachers in the chosen classes?

Research question 2: What are the main benefits and limitations of teaching and learning through the Grammar Translation Method and the Direct Method?

Research question 3: What are the teachers' and pupils' attitudes regarding the usage of Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method in English language classes?

Research design and methodology

In order to carry out this study, and to analyze the collected data, as objectively and accurately as possible, both quantitative and qualitative research approaches will be applied (McLean & Rouault, 2017; Albeckay, 2014). Participants in this research are going to be pupils and teachers involved in the learning/teaching process of English language. The sample of the participants is purposively chosen because of:

- Participants' awareness of the issue
- Direct involvement of the participants in the process

The sample consists of 2 subsamples for the Case Study:

- 60 pupils (nine-graders of the Elementary Schools)
- 3 teachers (English language teachers of the same school)

Sample size: 63 participants

Methods: Descriptive-Analytical, Descriptive-Explicative, Comparative.

Techniques: Survey, Interview, Content Analyses, Case Study.

Survey will be used to examine the opinions and the attitudes of students and teachers regarding the Grammar Translation Method used in English Language Learning.

Interview will be used to examine the opinions, the attitudes, and the personal experience of teachers regarding Grammar Translation Method used in English Language Teaching.

Instruments: Survey Sheet, Interview Protocol, Record File:

- Survey Sheet
The Survey Sheet will provide data from the students regarding the Grammar Translation Method used in their English classes. Besides general information the Survey will contain open, closed and combined question types that will refer to their opinions and attitudes towards this method. Taking into account the current situation we find ourselves in, this survey is conducted online, the pupils sent the questionnaires online.

- Interview protocol
The Interview Protocol will provide data from the teachers regarding their experience with the Grammar Translation Method. The Protocol will contain information on the project and the person interviewed. During the Interview a reminder will be used containing the topics that are to be discussed regarding their experience and attitudes towards the methods. The Interview will as well be done through an online platform.

Data analysis

Data gathered by the case study technique and the interview are analyzed qualitatively, in several phases: introduction of data, defining of the thematic frame, indexing, tabling and categorizing. Data gathered from the Survey are processed quantitatively, in percentages, tables, and graphs with comments and at the end of this we have these results.

Results and Discussions

This paper found more on the Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method usage among teachers and the students' opinions and attitudes regarding it. Taking into account the previous studies and researches done in the past regarding this issue, the group of pupils chosen for the study part reacted in the same manner as the previously researches claimed ([Anabokay & Suryasa, 2019](#)).

Moreover, the students just as well as teachers found these methods as very useful and also very common in their English language classes as it enables a faster understanding of the language and specific grammar structures. This paper attempt to find the benefits and limitations of the usage of these two methods ([Menaka & Sankar, 2019](#)). Concerning the data gathered and analyzed from the students' questionnaire this study shows the significant effects of the Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method.

As a result, the English language teachers need to develop an awareness of alternative teaching methods and strategies in the students and also involve active processing of the target language. Moreover, the English language teachers will have to remind the students on the conscious of the need to develop an independent and structured approach to language learning.

Conclusion

There are different methods that are used in teaching English language, however among the main ones are Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method, and despite that these might date back in the 16th century they still commonly used in English language classes. These two methods are different from one another yet their main goal is the same as they aim in teaching English language in the simplest manner as possible.

The Grammar Translation Method involves a combination of the translation of literary texts and explanation in the students' native language of rules of grammar. This method is widely used primarily because it entails little specialized

skills from the teachers as they use their native language. While for the students it is easier to communicate in their native as it does not cause any linguistic problem.

The Direct Method on the other hand, helps the learners or pupils to acquire correct pronunciation of the words, it provides better understanding or phrases, it is crucial in teaching and learning idioms, and above all it provides better fluency of language. Moreover, this method includes all language skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing, in specific it seeks the learners to acquire fluency of speech.

In this study certain issues are going to be elaborated in details; certain issues will just be opened and they can become subjects for future researches. I hope that the findings in this study will provide a clearer picture of the Grammar Translation Method and the Direct Method used in the process of English language learning.

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