Didactics 3rd Year English

Lesson Four: English Language Teaching Approaches /Methods

Now we examine the history of language teaching approaches and methods; it as well delivers a background knowledge for debating different latest methods. Contemporary methods revolutions are the upshot of efforts to answer the succeeding crucial question: how do teachers teach foreign languages?.

1. The Grammar Translation Method

The Grammar-Translation Method is not new but rather one of the most traditional methods.It

has had various names and has been manipulated by foreign language teachers for several years. Formerly, it was named the Classical Method. It was originally operated in the teaching of classical languages such as Latin and Greek. Earlier in the 20th century, this method was operated for the intention of boosting learners to read and appreciate foreign language literature. It was also anticipated that over the study of grammar of the target language, learners would become more acquainted with the grammar of their native language and this acquaintance would support them to improve their speaking and writing in their native language. Finally, it was supposed that foreign language learning would support learners to develop mentally; it was documented that undergraduates would conceivably never practice the target language, yet the intellectual practice of learning it would be helpful anyway. It is worth catching sight of the principles, objectives and procedures generally affiliated with Grammar Translation Method with the purpose of comprehending how it operates and why has revealed such a tenacity and firmness as an approved language teaching philosophy in several societies and institutions on a global scale.

1.1. Main Principles

1. Courses are taught in the mother tongue, with limited dynamic use of the target language.

2. Much language terminology is taught in the shape of lists of detached words.

3. Stretched intricate clarifications of the intricacies of grammar are prearranged.

4. Grammar delivers the rules for putting words together, and directions regularly addresses the

form and nuances of words.

5. Reading of tough orthodox writings is activated early.

6. Scant attention has been devoted to the content of texts, which are considered as drills in grammatical analysis.

7. Repeatedly the only drills are exercises in rendering detached sentences from the target into the

mother tongue and vice versa.

8. Limited or absence of interest is given to pronunciation.

The main principles of the Grammar Translation Method as stated by Richards and Rodgers

(1986, pp. 03-04) are these:

1. The goal of foreign language study is to learn a language in order to read its literature or in order to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that result from foreign language study. Grammar Translation is a way of studying a language that approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language. It, hence, views language learning as consisting of little more than memorizing rules and facts in order to understand and manipulate the morphology and syntax of the foreign language. The first language is maintained as the reference system in the acquisition of the second language.

2. Reading and writing are the major focus; little or no systematic attention is paid to speaking or

listening.

3. Vocabulary selection is based solely on the reading texts used, and words are taught through

bilingual word lists, dictionary study, and memorization. In a typical Grammar Translation text,

grammar rules are presented and illustrated, a list of vocabulary items are presented with their

translation equivalents, and translation exercises are prescribed.

4. The sentence is the basic unit of teaching and language practice. Much of the lesson is devoted

to translating sentences into and out of the target language. It is this focus on the sentence that is

a distinctive feature of the method.

5. Accuracy is emphasized. Students are expected to attain high standards in translation, because

of the high priority attached to meticulous standards of accuracy which, as well as having an

intrinsic moral value, was a prerequisite for passing the increasing number of formal written

examinations that grew up during the century.

6. Grammar is taught deductively, that is, by presentation and study of grammar rules, which are

then practiced through translation exercises. In most Grammar Translation texts, a syllabus was

followed for the sequencing of grammar points throughout a text, and there was an attempt to

teach grammar in an organized and systematic way.

7. The student' s native language is the medium of instruction. It is used to explain new items and

to enable comparisons to be made between foreign language and the students' s native language.

About the mid-nineteenth century many aspects promoted to the questioning and rejection of the

Grammar Translation Method. Additional possibilities for communication among Europeans generated a call for oral expertise in foreign languages contexts.

1.2.Main Objectives

The main goals of the Grammar Translation Method are:

1. To foster an aptitude to read impressive literary texts and to absorb the fields of study of reading and writing of the language correctly.

2. Recognize the value of foreign language literature and being disposed to read in the target language.

3. To know how to translate the literature of the native language.

4. Optimize apprentices’ capabilities in the native language.

5. To develop learners’ concentration and awareness.

6. To learn the skills of reading and writing.

7. The constructions of foreign languages are best well-read when compared and contrasted with

those of the mother tongue.

1.3. Procedures

Reading from an extract.

Translating the extract into the native language.

Clearing up the new word list.

1. Ask and Answer Questions

Comprehension questions: information confined within the reading extract.

Inference questions: contingent on their comprehension of the extract.

Questions connected to their own personal experience.

2. Practice on New Vocabulary

Translating a list of new words into the native language.

Antonyms/ synonyms lists.

Cognates bear a resemblance to the similarities of two languages. Learners are imparted to

identify cognates by learning the spelling or sound patterns that match between the languages.

Learners are as well requested to memorize vocabularies that have the appearance of cognates

but have connotations in the target language that are different from those in the native language. This technique, indubitably, would only be convenient in languages that share cognates.

3. Practice Grammar: Deductive Application of Grammar Rules

Statements of grammar rules.

Implementation of the rules in language extraction

– fill in the gaps.

4. Homework

Learning by rote terminology with the native language translation.

Transcribing the translation of the reading extracts into the native language.

Maintaining the grammar rules.

Writing a composition/ passage.

2. Teachers’ Roles are Very Traditional/ Authoritarian

Elucidate rules.

Deliver correction (required 100%).

Instructors are the source and supply of all materials, information, and answers.

3. Students’ Behaviours

Perform what they are asked to do.

Memorize the patterns/ terminologies.