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THE ROLE OF GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD (GTM) IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the importance of grammar and translation in both language teaching and learning a new language. Also, this article shows up the advantages and disadvantages of GTM and what to teach to 21st century students.

Key words

Grammar, translation, GTM, fluency, comprehension, communicative competence.

Introduction

In the first place, as no building can be imagined without a foundation, any language cannot be imagined without its grammar. Why mainly grammar? The main and to some extent noted reason for that – correct usage of the language. In language learning, grammar is a set of rules for correct usage of words, phrases, sounds, sentences. Correctness is required even in tiny details and elements of the language. Additionally, in linguistics grammar is interpretation which is supported by exact rules and exceptions. That is why grammar is so crucial in learning any language.

The other main thing in language learning like grammar – Translation. Translation of what? The vocabulary, grammatical structures, combination of skills in a speaking – all of these kind of language aspects are translated into the L1 (Mother Tongue).

There are introverted and extroverted, sociable and diffident student types in any classroom, which sometimes demands translation in the teaching process in order to get to every class member. As both grammar and translation are imprescriptible aspects of language learning, Grammar Translation Method (GTM) is respectively being used from decades in teaching language process.

Main part

GTM requirements can be focused only on reading and writing. Translating new vocabulary word-for-word, using framed examples to make sentences – can be characteristics of GTM. As everything has its advantages and disadvantages GTM is also not exception.

Advantages of GTM:

- Does not require teachers good preparation for class, because they just teach what is given in the grammar book.
- Textbook is only tool necessary during the lesson.
- The easiest way for teaching.
- Because of the translation it is so much convenient for students and less stressful or has less pressure on them.

Disadvantages of GTM:

- No intellectual growth, because students just write and read during the lesson.
- Students can lack of comprehension, because they have to translate word-for-word.
- Student – Teacher interaction is very small.
- There is no development of listening and speaking skills, which are crucial to show the result of what you have learned.
- No interaction with the “real” language. For instance: listening to music in a language being taught or watching movies, etc.
- Students can not create something using the target language.
- They can face a lot of difficulties while speaking with native speakers, cause they have not experienced that before.

If we don't use GTM in teaching we can face number of unexpected mistakes in the usage of language. Or if use GTM our students can be framed only by writing, reading. Some aspects of this method, such as: translating word-for-word and learning detailed exceptions are really useful for beginners, because after they will have built a strong grammar and vocabulary foundation and have improved their social skills they can use wide range of the language. As a matter of fact, using only this type of method can distract building communicative competence. Competence is an ability of showing what one knows, can do in any time when it is needed. It is not only theoretical knowledge, but also knowing how to do it in a practice in real-life situations. Communicative competence (CC) includes linguistic, discourse, strategic and sociolinguistic competence. Knowing a variety of formal and informal communication strategies, being open-minded and active are the main characteristics of CC.

Conclusion

So what to do? How to teach a language to 21st century students?

Teaching process is very individual depending both on teacher and student. Teaching grammar and translation of words is very important for beginners but not for elementary and upper level students. It would be better if grammar is taught at the beginning of language learning and after that language learning process ought to be entertaining and colorful with real-life based situations, because nowadays students who are living in globally developing world are short-attentive. GTM is testable that's why it always was, is and will be convenient for teachers. But when it comes to the correct usage of the language we cannot ignore the grammar, it is essential.

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