

Teaching English through Direct Method and Grammar Translation Method at Upper Primary Level of Urban Backdrop: A Study of Correlation

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Abstract

Teaching second language in the second language Classroom situation is a motivating assignment. The teacher has to render utmost effort to generate productive and receptive skills among the learners who constitute a mixed group in the class. Usually the teacher adopts the traditional grammar translation method to generate competency among the L₂ learners. But multiples types of learners are not benefitted equally in this method. Again if teaching situation is operated using the strategies associated with Direct Method in the classroom situations, second language learning may become animating to motivate the learners to be associated in the language learning process. The present Study is an attempt to explore the effectiveness of the Grammar Translation method teaching and teaching with Direct Method in the second language classroom situation at upper primary level of urban backdrop.

Key Words: Grammar Translation Method, Direct Method, upper primary level

1. Introduction

In traditional learning situation the teacher tends to generate a congenial atmosphere in the classroom situation by the mere application of the verbal skills with the help of prescribed text books. In the stage of target language learning, the second language teacher seeks to generate productive skills (speaking and writing) and receptive skills (listening and reading) among the learners by means of providing adequate verbal exposure of the second language in the conventional method. But some think that the learners' skill development might be made more feasible if second language learning situation is controlled by the relevant application of techniques of Direct Method. The present study is an attempt to explore the comparative effectiveness of Direct Method and Grammar Translation Method in terms of its application in the second language learning situations.

2. Objectives of the Study

Teaching a target language through some textual reading is probably the least effective endeavour in the sphere of second language teaching. Traditional teaching is generally operated inside the classroom situation in a hackneyed manner, whereby, the teacher maintains a connected discourse following the principles of Grammar Translation Method without bothering how much the learners get activated in the target language process. Keeping this view in mind the investigator undertakes an experimental project to know-----

- 1) Which between Direct Method and Grammar Translation Method is more effective in generating second language skills among the urban learners
- 2) Whether the application of specific methodological paradigms increases the requisite level of second language acquisition among the urban ESL learners belonging to the secondary level under W.B.B.S.E. in the district of Birbhum

- 3) Whether the Grammar Translation Method is more effective in language skill development than Direct Method of teaching English texts
- 4) Whether the Direct Method is more effective in language skill development than Grammar Translation Method of teaching English texts
- 5) Whether second language learning with the Grammar Translation Method in classroom situation enhances the *retention* level of the learners belonging to the *urban* background in comparison to the Direct Method of teaching the same category of learners or vice versa

3. Review of Related literature

According to Franke (1884), German Scholar a language could best be taught by using it actively in the classroom. Rather than using analytical procedures that focus on explanation of grammar rules in classroom teaching, teachers must encourage direct and spontaneous use of the foreign language in the classroom. Learners would then be able to induce rules of grammar. Known words could be used to teach new vocabulary, using mime demonstration and pictures.

The principles are seen in the following guidelines, according to Titone (1968):

- Never translate: demonstrate
- Never explain: act
- Never make a speech: ask questions
- Never speak with single words: use sentences

But the Direct method also have several drawbacks .The Harvard Psychologist Roger Brown (1973:5) described his frustration in observing a teacher performing verbal gymnastics in an attempt to convey the meaning of Japanese words ,when translation would have been a more efficient technique. However the Direct Method can be regarded as the first language teaching method to have caught the attention of teachers and language teaching specialists. It marked the beginning of the “Methods Era”.

In the 19th century this classical method came to be known as the Grammar Translation Method. Grammar Translation Method began in Germany, or more precisely in Prussia, at the end of the 18th century and established an impregnable position as the favoured methodology of the Prussia Gymnasien after their expansion in the early years of the 19th century. A popular mistaken notion regarding the origin of this method is that the method aimed to teach language by means of grammar and translation. Rather its original motivation was reformist in the sense that the traditional scholastic approach in the 18th century had been to acquire learners a reading knowledge of the foreign language by studying grammar and applying this knowledge to interpretation of the texts with the use of a dictionary. Thus Brown (1994) gives the indispensable proposition regarding the gradual evolution of this method in the following terms: Latin was taught by means of what has been called the Classical Method: focus on grammatical rules, memorisation of vocabulary and of various declensions and conjugations, translation of texts, doing written exercises. The primary feature of this method is that languages are taught not to promote oral/aural communication but to learn for the sake of being “scholarly” or in some instances for gaining a reading proficiency in a foreign language. Most of the advocates of this method were highly educated and trained in classical grammar and knew how to apply the familiar categories to new languages. Since this method was extremely scholastic it is not well suited to the capabilities of the young learners. More to say, this method was basically self study method and was not suitable for group teaching in the classroom situation. Its leading exponents are Karl Plotz, H S Olendorf and Johann Medinger. They have identified the following features of this method.

- ❖ Classes are taught in the mother tongue with little active use of the target language.
- ❖ Much vocabulary is taught in form of isolated words.
- ❖ Elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given.
- ❖ Grammar provides the rules for putting words together and instructions recur on the form and inflexion of words.

The Grammar Translation Method is basically an adaptation of techniques used to teach classical languages. Richards and Rodgers (1986) opine that there is no advocate of this method; though widely practised, there is no theory of it. They further think that there is no literature that offers a rationale or justification for it or that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology, or educational theory. Stern (1992) and Richards (2004) are of the view that grammatical competence forms a significant dimension of learner's communicative competence. According to many, the presentation of grammar to learners can provide information about the communicative use of the of language structures by contextualising them spoken and written form; it can give information implicitly through exposures to examples or explicitly through instruction on the stylistic variation of language form. Thornbury (2001) enumerates some rules about the teaching of grammar:

- 1) **Rule of Context:** Teaching grammar in context
- 2) **Rule of Use:** Teaching grammar in order to facilitate the learner's comprehension and production of real language, rather than as an end in itself;
- 3) **Rule of Economy:** To fulfil the rule of use, be economical
- 4) **Rule of Relevance:** The grammar forms with which the learners face typical problems should be taught
- 5) **Rule of Nature:** Teaching does not necessarily cause learning. Instead of teaching grammar, try to provide the right condition for grammar learning.
- 6) **Rule of Appropriateness:** All rules of grammar are to be interpreted keeping in mind the need, interests, expectation and learning styles and levels.

Ellis (2006) defines the definition of grammar teaching from a broad sense: Grammar teaching involves any instructional technique that draws learners' attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either to understand it meta-linguistically and/or process it in comprehension and/or production so that they can internalize it.

4. Statement of the Problem

The problem under the present study is entitled:

Teaching English through Direct Method and Grammar Translation Method at Upper Primary Level of Urban Backdrop: A Study of Correlation

5. Terms Definitions

Direct Method: Direct Method is based on the psychological principle of direct association between forms and meanings in the target language and provided for a theoretical justification for a monolingual approach to language teaching. It propagates that a language could best be taught by using it actively in the classroom. Rather than using analytical procedures that focus on explanation of grammar rules in classroom teaching, teachers must encourage direct and spontaneous use of the foreign language in the classroom. Learners would then be able to induce rules of grammar. Known words could be used to teach new vocabulary, using mime demonstration and pictures.

Grammar Translation Method: Grammar Translation Method of teaching implies the strategy of teaching that employs grammar and translation as prime vehicle for teaching any sort of second language texts. Here, mother tongue is used as a point of reference to translate the meaning of the literary texts or vice versa. It is also called the traditional method.

6. Hypotheses

The following null *hypotheses* are formulated:

- 1) There exists no significant correlation between the mean scores of pre-test and post test of the experimental group in urban school.
- 2) There exists no significant correlation between the mean scores of post -test and retention test of the experimental group in urban school.

- 3) There exists no significant correlation between the mean scores of pre-test and post test of the control group in urban school.
- 4) There exists no significant correlation between the mean scores of post-test and retention test of the control group in urban school.

7. Design of the Study

Keeping in mind the objectives of the Present research the researcher has devised the necessary design which comprises the following components:

- I. Method of Study
- II. Population of Study
- III. Sample of the Study
- IV. Sources of collection of data
- V. Procedure for investigation and data collection
- VI. Data treatment

8. Method of Study

The present study has been planned and implemented under experimental method. It aims at enumerating the effectiveness the second language teaching with Direct Method in comparison with the traditional method of teaching the second language at upper primary level classroom situation under West Bengal Board of Secondary Education. For the proper implementation of experimental design a school from the urban backdrop has been selected. Class VIII has been chosen for the purpose of experimentation of the teaching methods.

9. Population of the Study

The school belonging to Suri I block under the jurisdiction of Birbhum District has been selected deliberately selected for the specified purpose of investigation. The school from the urban background is Benimadhab Institution .Thus the pupils of the urban school constitute the population of the present study.

10. Sample of the Study

The 8th class of the urban school has been fixed up for experimentation. Two sections of the 8th class of the school comprising 30 students each have been taken up for present study. Thus taken together total 60 students constitute the sample of the present study.

11. Sources of Collection of Data

In order to achieve of the present study the following **tools** were employed for collection of data:

- 1) Pre-test of the students of the school
- 2) The post-test of the pupils of the school
- 3) The retention-test of the pupils of the school

The following scores will constitute the **data** for the present experiment

- 1) The scores of the pre-test of the 8th class students
- 2) The scores of the post-test of the 8th class students
- 3) The scores of the retention test of the 8th class students

12. Procedure for Investigation and Data Collection

As mentioned earlier, two sections of 8th class of an urban school is the definite backdrop for the present experimental research. A pre-test of the 8th class students of the urban school is taken. On the basis of the scores of the pre-test of the pupils of the said class of the urban school the pupils are

equalized and they are divided into Experimental and Control group by using **pair random sampling technique**. It is to be mentioned at the outset that the number of pupils under each group is 30. The design is as follows:

- 1) Pupils are randomly assigned to two Groups (R)
- 2) One group will receive Experimental treatment (T)
- 3) One group will receive Control treatment (C)
- 4) Both the Groups will receive a Pre-test
- 5) Both the Groups will receive a Post-test
- 6) Both the Groups will receive Retention-test

13. Experimentation

After careful observation of the teaching learning situation of the Birbhum district, one urban school is selected as the experimental backdrop. The urban school, namely, Benimadhab Institution belongs to Suri-I block. One English teacher, belonging to the school is selected to teach the Experimental group and the Control group.. The following three English prose texts prescribed by the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education for class VIII are selected for teaching both the experimental and control groups: 1. *The Great Escape* by Sugata Bose, 2. *Princess September* by Somerset Maugham, 3. *The Happy Prince* by Oscar Wilde.

The teacher was provided with necessary orientation regarding the following points on the use of Direct Method.

- Never translate: demonstrate
- Never explain: act
- Never make a speech: ask questions
- Never speak with single words: use sentences

The teacher was also instructed to use English in a consistent manner minimising the use of mother tongue and inspiring the pupils to communicate only in the mode of target language. Use of gesture and countenance was the teaching style to be used for conveying the meaning of the foreign words.

The Control Group, on the other hand, is taught using the principle of Grammar translation Method. The teacher taught the texts in a teacher-centric way by translating the English texts into mother tongue and pointing out the implied grammatical rules embedded in the structures of the texts. The pupils are taught in a passive manner.

14. Test Construction

After the experimentation of teaching comprising two weeks duration is over, a teacher-made post-test is taken to compare the effectiveness of the experimental method. The investigator constructed both the pre-test and post-test after a thorough of the techniques of the principles of test construction relevant sections of selected prose units. In addition, the consent of the class teacher and teaching experts were also weighed in the construction of the tests. Each test comprises 50 multiple choice type items based on the selected prose units of 8th class. While constructing the tests the dimensions of the language and structures are taken into consideration.

15. Reliability of the Test

Spearman-Brown Prophecy formula is used to determine the reliability of the pre-test and post-test. Here the reliability is estimated by comparing the halves of the pre-test and post-tests. In this way the reliability co-efficient is found to be 0.72

16. Analysis of Data

Raw scores obtained from pre-tests, and post-test and retention test were presented in a tabular form for the purpose of interpretation.

H₀ 1: There exists no significant correlation between the scores of pre-test and post test of the experimental group in urban school

Table-1: Table of correlation between the scores of pre-test and post test of the experimental group in urban school

| | V1 | V2 |
|----|-----------|-----------|
| V1 | 1.0000000 | 0.9665985 |
| V2 | 0.9665985 | 1.0000000 |

Here V1 and V2 implies that the correlation between the scores of pre-test and post test of Experimental group is 0.9665985

The obtained result shows that there exists a high degree of correlation between the scores of pre-test and post test of the Experimental group, which signifies that the achievement level of the pupils through teaching by Direct has resulted in the skill development of the ESL learners.

H₀ 2: There exists no significant correlation between the scores of post -test and retention test of the experimental group in urban school

Table-2: Table of correlation between the scores of post-test and retention test of the experimental group in urban school

| | V2 | V3 |
|----|-----------|-----------|
| V2 | 1.0000000 | 0.4437221 |
| V3 | 0.4437221 | 1.0000000 |

Here V2 and V3 implies the correlation between the scores of post test and retention test of Experimental group is 0.4437221

The obtained result shows that there exists a moderate degree of correlation between the scores of and post test and retention test of the Experimental group, which signifies that the achievement level of the pupils through teaching by Direct has resulted in moderate level of skill development of the ESL learners.

H₀ 3: There exists no significant correlation between the scores of pre-test and post test of the control group in urban school.

Table-3: Table of correlation between the scores of pre-test and post test of the control group in urban school

| | V1 | V2 |
|----|-----------|-----------|
| V1 | 1.0000000 | 0.8183166 |
| V2 | 0.8183166 | 1.0000000 |

Here V1 and V2 implies that the correlation between the scores of pre-test and post test of Control group is 0.8183166

The obtained result shows that there exists a very high degree of correlation between the scores of pre-test and post test of the Control group, which signifies that the achievement level of the pupils through teaching by Grammar Translation method has resulted in the skill development of the ESL learners.

H₀ 4 : There exists no significant correlation between the scores of post -test and retention test of the control group in urban school

Table-4: Table of correlation between the scores of post-test and retention test of the control group in urban school

| | V2 | V3 |
|----|-----------|-----------|
| V2 | 1.0000000 | 0.6370290 |
| V3 | 0.6370290 | 1.0000000 |

Here V2 and V3 implies that the correlation between the scores of post test and retention test of Control group is 0.6370290

The obtained result shows that there exists a good degree of correlation between the scores of and post test and retention test of the Control group, which signifies that the achievement level of the pupils through teaching by Grammar Translation method has resulted in considerable skill development of the ESL learners.

17. Results & Discussion

After systematic analysis of data the 4 hypotheses were experimentally verified and necessary results were drawn. The obtained result relating to **H₀1** shows that there exists a high degree of correlation between the scores of pre-test and post test of the Experimental group, which signifies that the achievement level of the pupils through teaching by Direct has resulted in the skill development of the ESL learners The obtained result relating to **H₀2** shows that there exists a moderate degree of correlation between the scores of and post test and retention test of the Experimental group, which signifies that the achievement level of the pupils through teaching by Direct has resulted in moderate level of skill development of the ESL learners. The obtained result relating to **H₀3** shows that there exists a very high degree of correlation between the scores of pre-test and post test of the Control group, which signifies that the achievement level of the pupils through teaching by Grammar Translation method has resulted in the skill development of the ESL learners. Again the obtained result relating to **H₀4** shows that there exists a high degree of correlation between the scores of and post test and retention test of the Control group, which signifies that the achievement level of the pupils through teaching by Grammar Translation method has resulted in considerable skill development of the ESL learners. From the study it is clear that teaching through Direct Method improved the immediate performance of the learners but it was not helpful in enhancing the retentive skill of the learners in terms of language proficiency, whereas, the performance of the Control group in post test and retention test shows that Grammar Translation Method has been effective in increasing retentive power of the learners in comparison to the Direct Method.

18. References

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