



Advantages & Limitations of Grammar Translation Method

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Introduction:

The Grammar Translation Method is an old method that was originally used to teach dead languages which explains why it focuses mainly on the written form at the expense of the oral form. The grammar–translation method originated from the practice of teaching Latin. At its core, translation is when you transfer the meaning of a written text from one language to another. While the translator will choose just one method for the whole text, there are a number of techniques that can be used for individual words and phrases. In grammar-translation classes, students learn grammatical rules and then apply those rules by translating sentences between the target language and the native language. Advanced students may be required to translate whole texts word-for-word.

Goal:

There are two main goals to grammar–translation classes. One is to develop students' reading ability to a level where they can read literature in the target language. The other is to develop students' general mental discipline. Users of foreign language want to note things of their interest in the literature of foreign languages.

Advantages

Translation is the easiest and shortest way of explaining the meaning of words and phrases. Learners have no difficulties understanding the lesson as it is carried out in the mother tongue. It is a labor-saving method as the teacher carries out everything in the mother tongue. The learners have to read the classic literature which develops their mental and intellectual ability. Literature also helps to enrich multiple potentials of the learners. The learners have to memorize a lot of vocabularies which help them to make different kinds of sentences.

By telling the meaning of the word or sentence in mother tongue, the teacher can at once make the students understand. The students are able to learn many items of English by comparison with mother tongue. The comprehension of the students can be



tested very easily. Knowledge is acquired gradually, by traversing the facts of language and the syntactic mechanisms, going from simplest to the most complex. Learning grammar, the students examine the texts developing awareness that language constitutes a system which can be analyzed.

Limitations:

Language learning does not consist of only memorizing a set of rules and manipulating the syntax and morphology of the target language. The translation of sentences or texts can be sometimes misleading. What the method is good at is “teaching about the language”, not “teaching the language”. The method focuses on grammar at the level of each sentence, that is, the well-formedness of sentences according to prescriptive grammarians. Actual data suggest that sentence-level grammar does not account for many instances of real communication. Speaking or any kind of spontaneous creative output was missing from the curriculum. Students lacked an active role in the classroom.

The main focus is on reading and writing at the expense of the speaking and listening skills. Very little attention is paid to real communication. Some sentences can be perfectly grammatical, but they may convey no meaning at all. Grammar rules may change not only diachronically through historical linguistic evolution but also synchronically, through dialectal variations

Conclusion:

Grammar translation method has a few both merits and draw-backs. It can be successfully used at higher educational institutions for teaching foreign languages for professional communication, but it must be combined with other methods. The teachers should use a variety of methods to teach a second language as each student is unique and will respond well to a particular method. A good teacher should make use of the items that he or she has and the learning styles of the students. Adapting your style to your class can be an effective teaching method.



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