The Impact of Grammar Translation on Communicative Skills of Second-Year Students in English Language Learning: A Case Study at the Faculty of Education, Al-Khums, Elmergib University

Abdussalam Ali Faraj Mousa, English Language Department, Faculty of Education, Elmergib University, Libya

Email: aamousa@elmergib.edu.ly

Abstract:

In today's interconnected world, effective communication is crucial for a nation's progress, particularly as Libya seeks engagement with English-speaking nations. The Grammar Translation Method (GTM), historically favoured for teaching English, employs the mother tongue to build a foundation in the foreign language. However, a shift from language comprehension to practical usage highlights the limitations of GTM in Libyan schools . This study explores GTM's impact on the communicative, vocabulary, and comprehension skills of a specific student group. It tests the hypothesis that prolonged exposure to GTM results in minimal improvement in communication skills. Findings show student performance variation influenced by factors like confidence, level, and gender, with teaching methods being the primary determinant. Student progress is hindered by factors such as lack of motivation, dependence on teachers, and limited communication activities. Despite yearly passage, students exhibit minimal improvement, affirming the hypothesis. To address these challenges, a proposed shift is advocated – moving from subject-focused teaching to prioritizing communication skills. To emphasize the entry examination's requirement for English comprehension proficiency highlights the need for suitable teaching methodologies to address the core issue.

Grammar Translation Method (GTM).

المستخلص:

في عالمنا المترابط اليوم، يُعَتَبَر التواصل الفعَّال أمرًا مهما لتقدم الأمم، خاصةً أن ليبيا تسعى إلى الانخراط مع الدول الناطقة بالإنجليزية، الترجمة النحوية هي استراتيجية تدريس تم استخدامها؛ لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في ليبيا، وذلك بالاستعانة باللغة الأم لبناء أساس في اللغة الأجنبية، ومع ذلك يظهر التحول من فهم اللغة إلى الاستخدام العملي قصور طريقة الترجمة النحوية في المدارس الليبية. يقوم هذا البحث باستكشاف تأثير طريقة الترجمة النحوية على مهارات التواصل، والمفردات والفهم لمجموعة معينة من الطلاب، كما يختبر الفرضية التي تشير إلى أن التعرض المطول لطريقة الترجمة النحوية يؤدي إلى تحسين ضئيل في مهارات التواصل. وأظهرت النتائج تباينًا ملحوظًا في أداء الطلاب، حيث تأثروا بعوامل مثل: الثقة بالنفس، والجنس، ومستوي الطالب، وتُعيق عملية التدريس عوامل مثل: انعدام الدافع لتقدم الطلاب، ورغم اجتياز الطلاب للاختبارات سنويًا، إلا أن التحسن في مستوياتهم كان ضئيلاً، مما يُؤكد على صحة الفرضية؛ ولتعزيز التحصيل وتطوير المهارات اللغوية الفعَّالة، يُقترح الانتقال من أسلوب التدريس التقليدي المركز على القواعد والمفردات إلى أنشطة تنمية مهارات

التواصل، مع أهمية تسليط الضوء على متطلبات امتحان القبول المتعلقة بإتقان فهم اللغة الإنجليزية، والتي تبرز الحاجة إلى منهجيات تدريس مناسبة للتعامل مع المشكلة الأساسية.

طريقة الترجمة النحوية.

1.1 Introduction

The world has gone through stages of development. The massive population of the world is brought closer together at every stage. Therefore, people require meaning for communicating, and since English is used by almost all developed countries, learning it has been a smart choice. English plays a major role in several countries around the world, including African countries. In Libya, English is a compulsory subject in all state schools. As Khilafat & Reddy (2022, P:49) state In 2018, the Libyan Ministry of Education made it essential to teach English to students in primary school, reflecting the country's rising aspiration level to keep up with the rest of the globe. As is well known, it was also held in Libyan educational circles that knowing English would give young students more chances because it is a language of academia, science, and business and would make them more competitive internationally. However, higher education in Libya is facing problems in many ways, according to Tamtam et al. (2011, P:748). The quality of education has been negatively impacted by old-fashioned teaching methods such as indoctrination and conservation by universities established decades ago, a lack of technological advancement, a lack of well-developed learning strategies, current employment in teaching, and the neglect of the use of self-learning abilities including analytical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, invention, and research skills.

The one subject that is considered one of the most relevant for students to learn is English. It is involved in almost all other subjects as well as being the language of books, academic conferences, international business, diplomacy, and sports. Additionally, English is becoming an increasingly significant component of higher education. According to Graddal (2007), approximately two-thirds of the world's universities are in English-speaking countries. As a result, English is widely used as a medium of instruction at universities throughout the world. International students are increasingly coming to English-speaking countries. Over half of the world's international students are taught in English. This means that English should be considered one of the main subjects and should be taught as efficiently as possible. in terms of educational development and establishing effective connections with other countries. Moreover, languages can be learned intuitively in a variety of ways. Thus, there are several methods used to learn foreign languages, one of which is the Grammar Translation Method (GTM). It is

a method of teaching foreign languages that involves students studying grammatical rules and then translating sentences between target and native languages. Using this method, students can read, understand, and translate written texts in the source language, as well as develop their general intelligence.

The primary focus of this study is the impact of GTM on two skills, pronunciation and comprehension, that students use to communicate during lectures. According to Edo-Marzá (2014, P:262) "It is beyond doubt that pronouncing a language properly is a key aspect of understanding and making ourselves understood". Since pronunciation is the first skill in any communication, weak pronunciation affects the student in many ways. Pourhosein (2012) points out that limited pronunciation abilities can have a negative effect on learners' self-confidence by reducing it, preventing social interaction, and thereby negatively affecting perceptions of a speaker's credibility and abilities, which obviously has a negative impact on EFL instruction. In the early stages of teaching English, grammar translation is a key component for students to gain some information and establish some background in the language. A teaching method that focuses primarily on grammar and translation would be ideal. This value, however, diminishes in higher education when compared to other more effective methods. Because the Libyan educational system places a heavy emphasis on GTM at all levels of education, This negatively impacts students' ability to communicate effectively in English during lectures in college. Therefore, teachers must adapt or use this method so that students can understand the subject matter.

This study examines the use of the GTM and its impact on a specific group of students during lectures. Plus, explore teachers' teaching methods, find the most effective one, and figure out their opinions on GTM and the reasons for using it or some aspect of it. As well as to provide some recommendations.

1.2 Research Aim and Objective

This study seeks to investigate the application of the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) within the Faculty of Education at Elmergib University. Specifically, it aims to evaluate the communicative abilities of second-year university students in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, and comprehension. The study further intends to delve into the teaching methodologies employed by educators, identify the most effective approaches, and understand their perspectives on GTM.

The research aims to uncover the reasons behind the continued use of GTM or its specific aspects. It endeavors to diagnose students' comprehension of the target language, identifying potential vocabulary or pronunciation issues and their

underlying causes. Additionally, the study aspires to generate recommendations based on its findings, shedding light on the challenges students may face and suggesting strategies to overcome these obstacles

1.3 Research Hypothesis

Relying exclusively on the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) throughout all academic years presents challenges. Instructors incorporate Arabic in lectures to ensure students' comprehension. This use of Arabic is vital, as it helps students become familiar with the language and fosters a sense of English proficiency. With exams primarily focused on rote memorization, students often pass the year without enhancing their communication skills. Consequently, subsequent instructors face difficulties in promoting the use of the target language, leading to a recurring cycle of issues that persist until graduation. These graduates then enter primary and high schools, perpetuating the same pattern.

To assess this hypothesis, the study aims to scrutinize and verify it within this specific student cohort. The evaluation will encompass pronunciation, vocabulary, and comprehension, all of which impact the communicative abilities of second-year students. The study will seek to identify any signs of improvement at this level.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What teaching methods do instructors employ in the classroom?
2. Is the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) used, and does it influence students' ability to communicate effectively during lectures?
3. Can students grasp the target language, or do they require translations when only specific aspects of GTM are applied?
4. Do students have sufficient time for communication during lectures?

1.5 Research Scope

This research aims to assess the understanding level, vocabulary, and pronunciation skills of a specific student group. It seeks to explore the impact of GTM on these aspects and compare various teaching methods to identify the most effective one. The study also investigates instructors' opinions regarding GTM and the reasons behind its application during lectures.

1.6 Study Limitations

This study exclusively focuses on the impact of GTM on students' comprehension, pronunciation, and vocabulary skills during lectures. It does not examine how this method affects students beyond the classroom or their reading and writing skills during lectures.

1.7 Statement of the Problem

In our interconnected world, many countries, including Libya, introduce English as an EFL from an early age. However, Libya's approach focuses heavily on teaching English through grammar and translations, primarily using the Grammar Translation Method (GTM). This approach can have both benefits and drawbacks for students.

According to Hull (2018), students can discuss English grammatically but struggle to speak the language. This means students become proficient in grammar but lack practical communication skills. It's been observed that Libyan students apply to university after studying English for several years in middle and high school without the ability to speak or understand spoken English.

The advantage is that students acquire a strong grasp of grammar and word meanings with ease, but the drawback is that they lack sufficient exposure to real-world English, which can impact their college experience. Abu Srewel (2002) also found that Libyan students tend to lack proficiency in English even after graduating from university due to the teaching methods employed in Libyan schools.

This research aims to address this problem, particularly in the context of the Faculty of Education at Al-Khums, focusing on second-year students. It intends to investigate if the limitations in students' English communication skills exist and if GTM is a contributing factor.

Literature Review

2.1 Defining Teaching Methods

Traditional teaching methods have been an integral part of education for a long time. Teaching methods, as described by Liu and Shi (2007), encompass a set of principles, procedures, and strategies that educators employ to help students achieve specific learning objectives. These principles and procedures are often tailored to the subject matter being taught, taking into account the teacher's beliefs about the most effective way for students to learn. It's important to note that there isn't a one-size-fits-all teaching strategy. What works in one context may not yield the same results in another. As Gebhard (1996) notes, a technique that proves effective in one situation might not be suitable for another. The effectiveness of a teaching method is contingent on various factors, including the task at hand, the characteristics of the students, and the teacher's approach.

A method can be defined as "a set of activities carried out in the classroom, guided by underlying theories, beliefs, or plausible concepts" (Prabhu, 1990). For example, a professor may opt for lecture-based instruction when dealing with

topics that lend themselves to verbal explanations. Conversely, for concepts that are more challenging to grasp, a hands-on, experimental approach might be preferred. In essence, a method must encompass various tactics and approaches, and a teacher must have a clear rationale for its effectiveness.

In the realm of language teaching, Anthony's hierarchy of approach, method, and technique offers a framework. According to Anthony (as cited in Liu, 2007), the highest level of thinking is the "approach," which delves into the nature of language and the fundamentals of language learning and instruction. The "technique" represents the lowest level, focusing on the tools and methods teachers use for instruction. Anthony's definition of a method is "an overall plan that aligns with an approach and is aimed at the systematic presentation of teaching materials." However, Stern (1983) points out that the concept of "method" is insufficient for comprehensively addressing language teaching because language instruction cannot be solely conceptualized through the method employed.

Effectiveness in teaching relies on the harmony between an approach, a method, and the availability of suitable materials or techniques. Richards and Rodgers (1986), use the terms "design" and "procedure" instead of "technique," differ from Anthony by placing the approach at the highest level of conceptualization. They view an approach as a framework rooted in theories about language and language learning, guiding the practices and principles of language instruction. Furthermore, a "design" associates an approach with a method, detailing how materials are selected and organized for optimal effectiveness within the chosen method. It also specifies learning activities and tasks that enhance the chosen teaching approach and outlines the roles of teachers, students, and instructional materials in implementing the method.

2.2 Historical Evolution of Teaching Methods

2.2.1 Pre-20th-Century Trends

The historical backdrop of language teaching methods reveals the importance of imparting foreign language skills in both ancient Greece and medieval Latin periods. Classical Greek and Latin served as lingua franca before yielding to other classical languages. These languages dominated higher education across Europe and were extensively used in various domains, including business, politics, and philosophy or religion. The educated elite of the time attained fluency in these languages as speakers, readers, and writers. It's worth noting that instructional practices of this era did not rely on language textbooks; instead, instructors or tutors likely utilized manuscripts and, perhaps, rudimentary

dictionaries listing equivalent words in multiple languages to teach language form and meaning.

The study of Greek and Latin grammar formally gained prominence during the Renaissance era, thanks to the invention of the printing press, which enabled mass production. It was during this period that distinctions emerged between classical Latin and Vulgate Latin, the latter being used as a lingua franca. Over time, these differences led to the formal study of classical Latin becoming the official subject of instruction in schools. Simultaneously, Latin's role as a lingua franca began to diminish, while various European vernaculars gained popularity and respectability. This shift towards vernacular languages and the increasing focus on analyzing classical Latin may have contributed to Latin's decline as a common language in Western Europe.

As European vernaculars gained prominence and utility, the 17th century witnessed a return to a more utilitarian approach to language study. Jan Comenius, a Czech teacher and methodologist, is among the notable language instructors of this time. His teaching methods, outlined between 1631 and 1658, advocated:

- The use of imitation rather than rigid rules to teach language.
- Encouraging students to repeat after the instructor.
- Employing a limited vocabulary initially.
- Providing opportunities for reading and speaking practice.
- Enhancing language instruction through the use of visual aids to make learning more meaningful.

2.2.2 20th Century Trends

In the first half of the 20th century, teaching methods primarily revolved around memorization and mastering materials through textbooks, drills, and practice. The emphasis was on conveying information rather than creating meaningful learning experiences. However, this paradigm shifted in the 1950s when educators and theorists began to prioritize the learning process and how to facilitate it effectively. Teachers transitioned from focusing on imparting information to nurturing dynamic and engaging learning environments through innovative methods like project-based learning, experiential activities, and student-centered instruction. These modern methods not only improved students' learning outcomes but also allowed teachers to create more vibrant and engaging classrooms.

Moreover, the 20th century witnessed significant developments in the profession of language teaching, especially between the 1970s and 2000s. Educators recognized the need for teaching methods that align with specific learning goals and cater to learners' characteristics. This realization led to the

emergence of new teaching methods, such as project-based learning and experiential activities. Language teaching began to focus more on providing students with dynamic and engaging learning experiences, shifting away from traditional rote memorization methods.

Additionally, during the 20th century, applied linguists and other educators sought to develop principles and procedures for the design of teaching methods and materials. Their efforts gave rise to proposals for more efficient and theoretically valid teaching methods, shaping modern language teaching practices. This century saw frequent innovation and shifts in language teaching approaches, often marked by the emergence of differing ideologies and methodologies. As Pennycook (1989) notes, language teaching methods have evolved progressively over the years, with each new approach building upon the prior one.

Rowlinson (1994) describes this evolution as "continuous upward progress through history," driven by the creation and adoption of new paradigmatic ideas and the rejection of older ones.

2.3 Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Libya

In the 1940s, after World War II, the teaching of English began in Libya, coinciding with the establishment of British administration in the northern part of the country, while the southern region was under French administration. This British policy included the promotion of English language education. English language courses were highly regarded, and the instructional approach centered around teaching English through a vocabulary of 850 words. The first English language textbook used in Libya was "The Basic Way to English" by KC Ogden, accompanied by two reading and comprehension books, "The Basic Reading Book" by L.W. Lockhart. In the post-primary stage, a new series was introduced in the 1960s, known as "The New Method," which was related to Arab culture. It was later replaced by redesigned textbooks titled "Modern Reader," authored by A. Johnson, an English language inspector in Egypt. To enhance the teaching process, a new English language program and textbooks were introduced in the 1960s. A series called "English for Libya" was created to meet the language and cultural needs of Libyan learners. This series included three books, three workbooks, and three teacher's guides, with comprehensive guidance on classroom activities, visual aids, teaching hours, and other instructional tools. This series was used until the mid-1980s.

In the 1970s and 1980s, a second series called "Further English for Libya" was introduced, with a focus on incorporating English culture as a teaching tool for elementary school students. However, in 1986, due to diplomatic tensions

between Libya and the United States and the United Kingdom, Libya's Ministry of Education issued Decision No. 195/1986 to stop teaching foreign languages, including English. English-language books were burned in public spaces, significantly impacting English teaching and learning in Libya. Many English teachers shifted to other subjects, resulting in a shortage of qualified English language instructors. In response, the Ministry of Education established English-language teacher training facilities in 1996. Unfortunately, the graduates from these training facilities often lacked adequate preparation to teach English effectively.

2.3.1 Overview of the Teaching System in Libya

Libya's educational system has four main categories: primary school (grades 1-6), middle school (grades 7-9), high school (grades 10-12), and higher education (undergraduate and graduate programs). The transition from home or private schooling typically occurs at age six. Public schools in Libya are segregated by gender from the first to the twelfth grade, which may impact students' ability to interact in English during various classroom activities. The educational system in the 1990s shifted the responsibility for educational affairs to local educational committees, leading to a decentralized system. During this time, private universities and schools saw a significant increase in numbers, with over 30 private universities and more than 1,000 private schools reported.

The Libyan educational system is divided into public and private education, with private institutions often hiring English teachers with varied qualifications. English instruction begins in the fifth grade in public schools, and a majority of female English teachers in the fifth through ninth grades have degrees in English or education from Libyan universities. In these lower grades, 79.38% of English language instructors are female. However, in the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades, most English teachers are male, coming from Libya, Egypt, Iraq, Sudan, and Palestine. Their English proficiency varies, and their accents reflect their respective dialects. This diversity results in students hearing English spoken in different accents, such as Libyan, Egyptian, Iraqi, Sudanese, and Palestinian. Teachers often require students to use Standard English, leading to a complex linguistic environment in Libyan classrooms.

2.4 History of the Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

The Grammar Translation Method (GTM) is a traditional and historically evolved approach to teaching English that has had a widespread presence throughout the Western world. It was developed by German scholars, including Seidenstucker Kare Plotz, H.S. Ollendorf, and Johann Meidinger, with the primary aim of simplifying the process of language learning (Richards & Rodgers,

2001). In the Western educational context, the study of "foreign" languages, in the past, often meant the study of Latin or Greek. The significance of Latin in fostering intellectual development has been acknowledged as essential for higher education. The Classical Method, which emphasized grammatical rules, vocabulary memorization, conjugations and declensions, translation of texts, and written exercises, was the dominant approach used for teaching Latin (Brown, 1994).

The Grammar Translation Method, as described in The Oxford Companion to the English Language, had its origins in Germany during the late eighteenth century, as a response to the literary method that had prevailed for centuries. In the United States, it was initially known as the Prussian Method. However, as other languages were introduced into educational institutions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the classical method became the primary method for teaching foreign languages. Oral language use had little place in language teaching during this time.

The term "Grammar Translation Method" itself emerged during the Reform Movement, notably in Wilhelm Viëtor's publication "Der Sprachunterricht muß umkehren!" in 1882 and a lecture he delivered in 1899. According to Howatt and Smith (2014), Wilhelm Viëtor is one of the earliest sources to use a variant of the term in German. They note that Viëtor referred to the "Grammatik– und Übersetzungsmethode" in a lecture published in 1902.

It is generally agreed that the so-called 'Grammar Translation Method' that we recognize today was mainly conceptualized for teaching foreign languages in newly established schools during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The method of teaching Greek and Latin in Prussian schools during the 18th and 19th centuries may have played a significant role in spreading it more widely (Kelly, 1976).

Mitchell (2009) highlights that many early authors developed the initial textbooks based on the GTM with the pragmatic goal of promoting the learning of modern foreign languages in schools, aiming to achieve reading literacy similar to classical languages. Historically, the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) was one of the most widely used methods for teaching foreign languages, especially during the late 19th and mid-20th centuries. It's important to note that GTM remains somewhat abstract and lacks a definitive definition. In fact, the term doesn't originate from proponents of the method but rather from its critics. As Kirk (2018) mentions, "Despite wide use of the term (usually disparagingly), there is no standard definition of the Grammar-Translation method; there is, therefore, a tendency to regard any means of language teaching that includes learning

grammar and undertaking translation as an example of the Grammar-Translation method by default. Yet, regardless of the purported widespread use of Grammar-Translation, there are no definitions or manifestos written by nineteenth-century advocates of Grammar-Translation".

2.5 The Reform Movement

Numerous language experts, such as Marcel, Gouin, and Prendergast, explored various language teaching methods. However, these early attempts yielded limited success. The challenges faced by these linguists prompted a more profound investigation into language education. Klippel and Kemmler (2021) suggest that the Reform Movement began due to a fundamental belief that modern languages should be taught as living, spoken languages, emphasizing oral skills and meaningful communication, rather than as a set of rigid rules or a collection of texts.

The stage was set for a significant shift in language teaching practices following the publication of Henry Sweet's groundbreaking work, "The Handbook of Phonetics" in 1877. The Reform Movement took root in Europe during the late 19th century, primarily in Germany, Scandinavia, and France. This movement led to ongoing debates between advocates of reform and those who favored traditional language instruction, rooted in a comprehensive understanding of grammar and canonical texts. It's a part of the larger historical struggle in language learning and teaching.

According to Rahaman (2021), the Reform Movement emphasized oral discussions over translation-based language instruction. The reformers aimed to make language learning more engaging and less cumbersome. Lengthy translations were seen as tedious, so classroom discussions took their place. The principles of "avoiding translation" and "using everyday vocabulary and phrases" shaped this approach to language teaching.

Klippel and Kemmler (2021) explain that the reformers, though they may not have directly coined the term "grammar-translation method," were, in fact, critical of its core concepts. They wanted to distinguish their novel ideas from the established norms. This required a critique of the existing methods and a reevaluation of language instruction.

Phonetics and the study of speech sounds played a pivotal role in promoting oral communication. As Richards & Rodgers (2001) mention, the field of linguistics experienced a renaissance during this period. Linguists emphasized that speech, not writing, is the primary form of language. The study of phonetics, which focuses on the sound system of language, gained prominence. The International Phonetic Association was founded in 1886, signifying a pivotal

moment in language teaching. Teachers started using lip and tongue postures to express foreign language sounds, bypassing the need for equivalents in their mother tongues. Journals like "Dhi Fonètik Tîtcer" (founded by Passy in 1886) and "Phonetische Studien" (founded by Viëtor in 1888) reflect the importance of phonetics during this time.

For instance, Klinghardt (1888) described in detail how he trained his students to distinguish and reproduce foreign sounds. The teacher's role became vital in helping students develop their speaking skills in another language, a shift from traditional methods. According to Viëtor (1902), language instruction aimed at promoting speaking and pronunciation could no longer rely solely on textbook exercises and translation. It now required active student involvement in pronunciation practice, vocabulary, and text-based conversations, as noted by Celica (2014).

As an alternative to the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method emerged. The Direct Method focused on using a language rather than dissecting it. It differed significantly from the GTM and emphasized phonetics, as Richter (2006) acknowledged.

In assessing the success of the Reform Movement, Klippel and Kemmler (2021) suggest that it's not a simple yes-or-no answer. The reformers couldn't instantly revolutionize language education across Europe. However, their gradual and consistent changes to curricula, textbooks, and teacher training have left a lasting impact. Oral skills and conversational practice have since become integral to language instruction, and language teacher training programs worldwide incorporate these principles. Many concepts that we now consider standard in language education have their roots in the progressive era of the late 19th century. The history of language acquisition and instruction remains a work in progress.

2.6 The Importance of Teaching English in a Communicative Way

Effective language teaching requires interaction. It's the cornerstone for both teachers and students in the classroom. Interaction is how ideas, feelings, opinions, and insights are shared. In today's fast-globalizing world, aligned education with societal needs is paramount. Language acquisition is vital, especially when it comes to communication. Recently, foreign language learning has evolved to prioritize effective communication in real-life situations, making the communicative approach the leading method. Jabeen (2014) underscores that the communicative approach focuses on communication, which is the primary goal. To communicate in a foreign language, students must comprehend spoken and written language. Learning a foreign language should prepare students for mutual understanding, education, and personal development.

The ability to comprehend and communicate effectively is key to foreign language acquisition. Students must express themselves orally and in writing while understanding both written and spoken language. This is where the communicative method comes into play. According to Gilles and Pierce (2003), classroom discussions are an effective tool for students to grasp the material. Selecting vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar materials tailored to students' goals and proficiency levels is crucial. Organizing language development correctly is the most effective way to enhance students' language and critical thinking skills. Asokhia (2009) emphasizes the importance of language teachers using the foreign language extensively until it becomes ingrained in learners' experiences. Effective teaching requires meticulous lesson planning and the ability to pace language development. Kalia (2017) conducted research comparing the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), showing that each method has its strengths and weaknesses.

Teaching English involves various methods, and there are pros and cons to each. What works well in one context may not be effective in another. GTM primarily focused on reading and writing skills, while CLT emphasized interactive communication. Translation into the mother tongue was no longer a part of language teaching in CLT, which aimed to develop meaningful communication skills. Learners were encouraged to use their natural language acquisition abilities to acquire the language. In contrast, GTM primarily used the students' mother tongue with minimal use of the target language. Vocabulary lists and rule explanations were prevalent in GTM textbooks, and translation was a common task. CLT places language instruction at the learner's center and provides opportunities for meaningful language use. It allows room for personal interpretation and variation. CLT represented a paradigm shift in British language education, embracing a more humanistic and interactive approach to teaching.

Both GTM and CLT have their merits in specific situations. GTM is suitable for introducing students to the language, while CLT excels at teaching students how to use the language. There's no one-size-fits-all approach to language teaching, and successful teachers adapt to their students and their unique needs. Effective teaching involves a dynamic approach, where methods may vary from one class to another based on the class requirements and student characteristics.

2.7 Merits of the Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

The Grammar Translation Method (GTM) has endured for good reasons. It remains an effective approach in classrooms with many students, especially when teacher-centered instruction is appropriate. GTM's primary technique of

translation into the native language (L1) aids in accuracy, synonym comprehension, and the removal of misunderstandings. It saves time when translating from L1 to the target language (L2) while clarifying meanings, words, and phrases in the target language. This method enables teachers who are not fluent in L2 to effectively instruct. It also eases the burden on teachers, as students can understand and respond in their native language, allowing teachers to gauge their comprehension (Marks, 2008). Translation also proves valuable in ESL learning and enhances foreign language proficiency. It assists in understanding a foreign language by helping students recognize the distinctions and connections between L1 and L2, facilitating the comprehension of linguistic structures. By providing accurate translations of English words, the GTM enables swift target language acquisition. Excluding translation in the learning process can impede students' understanding of the target language, hindering the achievement of instructional goals.

2.7.1 Features of the Grammar Translation Method

GTM predominantly focuses on translating sentences, which sets it apart. This emphasis on sentences was aimed at simplifying language learning (Howatt, 1984). The approach highlights accuracy, deductive grammar teaching, and instruction in the students' native language. Prator and Celce-Murcia (1979) outline the key features of the grammar translation method:

Minimal to no use of the target language in class; lessons are conducted in the native language.

1. Vocabulary is taught through lists of isolated words.
2. Grammar is explained in detail, with elaborate explanations.
3. Rules of grammar dictate word formation, and extensive focus is placed on word forms and inflections.
4. Complex classical texts are introduced early.
5. Limited attention is given to text content, which is treated as exercises in grammatical analysis.
6. Translation of disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother tongue comprises most drills.
7. Pronunciation receives little to no attention.

2.8 Related Studies

The influence of the GTM on students' English communicative performance has been a focal point in many foreign countries, as it impacts the future of English in those regions. Several studies have explored how GTM affects students' communication skills. For instance, Omar (2019) investigated how GTM impacts Libyan students' English communication abilities. His findings indicate that GTM

has a negative impact on the English language skills of Libyan students, and it is a prevalent teaching strategy in Libya.

Some researchers have compared GTM and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to assess their effectiveness. Natsir & Sanjaya (2014) found that CLT, with its focus on communication and interaction, improves students' language skills, while GTM can be monotonous and one-directional. CLT facilitates language learning through various engaging methods, making it more appealing to students.

Many countries, including Libya, continue to use GTM in primary education. Rafique (2019) evaluated the application of the Grammar Translation Method for English in primary schools and found that teachers extensively use GTM. This study suggests the need for a more varied teaching approach that includes speaking activities, communication between students, creative writing, and more to enhance students' language learning.

However, other studies have explored the benefits of adopting a communicative approach. Owen & Razali (2018) found that implementing communicative activities, such as information gaps and language games, in Libyan secondary schools significantly improved students' speaking abilities. Communicative activities create an interactive learning environment that engages students and enhances language learning.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The primary aim of this study is to investigate established hypotheses and address a series of research questions within a conclusive research design. To elaborate, this research takes a causal approach as it delves into the correlation between the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and a student's communicative performance during lectures. Additionally, it seeks to explore various teaching methods employed by educators, identify the most effective approach, and gather insights regarding GTM and the rationale behind its adoption or specific elements. The research employs a qualitative approach. Initially, a survey is administered to assess the utilization of GTM, followed by observations and the evaluation of students' communicative performance through coded themes. Simultaneously, interviews are conducted with teachers. This multifaceted approach enables the researchers to uncover the root causes of issues, arrive at conclusions, and consequently offer recommendations.

3.2 Ethical Considerations

The research is conducted with a commitment to respecting the privacy of participants. In order to avoid the "Hawthorne Effect," wherein participants alter their usual behavior due to awareness of being observed or studied, the study is carried out without participants' prior knowledge. Once the study concludes, participants will be duly informed of its existence. The interview questions adhere to a standard of avoiding offensive, discriminatory, or inappropriate language. Furthermore, proper attribution will be given to any works used in the study.

3.3 Sample of the Study

This study is based at Elmergib University's Faculty of Education, focusing on second-year students. The choice of second-year students is driven by their perception of the first year as a trial period to ascertain their affinity for the English language, with the flexibility to change majors if needed. Additionally, second-year students are still acclimatizing to the academic environment, making them suitable subjects for investigating the impact of GTM on communicative performance during lectures. Moreover, interviews will be conducted with three out of six second-year teachers, making use of a non-probability sampling method. While the study intends to observe all second-year students, the number of participants is subject to student attendance.

3.4 Data Collection

A qualitative approach is employed to examine hypotheses and address research questions. This process commences with an initial survey to determine the extent of GTM implementation, followed by two primary data sources:

3.4.1 Observations

The primary data source involves observing second-year students during lectures. This allows for an assessment of the influence of GTM on students' pronunciation, vocabulary, and comprehension performance.

3.4.2 Interviews

Secondary data is collected through interviews with three second-year teachers. These interviews serve the purpose of exploring teaching methods, identifying the most effective approach, and gathering teachers' insights regarding GTM, including any aspects they may feel compelled to utilize to ensure students' comprehension.

3.5 Data Analysis

The collected data is subjected to systematic coding to identify recurring themes, enabling the researcher to conduct further investigation and data

refinement to reach conclusive findings. The interview process involves initiating general inquiries, analyzing responses, and progressing to more specific questions in subsequent interviews based on the initial analysis, eventually culminating in addressing the core research questions.

3.6 Research Procedures

Observations were conducted during ten lectures on March and April, 2023. Interviews were also carried out with teachers to verify the utilization of GTM or its elements and assess their impact on students' communication skills. These procedures are geared toward testing the research hypothesis on this specific student group. Subsequently, the collected data will be analyzed to identify patterns and common themes to formulate conclusions, address research questions, and make relevant recommendations.

Results and Discussion

1.1 Results

Q1: What are the methods that teachers use in the classroom?

Teachers do not adhere to a specific method, primarily due to the students' low abilities resulting from the extensive use of the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) in elementary schools. These students struggle to adapt to methods other than GTM, necessitating teachers to introduce alternative techniques like direct and communicative approaches. While some educators employ advanced methods, many students remain passive during lectures. Some teachers combine GTM with communicative approaches, engaging students in text preparation, pronunciation, translation to Arabic for word meanings, presentations, and group discussions. This blended approach yields benefits, although not all students actively participate. In some cases, teachers employ peer tutoring, placing weaker students in front to enhance their understanding. This method effectively improves comprehension but often necessitates code-switching to Arabic. Overall, teachers face challenges in selecting an appropriate method, resulting in a blend of GTM and other techniques.

Q2: Is GTM used, and does it affect students' communicative performance during lectures?

Observations indicate that a mix of methods is common in lectures, offering both positive and negative effects. While this approach ensures students understand the material, it discourages self-improvement, leading to dependency. This negatively impacts students' communication skills, making it difficult for them to identify their weaknesses or improve their skills. Teachers must find ways

to impart information using various methods without reinforcing students' weaknesses.

Q3: Do students comprehend the target language or require translations when applying a different teaching method than GTM?

Students can be divided into two categories: those who understand English but require translations, and those who comprehend but struggle to speak. The former group relies heavily on teachers, hindering their independence and prospects. The latter group tends to remain silent or answer in Arabic during lectures, as teachers predominantly focus on the former group. Examinations not requiring verbal communication may discourage students from improving their speaking skills. Furthermore, teachers often do not actively encourage students to work on improving their English, leading to a cycle of dependency.

Pronunciation and Vocabulary:

During the initial week, significant mispronunciations were observed despite teacher instructions for preparation. Pronunciation could not be assessed further due to minimal communication. Most communication during lectures occurs between teachers and students in Arabic. Similarly, students lack comprehension of certain words, and the teacher's explanation is often necessary. While the vocabulary is lacking, students are allowed to use dictionaries for reference. Teacher performance is evaluated based on students' understanding of the subject matter and exam performance, rather than their communication skills. This preference for Arabic explanations is indicative of these issues.

Q4: Do students have enough time to communicate during lectures?

The extent of student communication during lectures depends on teachers' individual methods, and there is no uniform approach. Some teachers focus on individual lectures followed by student presentations, while others incorporate peer reading and answering. Certain educators aim to engage all students through active discussions and question-and-answer sessions. One teacher successfully encourages student involvement through various communicative activities. Despite some students' understanding of the target language, they struggle under pressure, often resorting to Arabic responses.

1.2 Discussion

Teachers face challenges in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) due to their students' dependence on Arabic. While they are compelled to use Arabic, the extent to which they rely on it varies. Some attempt to blend Arabic with CLT through tasks and presentations, while others experiment with the more challenging direct method. Despite a preference for

academic methods, external constraints lead to a range of opinions on student performance.

The diversity of teacher perspectives is an intriguing aspect of student performance. While some teachers sense motivation and a genuine desire for self-improvement in students, others hold differing opinions. The consensus is that students possess potential, but motivating them and unlocking their full potential is a significant challenge. An interesting observation is that most teachers believe this year's students are superior to the previous year, despite ongoing communication challenges. Variations in teacher perspectives are primarily influenced by student-teacher relationships, teaching methods, and student self-confidence.

Student performance is further influenced by their enthusiasm, subject preferences, and their perceived difficulty of subjects. Uninteresting subjects tend to result in disengagement, lower grades, and a lack of enthusiasm for learning. Additionally, students are more likely to skip classes or fall behind in subjects they find unappealing. These observations provide substantial evidence supporting the research hypothesis.

Conclusion

5.1 Recommendations

The research findings have illuminated several issues, and as a teacher-researcher, I'd like to propose some recommendations to address them:

1. Prioritize Communication Skills: It's understandable that teachers face challenges in choosing the right method. However, we should place greater emphasis on developing students' communication skills, with subject matter instruction as a secondary goal. A blend of the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can be effective. This involves incorporating code-switching during explanations and asking students questions to maintain their engagement. Placing inactive students in the front row can aid their understanding and motivate their participation.

2. Encourage Self-Improvement: To enhance students' English proficiency, it's crucial to motivate them to practice beyond the classroom. Teachers can assign homework and allocate one lecture a week for communication-focused activities such as presentations and group discussions.

3. Ban Arabic Usage in the First Year: Implementing a strict "no Arabic" rule during the initial year can compel students to make a choice: either work diligently to improve their English or consider a different department that aligns better with their language needs.

4. Support Silent Students: Teachers can focus more on quiet and inactive students by posing simple questions and seating them closer to the teacher to boost their confidence and encourage participation. Motivation and attitude play pivotal roles in English language learning.

5. Assist During Presentations: When students struggle during presentations or similar tasks, teachers should provide support, particularly when students encounter difficulties with language. It's acceptable if they make pronunciation mistakes initially, as some students grapple with performance anxiety.

6. Encourage Teacher Collaboration: Organize regular teacher meetings to exchange experiences and teaching methods. Shifting the classroom from a teacher-centered to a student-centered approach is vital for a more comfortable and effective learning environment.

7. Prepare for Academic Writing: To prepare students for their final year research, offer guidance on academic writing and encourage them to write essays, reports, and academic papers. This fosters creativity and readies them for their graduation projects.

8. Prompt Pronunciation Correction: Immediate correction of pronunciation is crucial, preventing students from memorizing words incorrectly. Timely feedback aids in pronunciation improvement.

9. Friendly Competition: Implementing friendly competition by comparing students with similar weaknesses during multiple lectures can motivate them to work harder and improve. However, teachers should exercise caution to prevent rivalry.

5.2 Conclusion

Reflecting on the research findings, a consistent theme emerges, acknowledged by all teachers: the prevalent use of Arabic during lectures, driven by a lack of motivation and students' dependency on teachers for clarifications. The most common reason cited by teachers is students' struggle to comprehend English, necessitating the use of Arabic for questions, explanations, and instructions. A minority of students actively converse in English, while others predominantly use Arabic or remain silent. This substantiates our research hypothesis for these specific students, although it's important to recognize that these findings may not be universally applicable to all English Language Teaching (ELT) contexts.

Another significant theme revolves around student activity. Some students become more engaged when teachers frequently use Arabic. Gender also plays a role, with students displaying more participation in lectures delivered by female teachers. Students' confidence and self-doubt regarding their language abilities significantly impact their classroom engagement.

One primary issue underlies these themes: the absence of an entrance exam for students entering the English department. The introduction of an entry assessment, with a minimum requirement of proficient English comprehension, can address this fundamental issue. By ensuring all students have a basic understanding of the language before commencing their academic journey, teachers can shift their focus to subject matter instruction and student progress, resulting in a more efficient learning experience for all involved. This study aims to shed light on existing challenges and propose potential solutions, serving as a foundation for future research on this topic.

References

Abu Srewel, F. (2002). The use of the learner's mother tongue in teaching English as a foreign language in some Libyan secondary schools in Tripoli. Unpublished masters' thesis, The Academy of Post-Graduate Studies, Tripoli, Libya.

Al-Khalil, A. L. E. A. The Role of Grammar-Translation Method in Enhancing EFL Learning Skills.

Aloreibi, A., & Carey, M. D. (2017). English language teaching in Libya after Gaddafi. In English language education policy in the Middle East and North Africa (pp. 93-114). Springer, Cham.

Altaieb, S. & Omar, Y. Z. (2015). Obstacles Libyan teachers of English encounter while implementing English language curriculum in Libyan high schools. Journal of Modern Education Review, 5(1), 840-853.

Al-Juboury, M. T., & Saedi, M. A. M. A. (2018). Modernizing Teaching English with Reference to Some of The Traditional Methods. Al-Adab Journal, 2(126), 53-72.

Algwil, K., (2019). The application of the communicative languae teaching method in the Libyan class at a UK university: Lesson Plan, Rationale and Evaluation. PUPIL:International Journal of Teaching, Education and Learning, 3(1), 245-257.

Asghar, I., Abbas, S., & Ahmad, N. N. (2021). Evaluation of English Language Teaching and Learning Skills at Secondary Level With Reference to Teaching Methods. Competitive Social Science Research Journal, 2(3), 17-33.

Asokhia, M. O. (2009). Improvisation/teaching aids: Aid to effective teaching of English language. International Journal of Education Science, 1(2), 79-85.

Brown, H. D. (1994). Principles of Language Learning and Teaching. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.

Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). Language teaching approaches: An overview. Teaching English as a second or foreign language, 2(1), 3-10.

Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton D.M. , Snow, M.A. (2014).Teaching English as Second or foreignLanguage. Boston.Cengage Learning.

El-Haddad, El-Mostapha, Ed. (et al.) Review of Teaching English in Libya – Textbooks Used in Preparatory and Secondary Levels in ESP in the Arab World:

Reality Check and Prospects, Proceedings of the XVIIth MATE Annual Conference, Erfoud, March 1997.

Gebhard, J. G. (1996). Teaching English as a foreign or second language: A selfdevelopment methodology guide. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Gilles, C. & Pierce, K. M. (2003). Making room for talk: Examining the historical implications of talk in learning. English Education, 36(1), 56-79.

Graddal, David (2006). "English Next–Why global English may mean the end of "English as aforeign Language", accessed from http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-english-next.pdf

GPCE (General People's Committee of Education). (2008). The development of education national report of Libya presented to the International Conference on Education Session (48) (Geneva, from 25-28 November 2008). Retrieved on May. 07, 2023 from http://www.ibe.unesco.org/National_Reports/ICE_2008/libya_NR08.pdf

Hashim, S. (1997). Review of Teaching English in Libya–Textbooks Used in Preparatory and Secondary Levels. In ESP in the Arab World: Reality Check and Prospects Proceedings of the XVIIth MATE Annual Conference Erfoud.

Howatt, Anthony Philip Reid, & Richard Smith. (2014). "The History of Teaching English as a Foreign Language, from a British and European Perspective." Language & History 57 (1): 75–95.

Howatt, Anthony Philip Reid, and Henry George Widdowson. (2004). A History of English Language Teaching. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hull, T. (2018). Content-based instruction: A communicative approach for the EFL classroom. PUPIL: International Journal of Teaching, Education and Learning, 2(3), 63-77.

Jabeen, S. S. (2014). Implementation of Communicative Approach. English Language Teaching, 7(8), 68-74.

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). Approaches and methods in language teaching. Cambridge university press.

Richter,B.(2006).First Steps in theoretical and applied Linguistics.Budapest. Bölcsész Konzorcium.

Jones, L., (2007). The student-centred classroom. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Kalia, P. (2017). Comparative study of methods: GTM and CLT. Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 22(5), 59-63.

Kelly, L. G. (1969). 25 Centuries of Language Teaching.

Khilafat, M., & Reddy, G. C. (2022). Libyan teachers' experience in teaching English as a second language and inclusion of target culture: some reflections. Journal of Positive School Psychology, 6(3), 48-56.

Kirk, Sandra. 2018. "Grammar-Translation: Tradition or Innovation?" In The History of Language Learning and Teaching: Volume II. 19th-20th Century Europe, edited by Nicola McLelland & Richard Smith, 21–33. Cambridge: Legenda.

Klinghardt, Hermann. 1888. Ein Jahr Erfahrungen mit der neuen Methode: Bericht über den unterricht mit einer englischen anfängerklasse im schuljahre 1887/88, Zugleich eine anleitung für jüngere fachgenossen. Marburg: N. G. Elwert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung.

Klippel, F., & Kemmler, R. (2021). Oral skills versus structural knowledge: the Reform Movement and the Grammar-Translation Method. Language & History, 64(3), 137-150.

Kong, N. (2011). Establishing a Comprehensive English Teaching Pattern Combining the Communicative Teaching Method and the Grammar-Translation Method. English Language Teaching, 4(1), 76-78.

Larsen, M., (2011), 3rd ed. Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching. Oxford. OUP.

Lenneberg, Eric H. 1967. Biological Foundations of Language. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Liu, W. & Shi, J. (2007)., An Analysis of Language Teaching Approaches and MethodsEffectiveness and Weakness. US-China Education Review, 4, 1, 69-71.

Liu, J. (2007). The place of methods in teaching English around the world. In J. Liu (Ed.). English language teaching in China: New approaches, perspectives and standards. (pp. 13-41). New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Rahaman, S. (n.d) Retrieved on May. 10, 2023 from: https://literaturexpres.com/role-of-reform-movement/

Rafique Ahmed, S. (2019). The Use of (GTM) Grammar Translation Method in the Subject of English at the Primary Level.

Mark, (2008) available at: www.ijsrm. Human journals.com (Advantages and Disadvantages of (GTM).

Metcalfe, B. D. (2006). Exploring cultural dimensions of gender and management in the Middle East. Thunderbird International Business Review, 48(1) 93-107.

McArthur T. (1992). The oxford companion to the english language. Oxford University Press.

Mitchell, Rosamond. 2009. "Foreign Language Teaching and Educational Policy." In Handbook of Foreign Language Communication and Learning, edited by Karlfried Knapp & Barbara Seidlhofer, 79–108. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Mohsen, A. H. S. (2014). Teaching English as a foreign language in Libya. Scientific research journal, 2(11), 58-64.

Najeeb, S. S. (2013). The business of teaching English as a second language: A Libyan case study. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 70, 1243-1253.

Natsir, M., & Sanjaya, D. (2014). Grammar translation method (GTM) versus communicative language teaching (CLT); A review of literature. International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies, 2(1), 58-62.

Newson D. (1998). Translation and Foreign Language Learning. In K. Malmkjær (ed.), Translation and Language Teaching: Language Teaching and Translation, Manchester, St. Jerome Publishing.

Omar, Y. Z. (2019). Influence of grammar translation method (GTM) on Libyan students' English performance in communicative situations. PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences, 5(2), 511-530.

Omar, Y. Z. (2014). Perceptions of selected Libyan English as a foreign language teachers regarding teaching of English in Libya (Doctoral dissertation, University of Missouri-Columbia).

Orbeta, E. D. and Decano, R. S. (2019). Factors associated with students' performance in English in the implementation of Spiral Progression. PUPIL: International Journal of Teaching, Education and Learning, 3(1), 45-70.

Oswald, D., Sherratt, F., & Smith, S. (2014). Handling the Hawthorne effect: The challenges surrounding a participant observer. Review of social studies, 1(1), 53-73.

Pennycook, A. (2004) 'History: after 1945', in M. Byram (ed.) Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning. London: Routledge. 275-282

Prabhu, N. S. (1990). There is no best method–Why? TESOL Quarterly, 24(2), 161- 176.

Prator, C. H. and M. Celce-Murcia (1979) An Outline of Language Teaching Approaches in Celce-Murcia, M. and L. McIntosh (eds.) (1979)

Rhema, A. & Miliszewska, I. (2010). Towards e-learning in higher education in Libya. Issues in Informing Science and Information Technology, 7, 423-437.

Richards, J. C. and T. S. Rodgers,(2001), Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching: A Description and Analyses. Cambridge University Press, p.3. Ibid. p.5.

Richards, J. C. and T. S. Rodgers (1986) Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching. CUP.

Rowlinson, W. (1994) 'The Historical Ball and Chain', in Swarbrick, A. (ed.) Teaching Modern Languages. London: Open University: 7-17.

Scovel, Tom. 1969. Foreign accents, language acquisition, and cerebral dominance. Language Learning 19.24 5-253.

Shihiba, S. E. S. (2011). An investigation of Libyan EFL teachers' conceptions of the communicative learner-centred approach in relation to their implementation of an English language curriculum innovation in secondary schools. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Durham University, England.

Siefert, Thomas Raymond.(2013). Translation in Foreign Language Pedagogy: The Rise and Fall of the Grammar Translation Method. Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University.

Tamtam, A., Gallagher, F., Olabi, A. G., & Naher, S. (2011). Higher education in Libya, system under stress. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 29, 742-751.

Taylor, B. P. (1974). Toward a theory of language acquisition 1. Language learning, 24(1), 23-35.

Viëtor, Wilhelm. 1902. Die Methodik des neusprachlichen Unterrichts: Ein geschichtlicher Überblick in vier Vorträgen von Wilhelm Viëtor. Leipzig: Verlag von B. G. Teubner.

Vishal Gupta. (2016). Advantages and disadvantages of grammar-translation method, Retrieved from

https://www.examweb.in/grammar-translation-methodadvantages-disadvantages-3964