WHY GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD?

by:
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Among all the skills in the field of communication, not to discount “reading” is “speaking”, the latter makes a pressing issue in the field. This holds true up to date especially in the second language and more of this issue is in teaching the foreign language. Most learners, who have been diagnosed to have reading problems most likely are the learners who cannot speak the second language.

Facts presented that this issue needs immediate intervention for these learners who cannot adopt and project the skill that needs to be developed, inside and outside school rooms and premise (Inocencio 2002). Besides intervention and remediation, teachers, at least, should make use of a methodology that might serve as a wheel to run the teacher’s objective and deliver the needed competencies in day-to-day discussions. Objectives and competencies that may acquire that skill directly or indirectly must align it with this important skill in communication – the effective skill of speaking.

Grammar Translation Method (GTM) is a methodology that encodes the counterpart meaning of a certain idea (in phrase or sentence) from one language to another language. This may bridge the “gap of interconnecting idea” when the learners want to express themselves especially during oral reports or even during a recitation. GTM may cord that gap, in the process of letting the learner express his idea/answer using the first language (L1) in the English class. Requiring learners to an absolute use of the second language (L2) may retard the flow of the class discussion.
The role of the teacher as facilitator performs the “translation” for better absorption, comprehension, and application of the ideas presented by the learners. Only the needed parts of their answers should be translated into the target language. Along in the process, the teacher should give the appropriate explanation of why GTM is needed. This helps not to compromise the willingness of the student to share his idea in the L2 during discussions. The L2 is mandatory in some points but this will hamper the spontaneous flow of “idea sharing” in the class. Allowing them to answer in L1, along with teacher’s knowledge of GTM, brings the communication or discussion in the right track until the certain competency is achieved.

Constant use or overuse of GTM in the classroom discussion could be misinterpreted as using the inappropriate medium of instruction for the subject. This could be avoided simply knowing when to use it. Let the GTM be useful for those learners, whose ideas may bring “sense” and not as an “gap” as important contribution of learners in the discussion. Teachers otherwise, must not fail “to translate” in details and make the learners repeat the so called “translated ideas”.

After all, these learners may apply the GTM and approaches when they go to Higher Education. Some courses in college, for example, learning a foreign language sometimes is a requirement in the discipline they have chosen. Certainly, the GTM is alive. L1 to L3 (foreign language) is noticeable Korean, Mandarin and Japanese languages are mandated and needed to be learned. Only GTM fits to earn the learning of the L3 and that is why we need to use GTM in the classroom.

References:
