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TEACHING MINIMUM GRAMMATICAL MATERIALS TO 5TH GRADE STUDENTS BASED ON A COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH

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Abstract

Finding the methodology that best suits your students is the most important element in the teaching process, especially when it comes to teaching English as a foreign language. With the phenomenal adoption of the communicative approach, the traditional approach has taken a relatively smaller place in most language courses. This paper aims to show that a mixture of approaches is better than using a single approach. Experience and practice have shown that both the communicative and traditional approaches are more effective and efficient. While the communicative approach provides learners with the cultural context of the target language, the traditional approach introduces the features of the language and its structure, mainly grammar. In most of my classrooms, teaching grammar and syntax has proven fundamental and essential, as the grammar and syntax of Arabic (the native language) differs from English (the target foreign language). To improve the quality of teaching and achieve better results, both approaches should therefore be used. The article also gives a brief overview of the historical background of the two teaching approaches and shows the main advantages and disadvantages of implementing the communicative and the traditional approach.

Keywords: audio-lingual method, the direct method, the reading method, target language, approaches, particular trick, strategy.

Throughout history, teachers and educators have adopted many different teaching methods and approaches, such as B. the grammar teaching method, the audio-lingual method, the direct method, the reading method, and many others. However, the traditional language teaching approach (sometimes referred to as the grammar-translation method) and the communicative approach have long been the two most commonly used by teachers. Because teaching a second or foreign language is different from teaching a first or first language, teachers, educators, and linguists are constantly looking for new methods and approaches that lead to more effective teaching. Ultimately, the ultimate goal is to meet learners' needs and help them learn



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a second/foreign language. For this reason, it is suggested that linguists and educators stop looking for a better method and start looking for teaching methods or strategies that are tailored to local needs and experiences. Approach, method, technique to improve the quality of language teaching, the American linguist Edward Anthony (1963) identifies three important concepts called approach, method, and technique, which are arranged hierarchically. Approach, method, and technique are among the most commonly used terms in any academic curriculum. To avoid confusion, Anthony (1963) defines each term as follows: a. Approach It is a set of correlative assumptions that address the nature of language teaching and learning and describe the nature of the subject to be taught. b. Method - It is an overall plan of orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and everything is based on the chosen approach. A single approach encompasses multiple methods. c. Technique It is what takes place in a language class, such as a particular trick, strategy, or plan to achieve a particular goal. In other words, the organizational key is that techniques perform a method consistent with an approach. Besides Anthony (1963), Celce-Murcia (2001), and Brown (2007) suggest that among the three concepts defined above, the teaching ESL/EFL method is the most fundamental. It is a series of systematic presentations that teachers use in their classes to make their students feel comfortable, satisfied, and not bored.

English as a world language: As noted by The Economist (2001), English has become the global language that has influenced the whole world. It is estimated that one-sixth of the world's population speaks or uses English. English is used not only as a language of communication but also as the main language of the United Nations and NATO, the official language of international aviation, the unofficial first language of sports, radio broadcasts, letter writing, rapidly developing technology, films, scientific research and its literature and web-based job advertisements. Today, English is taught in three different settings: first language or mother tongue (L1), second language (ESL), and foreign language (EFL). Kachru (1986, 1992, 2006) describes these 3 settings as inner-circle countries, outer-circle countries, and expanding-circle countries. In the countries of the expanding circle, English is taught and used as a foreign language. These include countries such as China, Russia, Spain, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and many others where English is considered fundamental to international news, popular culture, and advanced education. Recently it has been argued that non-native speakers of English are more likely to



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be native speakers of monolingual English. According to Savignon (2007), the ratio is more than two to one. Thus, as the world language of the 21st century, the Cairo Egyptian Gazette proclaims that English is the property of the whole world and not just of Americans or other inner-circle countries.

English as a Second Language: In addition to what has already been said, English in a second language environment has a strong presence in 4 different areas. First of all, English is the main language of the mass media, the language of newspapers, radio, and television. In addition, English is the language of official institutions such as the court and government (local and central). In addition, it is the language used in educational institutions, especially in schools and universities. Last but not least, English is considered an essential part of trade and industry organizations. In the countries of the outer circle, excellent knowledge of English as a second language allows for a smooth transition to social development and economic advancement. English as a second language is learned not only in the Outer Circle countries but also in the Inner Circle countries. Immigrants to Britain, the United States, Canada, or Australia learn English for inclusive purposes, which enables them to identify with the host country's native-speaking community and to use it as a lingua franca with people from a linguistic background different from theirs.

English as a Foreign Language: It is believed that people learn a foreign language for two different reasons. On the one hand, they learn a foreign language for instrumental purposes. This group of learners includes tourists, vendors, and science students. You need the foreign language for operational purposes, e.g. B. reading a book in the target language and communicating with other speakers of that language. On this basis, people learn English as a foreign language, either to visit England, to communicate with other tourists who speak English, or to read English books and newspapers. On the other hand, some people learn a foreign language for integrative reasons. Learners in this group have the urge to identify with the language community of the target language (foreign language). By knowing the language, they feel at home and understand the attitudes and worldviews of that language community. According to Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill & Pincas (2003), EFL, unlike English as a second language, is only taught in schools; it has nothing to do with the national or social life of the learners (p. 6).



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Recently, the line between ESL and EFL has thinned as English becomes more global. The status of English has also changed in many countries. For example, with the diminishing role of English in countries like India and Sri Lanka, the emphasis has shifted from a second language to a foreign language. At the same time, the opposite is true for other countries. Linguistic and political decisions in many European countries such as Sweden and Holland have facilitated the transition from a foreign language situation to a second language situation. Second or foreign language, Savignon (2007) argues that the emergence of English as a world language had a major impact on the whole concept of language teaching (p. 210). For Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill & Pincas (2003), English is either the language of a neighboring country or a language of global importance, which is why educators devote more teaching hours to English than to other languages or subjects in the curriculum. The Traditional Approach to Language Teaching Teacher-centred, memorization, memorization of rules and vocabulary, passive learning, and separate desks are some of the terms that describe the traditional approach to language teaching. It mainly focuses on the rules and structure of the target language, for which the teacher uses well-organized and structured textbooks. One of the unique features of traditional language teaching is that teachers explain the grammar rules face-to-face. They interact with their learners by tailoring their lesson plans and materials to the needs of the class.

On the other hand, the traditional language teaching approach has a few disadvantages. Because it is a teacher-centered approach, it leaves little room for learner creativity. During the teaching process, learners receive passive input. The teacher explains a particular rule of speech thoroughly and factually, leaving the learners almost no opportunity to think. It's worth noting that both teacher-student and student-student interactions are minimal - quiet classes that lead to boredom.

According to Larsen-Freeman & Anderson (2011), key features of traditional language teaching methods include:

1. Translation from a foreign language to a native language
2. Learning grammar deductively
3. Memorizing native-speaker equivalents for foreign-language vocabulary
4. Teacher-Centered Class
5. Little teacher-student and student-student interaction
6. Focus more on vocabulary and grammar rules than meaning
7. Immediate correction of errors
8. Importance of the exact structure.



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Historical background of communicative language teaching The origins of communicative language teaching can be traced back to the late 1960s when the British language teaching system was looking for change played an important role in exploring new theories of instruction. According to him, instead of describing and teaching language through its traditional concepts of grammar and vocabulary, a system of meaning for the communicative use of language was demonstrated through categories of communicative functions such as requests, rejections, offers, and complaints. It is worth noting that after the emergence of English as a world language, communicative language teaching has become a buzzword in discussions about the practice and theory of second and foreign language teaching.

Communicative language teaching approach in response to the disadvantages of the traditional language teaching approach, the communicative language teaching approach was introduced. Therefore, the concept of isolated teaching has been replaced by the concept of language teaching in context, more precisely in a social context. In contrast to the traditional language teaching approach, the terms that best describe the communicative language teaching approach are student-centered, active learner, group work, and context-based. In communicative teaching, the teacher is seen as a top performer. The students work on tasks in small groups. As a result, they have the opportunity to interact more and use language to communicate. In addition, communicative language classes prepare learners to use the target language in real-life situations. However, less attention is paid to the form and structure of language. Teachers focus on meaning more and avoid correcting mistakes.

As noted by Thornbury (1999), differences in attitudes toward the role of grammar in foreign language teaching reflect differences between teaching methods, teachers, and learners. He believes that in the last 50 years, no other topic has occupied theorists and linguists as much as the topic of grammar teaching in foreign language classes. He goes on to say that the entire history of language teaching could be summed up in the claims and counterclaims for and against grammar teaching (p. 14). Some teachers believe in the misconception that communicative language teaching means not teaching grammar. Larsen-Freeman (1986) and Johnson (1982) suggest that in communicative language teaching primary importance is attached to the use of language for communication or the function of language, while structure or form is of secondary importance. On the contrary, teaching grammar and structure is essential for the reasons given above. Using language for communication does not mean using ungrammatical sentences. The majority of ESL learners need English



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for professional purposes, writing emails and presenting reports. It is unacceptable to write sentences with imprecise grammar and structure. For example, consider the following two sentences:

Let's eat Grandpa.

Let's eat, grandpa.

In these 2 sentences, the comma has a great influence on the meaning. Therefore, knowing the correct punctuation is necessary to understand the meaning of a sentence. As native Arabic speakers who speak and hear Arabic all day long, they find it difficult to think in English. Most students think in Arabic and translate it into English. Sometimes the meaning is not conveyed due to poor translation; sometimes they write sentences that follow the word order of an Arabic sentence. Another example is the tense of the verb. Instruction is required to teach students the form of each tense in English. It is unacceptable for a student to write an essay in which all tenses are misspelled. Therefore, the integration of form-focused practice with meaning-focused experience is strongly recommended. In addition, the implementation of the communicative approach in EFL lessons (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) is more difficult. The classroom is the only place where learners receive input in the target language, and most cases no more than 2 hours per week. Therefore, it is very difficult for them to use a foreign language to perform a communicative task.

Conclusion:

To sum up, to improve teaching quality and get the best results, teachers should combine the benefits of both approaches and apply them in their classrooms. While Hymes (1972) proposes that grammar rules are useless without usage rules, Canale & Swain (1980) propose that usage rules are useless without grammar rules. Indeed, Prabhu (1990) notes that some teachers believe that there has never been a best approach to teaching; for them, different contexts require different approaches; Which makes the lesson more challenging. For Bax (2003), Burns (2013), Kumaravadivelu (2012), and McKay (2011), the best pedagogical approach is achieved through the blending of local and global considerations, resulting in desired local outcomes and global needs being met simultaneously. If teachers blindly follow the communicative approach and never comment on the rules of sentence structure and word order unless they point out mistakes and inaccuracies promptly, students will fail to form grammatically correct sentences and compare their



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mistakes to recognize other sentences. It is recommended not to ignore any approach, no matter what. Teachers can teach grammar and structure to help learners form accurate sentences while communicating; They can teach how to use language to communicate, benefiting from their knowledge of language rules. After all, the future is still unknown. A new day, a new approach, and a new theory of language are always waiting to be discovered.

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