BRAC University

66, Mohakhali C/A, Dhaka 1212

Creative Grammar Teaching: Reviewing Some Established English Language Teaching (ELT) Methods

Carmel Gomes

ID: 07303011

Department of English and Humanities

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By

Carmel Gomes

Student ID: 07303011

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Carmel Gomes

ID: 07303011

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Abstract

This report is based on experiences from the classes I taught during my internship at St. Francis Xavier's Greenherald Int'l School with a focus on teaching grammar in ESL classroom. During my internship, I tried to relate the theories and knowledge from various ESL and ELT courses I have studied in my graduation period with the real life classroom experiences. This paper also includes some suggestions for teaching grammar in classroom and recommendations towards solving a few problems which I have faced during my internship as a teacher at the school.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Grammar is often described as the rules of a language. According to Widdowson (1990), "...grammar is not a constraining imposition but a liberating force: it frees us from a dependency on context and a purely lexical categorization of reality," (Cullen, 2008, p. 221). The concept is that grammar is something that liberates a language user from relying on lexis and context. That is, without having the knowledge of grammar, a learner is supposed to forcefully rely on "lexis and the immediate context, combined with gestures, intonation and other prosodic and non-verbal features" in order to communicate his or her intended meanings. (Cullen, 2007, p. 221). For communicating, people need to know the language and for knowing the language, it is important to learn its rules that are grammar.

Since the necessity of teaching grammar was realized long back by the language experts, different approaches and methods have been discovered so far for teaching and learning grammar like: Grammar Translation Method (GTM), Direct Method, Audio Lingual Method (ALM), Silent Way, Desuggestopedia, Total Physical Response (TPR), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and so on. Also, a teacher can use an eclectic method for teaching grammar; that is, adopt techniques from different methods and approaches and thus make a fusion of all methods.

Besides adopting a suitable method and technique for grammar teaching, it is also important for a teacher to consider the socio-cultural environment of the learners which "often determine the suitability of both materials and methods," (Mcdonough, 2003, p. 8). Also, in order to carry the theory into practice, the materials should be designed in an appropriate way.

That is why, for teaching grammar in an effective way, the appropriate adaptation of methods and techniques are very important for both teachers and students.

During my internship, from my real classroom teaching experiences, I noticed that GTM, ALM and CLT were very suitable for teaching English grammar. As my aim was to create a fine base of English grammar, I think the three methods worked very well except for a few drawbacks. On the other hand, it is also true that for a teaching method or technique to be effective, learners' age, interests, level of proficiency, mother tongue, preferred learning style, personality etc play a vital role besides teacher's preference of tasks and style of teaching (Mcdonough, 2003, pp. 6-7).

I completed my internship from St. Francis Xavier's Greenherald Int'l School, which is in Asad Avenue, Mohammedpur. The duration of my internship was three and a half months starting from January 26, 2011 to May 16, 2011. I was appointed as an intern teacher and my responsibility was to teach English grammar to the students of grade III. Unlike many teachers, I tried to implement different popular techniques of Grammar Translation Method, Audio Lingual Method and Communicative Language Teaching for teaching grammar instead of sticking to one particular method and its techniques. My goal was to make the grammar class interesting and lively through a combination of different teaching methods and techniques.

In my report, I will discuss the methods and techniques which I used for teaching grammar in a creative way during my internship. Besides reviewing previous research on these three methods, I will explain how I implemented the theories and techniques in my classes. In this paper, I will try to relate my theoretical knowledge of the courses studied, i. e. Second Language Acquisition (SLA), English Language Teaching (ELT) Methodology, Teaching

Techniques, Teaching Practicum, Material Design and so on to my experiences as a practitioner at St. Francis Xavier's Greenherald Int'l School. The methods and approaches that I incorporated into my grammar teaching are: Grammar Translation Method (GTM), Audio Lingual Method (ALM), and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

Chapter 2: School Profile

St. Francis Xavier's Greenherald International School

St. Francis Xavier's Greenherald Int'l School is one of the renowned English medium schools in Bangladesh. The school is an extension of the St. Francis Xavier's Luxmibazar English Medium School which was closed in 1971 during the liberation war of Bangladesh. Later, in 1972 the school was reopened by the order of the Education Ministry for the children of foreign nationals only. But afterward Bangladeshi children were also allowed to study in this school.

The school is situated at Asad Avenue, Mohammedpur on a large ground. The school is a long three storied building with sufficient open places around it. There is a large playground and a basketball court in the school surrounding. The school has an excellent environment fenced with plenty of large trees.

Since 1954, the school has its affiliation with the Cambridge University, U.K. The school is "…owned and run by the Sisters of the Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions, a Roman Catholic Order, originating in France, whose main apostolate is education of children," (Student/Parent Handbook, 2003, p. 2).

Besides preparing the students for intellectual excellence, the school also works to give the formation of the whole person through an integrated Curriculum based on the values of education. It is to prepare students personally for future leadership responsibility both nationwide and worldwide.

The school follows the Cambridge Curriculum for both 'O' and 'A' level. From K.G. I to grade 12, there are around 1,350 students learning in this school. In average, there are 40-50 students in each section. All are equal and everyone at school shares in the responsibility of providing a positive and secure academic environment.

The students of the school are very active and self-motivated and it is mandatory for them to take part in different extracurricular activities. The school has science lab, computer lab and a large well enriched library from where the students can get benefit. For the students, the school offers a variety of extracurricular activities like: Debate Club; Science Club; Drama Club; Computer Club; Sports Competitions- Football, Basketball, Volleyball, Cricket; Art and Painting Competitions; Dancing and Choir Singing; School Newsletters; Yearly Magazine and so on. The students discover their strengths and talents through these activities. Hence, students are encouraged to make good use of these opportunities. Also, educational excursions, meena bazar, science fair etc are arranged for the students (Student/Parent Handbook, 2003, p. 2-15). .

While working as an intern teacher, I have found that St. Francis Xavier's Greenherald is an excellent school where besides a standard curriculum, students are exposed to numerous extracurricular activities and are nurtured in a caring and mostly disciplined environment.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

The twentieth century is a time of the global village and the World Wide Web. Now-a-days people have to learn another language specially English not only for getting higher education but also for communicating with people from different speech communities for various purposes. While learning or acquiring a new language, it is essential to use the language accurately with correct grammar. Otherwise, communication may get hampered. Different language teaching and learning methods have been introduced so far for teaching a foreign or second language. For an ESL teacher, it is very important to use a context friendly method rather than just adopting a popular and established method blindly. Also s/he can use a blend of different methods instead of sticking to one method. While using various methods, the teacher has to notice carefully which method works best for his or her classroom and adopt that particular method. There exits different language teaching methods for teaching grammar of the target language. In my teaching, I mostly used Grammar Translation Method, Audio Lingual Method and Communicative Language Teaching while teaching grammar. In this literature review I will discuss a selection of ESL methods that, I used to teach my students.

3.1 Methods of Teaching Grammar:

3.1.1 Grammar Translation Method (GTM):

Grammar Translation Method is a traditional method which was used for teaching classical languages like Latin and Greek. Back in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries in the Western world foreign language teaching and learning was associated with the learning of Latin and Greek. The focus was given on rote memorization of grammar rules and vocabulary, learning syntactic structures and also translation of literary texts (Thanasoulas, 2002). As cited in Larsen-

Freeman (2004), Chastain (1988) points out that once this method was called Classical Method since it was used to teach classical languages (p. 11). Then, in the late nineteenth century, the method came to be known as the Grammar Translation Method. "Grammar translation is a way of studying a language that approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences and tasks into and out of the target language," (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.5). This method considers learning the grammatical rules, memorizing vocabularies and translation of texts as primary goals for learning without focusing on the learners' communicative skills. This leads to the idea that the method teaches students about the target language but does not teach how to use the language.

3.1.2 Objectives and Principles of Grammar Translation Method:

Some basic principles and objectives of Grammar Translation Method (GTM) regarding grammar teaching are-

In Grammar Translation Method, students are focused to learn the grammatical rules and vocabularies of the target language rather than, making them able to communicate in the target language (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p. 16). This is because, the main objective or focus of GTM is to prepare the students read and understand literature in the target language (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p. 17). Also, students are required to develop their written grammatical knowledge but not spoken grammar. In the book *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*, Richards and Rodgers (2001) says "Reading and writing are the major focus; little or no systematic attention is paid to spelling or listening," (p.6). Accordingly, pronunciation receives almost no attention (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p. 16). Translation is considered to be an essential part of grammar

teaching in GTM. In this method, the learners have to translate sentences "into and out of the target language" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.6). They are asked to translate from the native language (L1) to target language (L2) or vice versa. Deductive approach of teaching grammar is followed in GTM (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 6). The teachers first explain the rules which the students are asked to memorize and then examples are provided. Also while explaining the grammatical rules, the teacher uses the learners' native language. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), the native language is used as a medium of instruction while explaining a new item (p.6). Learners' L1 is allowed in the classroom with complete freedom.

3.1.3 Audio Lingual Method (ALM):

The Audio Lingual Method was first introduced with the name Army method when the American soldiers started learning the language of their partners and enemies with a limited set of language items in order to perform certain oral functions. These were done through memorization of set phrases, repetitive drills, learning contextual vocabularies without any grammatical explanations. Later in 1950s, the method came to be known as the Audio Lingual Method (Thanasoulas, 2002). The method is an oral-based approach having a strong theoretical base in linguistics and psychology. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), "It was the incorporation of the linguistics principles of the aural-oral approach with state-of-the-art psychological learning theory in the mid- 1950s that led to the method that came to be known as Audiolingualism," (p. 53). Sometimes, the method is also referred as Michigan Method as it was Charles Fries (1945) of the University of Michigan and his colleagues who rejected approaches like: Direct method in which learners are immersed into the language, use it and absorb its grammatical patterns gradually and then applied principles from structural linguistics in order to develop the Audio lingual method (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, chap.4). In ALM, speech is

viewed as more basic criteria than the written form and that is why it intends to teach the language and not only the rules of the language (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.55).

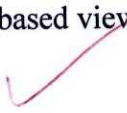### 3.1.4 Objectives and Principles of Audio Lingual Method:

Incorporating with the grammar teaching, Audio Lingual method has few basic principles or features:

In ALM, grammar items and structural patterns are introduced to the students in the form of dialogues which the learners learn through imitation and repetition. Thus, grammar is introduced from the examples presented instead of providing explicit grammar rules (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p.45). Also, the method believes that students will internalize the patterns through continuous drilling which is not only a central technique but also a unique feature of ALM (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, chap.4). Also learning vocabulary of the target language is kept to a minimum as the main objective of the method is to teach the grammatical patterns and sound systems of the target language proficiently (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p. 46). Towards this objective, a teacher's role is vital as it is him or her who is responsible for providing the students with a good model for imitation. Learners are imitators of the teacher. Learners follow the teacher's direction and response accordingly. As cited in Larsen-Freeman (2004), "The teacher is like an orchestra leader, directing and controlling the language behavior of her students," (p. 45). While mastering the grammar rules and pronunciation through repetitive drills, students do it first through listening then uttering and then consequently reading and writing. That is how language is taught in natural order (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing) in ALM (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p.44). Additionally, accuracy of the sentence patterns and pronunciation is emphasized in this method (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 157). The teacher controls the

learners and prevents them from doing errors. The method focuses on the notion, "Get it right from the beginning," (Lightbown and Spada, 1999, p. 118) and hence prevents the learners from making errors. As the errors could become habits, it is better to prevent the bad habits before they happen. Furthermore while teaching grammar; the method does not consider translation of sentences as necessary criterion. Translation is absolutely forbidden as it is thought that the habits of the learners native language would interfere mastering the target language (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p. 47). Therefore, translation is not practiced in the classroom.

3.1.5 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):

"Experience is the best of all schools," having this notion as base, Communicative Language Teaching or CLT was introduced. Emphasizing on the functional and communicative prospective of language, it was British Applied linguists who focused on the communicative competence rather than structural competence. Finally, it was they and its government who accepted the new approach and made it prominent both nationally and internationally which came to be known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT); a combination of grammatical and functional teaching (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, chap. 14). Towards the goal of enabling the students communicatively competent, the method aims to develop procedures for the teaching and learning of all the four language skills. It was Krashen and other second language acquisition theorists who believe that language learning occurs through communicative use of language rather than through practicing language skills (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 162). And it is CLT that focuses on practical language usage rather than only practicing language skills. This method is therefore learning by doing or the experience approach and thus can also be referred to as learner-centered and experience-based view of second language teaching.

3.1.6 Objectives and Principles of Communicative Language Teaching:

CLT has a few basic principles in connection with grammar teaching in a classroom. They are-

The main objective of CLT is to enable the students to communicate properly in the target language. It is CLT that says Language is for communication and thus believes that students ought to know the knowledge of the linguistic forms, meanings and also functions (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p. 128). That is, besides practicing language usage students also need to know the proper grammar rules. An obvious feature of CLT is that teaching is done with a communicative intent and in a proper social context; giving the students a feeling of being in a real life situation while using authentic materials. In this regard, the role of a teacher is very significant in this method. As, in CLT, learning occurs within a situational framework engaging students in real life communication process through role plays, picture strip story, language games etc, it is him or her whose major responsibility is to create appropriate situations where students can participate in such situations. Because, the grammar and vocabulary items to learn are expected to be acquired from such contexts (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, chap. 5). That is how CLT follows inductive approach of grammar teaching. Instead of directly stating the rules or definitions of grammar, it presents the rules implicitly which the students elicit after the completion of certain activities (Larsen-freeman, 2004, chap. 5). Unlike Grammar Translation Method, the language items are learnt in a natural process. As cited in Larsen-Freeman (2004), "students work on all the four skills from the beginning," (p. 131). Being in a natural setting, they are exposed to develop all the four language skills simultaneously just like people acquire their native language. In addition, "the sequence of units is determined solely by principles of linguistic complexity," (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 157). While teaching grammatical rules,

the simpler items are introduced and taught first. Once it is internalized and the learners get more proficient in the target language, the previously learnt items are re-introduced and more complex items are then taught (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p. 131). For example, in learning to make request, beginning learners might practice 'May I borrow your pen?' whereas more proficient learners might learn 'May I have the pleasure....?'. In CLT "fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal," (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 157). The method focuses on both fluency and the accuracy of language forms. Towards the goal errors are seen as a natural outcome. If any grammatical errors are made during an activity, the teacher tends to ignore it instead of correcting it immediately assuming that it might hamper the fluency (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, chap. 9).

3.2 Approaches of Teaching Grammar:

Deductive and Inductive approaches are the two of the basic approaches used to the presentation of language items.

3.2.1 Deductive Approach:

Deductive approach of teaching grammar is a way of teaching where rules and definitions of grammar items are presented first followed by examples. According to Paradowski (2007), in this approach learners are provided with ready-made grammar rules and a detail of the formation of the new structure, what are its' components and in which contexts it can be used (pp.110-114). Gollin (1998) states that, "Language learning is most clearly deductive when a teacher gives an explicit statement of the rule, which the students then apply to examples," (p. 88). In this approach, firstly grammar rules and examples of structures are given and then language is

practiced (Gower, Phillips, & Walters, 1995, p. 135). For example, the traditional Grammar Translation Method purely uses the deductive approach (Gollin, 1998, p. 88).

3.2.2 Inductive Approach:

In inductive approach, initially a situation is established which contextualizes the language item to be learnt and then, the students discover the structures from the context. It can also be called as a "rule discovery" technique where students are not merely provided with readymade grammar rules (Paradowski, 2007, pp. 110-114). Gollin (1998) says that, "The term 'inductive' most obviously applies when a child learns its first language by inducing the rules from exposure to the language in use," (p.88). It is a way of teaching grammar implicitly without stating the grammar rules directly to the students. An example is CLT where everything is taught implicitly through an inductive way.

3.3 Teaching Grammar in ESL classrooms:

CLT has given some explicit suggestions about how to deal with grammar in ESL classrooms. One of them is PPP model.

3.3.1 PPP (Presentation, Practice and Production):

A variation on Audio-lingualism was done in British based teaching and in some other places and a new procedure came from it which is known as PPP or Presentation, Practice and Production (Harmer, 2001, p.80). Such procedure is mostly useful for lower level students where much of the language items are new to them (Gower et al, 1995, p. 126). For teaching grammar PPP framework is helpful. It is divided into three phases; Presentation, Practice and Production. The first phase is 'Presentation'. As cited in Scrivener (1994), "Presentation usually refers to

ways of introducing supposedly 'new' language to learners, and typically involves exposure to language (usually in restricted form) alongside other language information via teacher explanation, elicitation and guided discovery," (p. 271). In this stage teacher introduces the new language usually with a situation to elicit the existing knowledge of the students. S/he can do this by showing picture, describing story or incident and also using physical gesture followed by question-answer and discussion session (Harmer, 2001, p. 80). Then, the second phase is named as 'Practice' where learners try to exercise themselves the language items they have learnt through controlled activities like: choral repetition, individual repetition, cue-response drills etc. Students repeat and practice whatever is asked by the teacher with no use of their own creativity. Additionally, the teacher corrects any mistakes s/he hears in this stage. Next, the third phase is 'Production' where the learners actually produces new sentences by using own creativeness. This stage is also called as immediate creativity as students use their creativity in this stage through various open ended activities (Harmer, 2001, p. 81). Instead of just drilling and repeating sentences like the second phase, they are mostly involved in self-doing activities. For example: they might be asked to describe a situation of their own or write a paragraph or composition using the new language item. This is how PPP model can be used to teach grammar. It is not only presenting the grammar items then practicing it and finally producing it but also, executing it in an effective and creative way. As cited in Harmer (2001), the PPP procedure is still used by a large number of trainers and trainees as the main default model for teaching new language forms (p. 82).

Chapter 4: My Experience
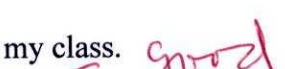
4.1 <u>Experiences as an Intern:</u>

I completed my internship at St. Francis Xavier's Greenherald International School where I was appointed as an English teacher of grade III. There were thirty three students and I was told to take care of the language part that is English Grammar. Besides teaching grammar, I sometimes involved my students in practicing creative writing in the class. *New Brighter Grammar- 1* was the textbook which I had to follow besides using some other reference books. Going through the syllabus, I decided to move from easier topics to the difficult ones and thus follow what Lightbown and Spada (1999) stated, "Teachers should teach simple language structures before complex ones," (p. 166). On the first two days I observed two classes of grade III. From the observation I noticed how the teachers teach and manage the students in the classroom. It was a grammar class where the teacher was teaching following the Grammar Translation Method. From my conversation with the Junior Section In-charge, I came to know that though the teachers use different communicative approaches but mostly GTM is followed in the grammar classes. Since then, I decided to implement different teaching methods and techniques for teaching grammar in my class.

Also I noticed that the seats were in the traditional arrangement, i.e. in rows. In front of the class there were a big blackboard and a table facing the students.

In this part, I would like to discuss the different teaching methods and their techniques I implemented to teach grammar and also comment on their effectiveness.

4.2 Implementation of different teaching methods:

A variety of teaching methods have been proposed so far for teaching grammar. Among them mostly I followed the GTM, ALM and CLT. From my experiences, I believe that before each class every teacher has to go through the content of the topics and prepare a lesson plan. I too practiced that. The day before each class, I used to study the topics. The purpose of my self-study was to make myself prepared so that I can answer every possible inquiry of my students. Also, my intention was to seek for a suitable teaching method(s) and technique(s) for teaching certain grammar item(s). Thus, I prepared lesson plans before my classes. To cater to my students' needs, I followed an eclectic method in my class. *good*

4.2.1 Grammar Translation Method (GTM):

For teaching a second or foreign language, Grammar Translation Method or GTM mainly focuses on the structural rules of the target language. During my observation period, I noticed the teacher was using GTM mostly in the grammar class. I too used Grammar Translation Method in my class. The GTM techniques that I followed are discussed below.

➢ **Memorization:**

Memorizing structural patterns is one of the widely used techniques of GTM. Memorization of grammar rules and vocabularies is a basic technique followed in regard of grammar teaching. However, I personally did not support this technique much until I implemented the technique in class and got effective result of it. In order to teach certain topic(s), I had to apply this particular technique in my class. For example, there was a topic named as 'Pronouns: subject and object' where the students were to identify which pronouns are used as subjects and which as objects in a sentence. It seemed a bit difficult for them to distinguish as there is no specific rule(s) given for

that. Even after practicing some exercises they seemed to be confused. So, I gave them a list of fourteen isolated words and asked to memorize those words. Later, I found it effective as the students memorized those and were able to identify the words properly.

Also, I applied the same technique while teaching 'irregular plurals'. A list of examples of irregular plurals was given in their textbook which they had to remember accurately. So, I asked them to memorize all the rules and examples which actually made the learning easier. Then, I realized using such technique is effective while teaching certain language items like irregular plurals, genders etc which cannot be learnt without memorization.

➢ **Using words in sentences:**

Another technique that I implemented in my class is 'use words in sentence'. In order to see that the students has understood the meaning and use of new grammar rules, they were given some words and were asked to make new sentences using those words. While teaching 'interjections,' I implemented this technique in my class. First, I showed them a list of few words written in a box. Then, I told them when and how such words are used. For example: to express surprise, pleasure, pain etc. Lastly, I gave them a task where a list of words (i.e. exclamatory words) were given which they had to use in order to form new sentences. After completion of the task, I found that most of the students created meaningful sentences.

➢ **Fill-in-the-blanks:**

'Fill-in-the-blanks' is a common technique used in GTM. Here, usually students are given a series of sentences with words missing and are expected to fill the blanks with a particular grammar item or vocabulary. I too applied this technique while teaching verbs specially 'be verbs'. Firstly, I explained what 'be verbs' are and why and where they are used. When it

seemed that the students got the idea, I wrote a series of sentences with blanks on the board and then asked them to fill the blanks with suitable 'be verbs'. Here, mainly I did board practice. I selected students randomly and asked to come in front and write on the board. While doing this activity, I found that the students were voluntarily raising their hands as they were eager to write on the board.

4.2.2 Audio Lingual Method (ALM):

Audio lingual method is another language teaching method which can be used effectively in classroom. For teaching some grammar items like 'verbs' and 'adjectives', I used this method in my class.

> **Drills:**

Drilling is a technique of ALM where certain sentence patterns and grammar items are included in the sentences which are then practiced through drills. I applied it to teach 'the use of verbs'. For this, I wrote some lines on the board.

For example-

I like to go to school.

Sami likes to go to school.

Rina likes to go to school.

They like to go to school.

I read the lines aloud and then the students repeated each line several times after me. I tried to make the grammar items overlearnt by the learners and it happened accordingly. Later, when I

asked them questions like: 'Does Sami like to go to school?' and 'Where do they like to go?' they replied 'Yes, he *likes* to go to school' and 'They *like* to go to school'. I provided them with more examples of similar type and continued drilling. I found it effective as the students actually were able to learn it. I got the proof when I asked them random questions while changing the persons and numbers, all of them could answer automatically without stopping to think. Thus I agree with what Larsen-Freeman (2004) has said: "Language learning is a process of habit formation. The more often something is repeated, the stronger the habit and the greater the learning," (p. 43).

> **Single-slot substitution drills:**

Among various types of drilling, I used 'single-slot substitution drill' while teaching 'adjectives'. I began the class with drilling instead of reading the definition from the book. For example, I wrote 'A thin man came into the room' on the board. Then, I asked if I say 'fat' instead of 'thin' what will be the sentence. They altogether uttered the new sentence correctly. Similarly, I started giving more cues like: 'tall', 'short', 'black' etc and accordingly they answered appropriately. Next, I disclosed the definition and involved them into more practice. I found the students became very excited when I gave them the chance of controlling the activity. For example, I wrote a sentence consisting of single adjective on the board and picked students in a random order to come to the board and provide new cue words (i.e. adjectives) for the ongoing activity. Thus I gave them the authority and responsibility which actually accelerate their interest and learning. I found that the students were actively performing the drills as it were their peers who were controlling the activity. Also, if anyone was seen giving any wrong cue word, the other students corrected him or her immediately. Such an activity really facilitated the learning process

because instead of getting examples from me or from the book, it was the students themselves who brainstormed and came up with new examples of adjectives.

4.2.3 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):

CLT is basically a language teaching method where students learn language for communication through various communicative activities. It is a method which is quite different from the GTM. With regard to learning and teaching grammar, CLT advocates various language learning activities. During my internship, I noticed that the teachers use mostly GTM whereas I often tried to follow CLT in my class.

> **Elicitation:**

Elicitation is a common practice in CLT which means bringing out the students' existing knowledge and ideas about certain topics before teaching about it. Every time before starting any new topic, I tried to use elicitation in my class. For example: while teaching present continuous tense and the 'ing' form of verb, I used elicitation by showing some pictures and generating ideas from the students. First, I showed them twelve different pictures. In all the pictures, there were people and animals in different actions. Then, I asked questions about those actions to the students; for example 'What is the boy doing?' or 'What is happening in this picture?' and so on. From this, I tried to notice how they formulate two verbs (auxiliary verb and main verb) together. During the activity I also noticed that some of the students made mistakes in agreements between subjects and the auxiliary verbs. The idea I got was the students knew that auxiliary verbs need to be placed before the 'ing' form of verbs, but they are yet to apply their knowledge correctly into their performance. Thus, the technique enabled me to know the existing knowledge of the learners about the sentence structures, and to know which areas need to be focused on.

Therefore, I agree with what has been suggested by the researchers, "Eliciting gives members of a class the necessary and motivating feeling of being encouraged to invest part of themselves," (Gower et al, 1995, p.37).

> **Group work and pair work:**

Involving students in various group and pair works is another common practice in CLT. It is helpful when it is required for the students to do a range of tasks for which individual work is not sufficient or appropriate. So, in order to accomplish an activity, firstly I had to divide the class into eight groups; consisting of four members in seven groups and five members in one group. Then, I distributed eight paper sheets to each group. There were numerous words written on the pages where altogether the words were arranged in such a way so that it formed different shapes like- tree, flower, fish etc. The task I gave them was to pick up different 'parts of speech' from the words. But, it was not same for all. Each group had to work on each 'parts of speech' and thus eight groups on eight different 'parts of speech'. Therefore, one group worked on 'nouns', one group on 'pronouns' and so on. I also told that the group which will come up with the maximum correct words will be announced as the best group of the class. Thus, I tried to involve them into the task and it worked well. I found that instead of seating idle, all the group members were co-operating in the activity. Thus I agree with what Harmer (2001) has suggested, i. e. such grouping activities "reinforces a sense of belonging among the group members," (p. 114).

> **Communicative activities used :**

I implemented several communicative activities in my class like- group work, pair work, language games etc for organizing the chain of grammar activities. On the first day, I involved the students in a game. The purposes were to break the ice first and involve the learners in

different type of activity which they might not have been experienced before. My goal was to give them more vivid idea on the 'subject and object of a sentence'. So, I distributed small piece of papers among the students; where some got the subject part, some got the verbs and others got the objects. Their task was to move around the classroom, look for their partners and thus complete a sentence. At the beginning, it took some time for me to make them understood but the students could successfully complete the activity. In addition, I uncovered the efficacy of such an activity when I found a particular student named Abraham also taking part in the activity. Abraham came from Hong-Kong who was new in that school and always looked sad and used to cry in all the classes. In the previous classes I tried to talk to him and made him listen to the class lectures but my efforts failed to engage him in the class. But, on that day when I introduced the game, he too came and took a paper from me which actually made me surprised. Later, I came to know from other teachers that this was the first time when he willingly showed his interest in a class activity. I felt really glad and therefore support the statement that students find games enjoyable and if they are designed appropriately, they provide valuable communicative practice (Larsen-Freeman, 2004, p. 133).

> **The PPP (Presentation, Practice, Production) Procedure:**

After implementing different communicative activities, I had to think for ideas while I was planning to teach 'prepositions' in my class. I knew that such a grammatical item is not easy to master within a short time. Even many experienced learners get stuck with this tiny but essential component of English grammar. That is why, I looked for a suitable activity for it and finally decided to use the PPP procedure. Firstly, I presented the new item using various visual materials like- colorful pictures, objects etc. I placed three different objects on the table and then demonstrated different states or positions like – on, in, under, over, in front, between, beside etc.

I repeated showing the placements several times so that they do not get confused with them. Then, arbitrarily I nominated students and, picked different objects, placed them in different positions and asked the students to name the positions. Next, I distributed pages with two different pictures of two rooms and asked them to write a short composition highlighting the difference between the two pictures. Deliberately I selected such pictures for this activity so that if anyone wants to describe the arrangement of the rooms then s/he has to use prepositions. Later on, while checking their copies, I found that my objective was fulfilled. Everyone used several prepositions in their writing with fair amount of accuracy.

4.3 Implementation of different teaching approaches:

Inductive and Deductive are the two main approaches used for presenting the language items to the learners. Deductive approach means presenting the grammar rules directly to the learners whereas inductive approach refers to the indirect presentation of the grammar rules. Most of the time, I used the inductive approach in my class and followed the deductive approach rarely. For example- for teaching 'conjunctions', I applied the deductive way of teaching. At first, I read out the definitions of 'conjunction' to the students and then showed them the examples. Later, the students practiced some exercises from their textbook. That is how I taught the language item using the deductive approach. It was my assumption that the students might face difficulty using the right conjunction(s). That is why, in order to avoid their confusions, I used the deductive approach for teaching this particular grammar item as because, it is more direct and straightforward. For this, I supplied a short list of conjunctions, which the students needed to use to complete the exercises. Another reason for using this approach was leaving more time for practicing the new items. The students were expected to make mistakes; therefore I planned to

make them practice more. Thus applying the deductive approach I tried to make the learning much easier for the learners and save time at the same time.

Except a few times, mostly I used the inductive approach while teaching different grammar items. For example- I followed this approach in order to teach 'pronouns'. Instead of telling what pronouns actually are and where they are used, I gave them a task at the beginning of the class and asked them to complete it. The task was to read a passage and change some underlined areas which they think might need to be replaced by any other word(s). The passage was:

Rina and Lisa are two sisters. (a) Rina and Lisa are in the same class. (b) Rina and Lisa go to school regularly. Last week, (c) Rina and Lisa's mother gave (d) Rina and Lisa new dresses. (e) Rina and Lisa thanked (f) Rina and Lisa's mother for the dresses. Later, (g) Rina and Lisa's father bought ice-creams for (h) Rina and Lisa. (i) Rina and Lisa also thanked (j) the father.

Without informing that the underlined areas needed to be replaced by pronouns, I asked them to complete the passage in a right way. To my surprise I realized that most of the students completed the passage the way it should be. They inserted appropriate pronouns, which was beyond my expectation. Though a few students made mistakes while inserting the pronouns, but I was glad to see that they could identify the inappropriateness and make changes using the pronouns. Soon after, I checked their tasks and found that majority of the mistakes were done in no. d, f, g and j. Then, explaining the reason I wrote the correct answers on the board. After that, I gave them more similar exercises to practice. After using the approach, I found it as an easy way of teaching grammar. Before this I experienced the students did not like reading the definitions from the book and paid no attention when they were asked to go through the books.

Sometimes I noticed boredom in their face. Therefore, I applied this approach and got effective results. As a result, I would say that I found inductive approach to be more effective in my class than the deductive approach.

Chapter 5: Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1 <u>Recommendations:</u>

My internship program lasted for three and a half months and within this time I gained many valuable practical experiences about classroom teaching. So, based on my internship experience, I would like to make the following suggestions:

1. It is required for a teacher to give equal opportunity and importance to each and every students of the class. In this regard, a large number of students create trouble. Because, of too many students often it becomes problematic for a teacher to pay equal attention to every students in case of giving feedback or monitoring class works and checking home works etc. The total students of my class was thirty three and I faced problems while involving them in activities like- board writing, reading loud, giving answers etc. Though I wanted but could not give the chance to everyone which I think made my students sad. Therefore, I think, in order to facilitate learning, the number of the students should be lessened.

2. I noticed that the teachers use the Grammar Translation Method extensively in class. However, various methods like- CLT, ALM can also be applied in a grammar class. In my classes I noticed that the students become more active and pay more attention when they were involved in different activities like- group and pair works, language games etc. So, I think the grammar classes can be more interactive and lively if the teachers could apply different teaching methods in the class.

3. While teaching, I found that the inductive approach works better than the deductive approach of teaching grammar. But, in contrary, I observed that most of the teachers taught using the deductive way. From my experience I can say that a class can be made livelier by using the inductive approach instead of teaching in deductive way. Because, it is the inductive approach where learners get more opportunity to brainstorm and think over the situation, generate ideas and thus discover the language items by themselves. So, I think besides the deductive approach, inductive approach of teaching should be practiced in the class.

4. Also, while teaching particular grammar item e.g. 'preposition', teachers can make use of various pictures, drawings and objects while giving examples instead of just delivering lectures. By showing such objects and pictures, students will not only listen but also visualize the examples given. Such visualization reinforces effective and meaningful grammar teaching.

5. Before starting any grammar topic, teachers can prepare the learners first instead of starting teaching directly. That is, a teacher can engage the students in some warm up activities and thus practice elicitation. Such a technique will work as an 'ice-breaker' and give the learners an idea of what to be learnt.

6. A better way to teach grammar is through texts rather than teaching grammar in isolation. That is, while teaching grammar, a teacher can teach using short or detailed texts, presenting a situation to them. This will help them to apply the grammatical knowledge in a real life context.

7. It is essential for a grammar teacher to design the methods and techniques according to the students' age, interest and level of proficiency. For example, while planning for a language games, pair and group activities etc, a teacher should consider the learners age. Because, if the learners are too small like students of elementary level, then they could make a class chaotic instead of getting benefit of it.

5.2 <u>Conclusions</u>

To conclude my report, I would like to say that identification and adaptation of suitable methods and techniques are indeed important for teaching grammar in a classroom. I would also like to say that Grammar Translation Method, Audio Lingual Method and Communicative Language Teaching play significant roles to teach language items. As a teacher, I implemented various techniques from these three methods and also got effective outcomes. As a result, I can say that a teacher actually cannot stick to one particular method and follow that method in all situations. A method, which is appropriate for a context may not be appropriate in another context. So, a teacher's responsibility is to know his or her students and find out the ways to integrate necessary methods and procedures into a wider eclectic approach.

In order to make my classes interesting, I applied many techniques, where some of them were really effective and also enjoyable to the students. They liked elicitation, drilling, board participation, pair and group works etc which motivated them a lot. Because, I believe that not only the teacher's teaching style and methods, but also learners' interest and attitudes towards the target language plays an important role in learning that language. According to Lightbown and Spada (1999), "positive attitudes and motivation are related to success in second language

learning," (p.56). Since, the young learners are very unstable, it is important for a teacher to grab their attention and motivate them.

Overall, I had a wonderful experience of teaching the students of St. Francis Xavier's Greenherald Int'l School. While teaching, I had a lot of fun and enjoyed each day of my teaching. The students, the teachers and the Junior Section in-charge who was my onsite supervisor were very friendly and helpful to me. Lastly, I would like to say that it was very rewarding to teach the young learners and teaching them was one of the most exciting and memorable experiences of my life. I believe that this experience would help me to be an efficient teacher in future.

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