



PLEASURE READING IN THE TARGET LANGUAGE IMPARTS COMPREHENSIBLE INPUT AUGMENTING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING AND COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

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ABSTRACT

In this rapidly growing world, the significance of English language to be taken as “Lingua-Franca” has been irrefutable as well as inevitable. Like several other progressing nations, Pakistan has also been facing challenges in educational field regarding the selection of a national curriculum, its implementation and integration. In Pakistan, English language is being taught as a compulsory subject up to school, college and university levels. But there are serious problems of communication faced by the teachers along with students in teaching-learning ESL. They are not confident enough and encounter mental blockage while communicating in the target language. It raises questions on the appropriateness of the curriculum of English language teaching generally and different methods of teaching in particular. In order to study and address this issue, the researcher has gone through a number of theories of SLA and found Stephen Krashen (1980) the most suitable for the current research. So, in this perspective the researcher has conducted a collective case study of 5 English language teachers at University-level in Punjab, Pakistan in the light of Krashen’s SLA Theory. These teachers are teaching English language in the public, private and elite class Institutions. They are reportedly imparting their knowledge through GTM, DM or the fusion of these two methods. These are the prevalent approaches of teaching English language in the selected Institutions. The researcher has applied triangulation technique comprising oral interview, direct and participatory observations and qualitative questionnaire. After conducting an initial brief oral interview of twenty five English language Instructors in the public and private sectors, the researcher selected 5 Instructors who showed their interest and willingness to be part of this project. After collecting the data through the triangulation technique, it is analyzed by the researcher in the light of Krashen’s SLA Theory to draw final conclusion and give recommendations. It is revealed as an outcome of this research that English language teaching system as witnessed in case of four out of five Instructors by the researcher is tilted towards the traditional approach of learning second language. The emphasis is largely on learning rather than acquisition of second language. It is not providing the comprehensible input i.e., meaningful communication by sticking to the TL (target language) amongst learners such as proposed by Stephen Krashen. On the other hand, the natural approach of teaching English language as witnessed in case of T2 by the researcher is the most appropriate in achieving the CC (communicative competence) in the TL. Thus in view of the findings of this research, it is the need of the hour to switch the current system of teaching English language in Punjab, Pakistan from learning onto acquisition for the purpose of augmenting undergraduate pupils’ critical thinking and communicative competence. Furthermore, the researcher pointed out salient features regarding comprehensible input including the classroom environment, teachers’ re-defined role, audio/ visual tools and appropriate curriculum as suggested by Krashen.

KEY WORDS: *Pleasure Reading, Target Language, GTM, DM, Learning, Acquisition, Code Switching, Code Mixing, Comprehensible Input, Critical Thinking, Communicative Competence*

1 INTRODUCTION

The prime motive of this study is to equip Pakistani teachers with stimulating and inspiring knowledge of acquiring second language that might produce a constructive impetus onto their

students' performance. Certainly, in the view of my numerous visits of taking tape recorded interviews of language teachers, it is dawn on me that many of them still require clarity and inspiration for their instructional and procedural presentation of teaching English language. Apparently, a very small number of teachers were performing effectively in achieving their teaching objectives while most of them were incapable and indecisive of meeting their ends. Therefore, a remedy is inevitable to improve and enhance the performance of English language teachers in Pakistan (Javaid et al., 2024a).

Krashen's theory of SLA, offers a widespread understanding of certain principles and problems regarding the acquisition of SL. It triggers the pedagogies which clearly put forward the tangible ways to address the concerns of Pakistani teachers in their systematic language teaching procedure (Javaid et al., 2024b). It establishes a structure that may well inform them of their pedagogic deficiencies. These are sidestepped by adopting some optimistic approaches and behaviors in the teaching of ESL

1.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Grammar Translation Method (GTM) of teaching English has outperformed other teaching approaches for a number of periods in the past. Both reading and writing abilities have been vital to language instruction and have changed the educational system, yet they have been ineffective for both teachers and students. Conversely, the Direct Method focuses on speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Grammar rules, vocabulary, and syntactical structures are the focus of both approaches. However, not every aspect of teaching English can be covered by the Grammar Translation Method. DM is a more effective and comprehensive approach. It brought revolution in the field of teaching and it changed the phenomenon of the classroom especially for teaching EFL/ESL. (Sumaiya, 2015)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Why is it so difficult for English language teachers and their students that they encounter mental blockage while communicating in the target language? What are the deficiencies and loopholes causing barriers in a fluent communication in the target language? Which method of teaching learning is more conducive to pave the way for smooth and easy acquisition of the target language?

1.3 Previous studies in the field

A number of linguists believe that GTM is superior to other teaching approaches. Language experts claim that there is no theory or literature supporting the Grammar Translation Method (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). It might offer an explanation that attempts to connect it to linguistic, psychological, and educational theories. English language instruction has undoubtedly improved globally. Nonetheless, teachers and students still face numerous challenges in the discipline, particularly at the undergraduate level in Pakistan. At this level, some students have a greater grasp of the English language and its structure, but the majority lack clarity and awareness of the language's use, purpose, and structure.

For instance, both teachers and students still struggle to understand the idea of learning a foreign language. The idea of attaining CC in the TL is not adequately addressed by English language education approaches. These approaches address the government-provided curriculum only at the undergraduate level in Pakistan. The challenge here is to use effective teaching strategies that could motivate pupils to acquire and comprehend the English language. Which of two approaches—GTM or Direct Method—should be applied to increase students' motivation to learn English is the study's main issue.

P. Sumaiya (2015) conducted a comparative study on DM and GTM of teaching in BRAC University Bangladesh. She has acknowledged the importance of fusion of these methods in learning TL. She says that the direct method is really fruitful for communicating in the TL.

Skogmyr Marian, K. (2015) had executed a research study on the problems faced by students regarding lexical elements of the TL in a classroom environment. He emphasizes the natural approach of teaching the TL. He has discussed the spelling problems and the strategies to address this issue in the TL.

Teachers' opinions of the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model were assessed by Suazo, F. I. (2016). It highlights the significance of Comprehensible input along with other strategies to make the teaching process more effective.

Richards & Rodgers (2014) has explored the approaches and methods in language teaching. They have presented teacher as a need analyzer and guidance counselor. They are of the view that GTM has no theory and no literature. So they are of the view that communicating language teaching is the best approach for learning L2.

Ramos Aragón, M. G., & Argueta Chica, M. E. (2017) have conducted a study in the University of El Salvador. It has disclosed the effect of comic strips used by the teachers for enhancing the vocabulary, reading and conversation skills of their students.

1.4 Significance of study

After finding out the problems of teaching-learning at undergraduate level, this research addresses them in the light of SLA theory of Stephan Krashen by providing materials, tutorial room adaptation, utilizing Direct Method as a substitute of GTM and different techniques for teaching the foreign language. This study is really beneficial to improve the students and teachers' language skills and the entire educational system as well.

1.5 Delimitations

The researcher has confined the study to English language teaching methods that are prevalent in Pakistan at undergraduate level. It is a comparative analysis in the light of Stephan Krashen's Theory of SLA. The purpose of the research is to consider all the major factors that contribute to achieve the CC in the TL.

1.6 Objectives of Study

- To understand the practical application of SLA theory by Stephan Krashen for English language Lecturers in Pakistan.
- To explore the ways teachers enhance their teaching and communication skills.
- To analyze the impact of comprehensible input on second language acquisition.

1.7 Research Questions

- How do the teaching practices of undergraduate teachers conform the stipulations of Stephan Krashen theory of SLA?
- What factors can facilitate the acquisition of English language in a classroom?
- How do undergraduate level teachers perceive the importance of comprehensible input in their language instructions?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

The researcher has explored the premeditated research questions through qualitative method. Bloomer (2010) elucidate that the behaviorist research pattern in linguistics has been shifted from quantitative methods to qualitative approaches.

Greene and Collentine (2009) describe that the qualitative methods are the best measures to explore the complexities faced by teachers regarding their language knowledge and perceptions. It also explains the teachers' beliefs and the factors influencing their linguistic knowledge.

So Patton (2002) asserts that qualitative method allows researchers to do an in-depth analysis of a problem and does not confine them to some fixed categories.

To evaluate and answer the research questions, a tri-angulation method was established. The methods of research used for this study were consisted of tape-recorded interviews, direct and participatory observations and qualitative Questionnaire responded by English language teachers in Punjab, Pakistan. This triangulation technique studies various aspects of learning circumstances which are very effective in exploring teachers' perception of linguistic knowledge.

3.1.1 Research Design

According to Yin (2000), Qualitative research design comprises of human experiences, attitudes and their vivid description. It requires the selection of the problem, population sampling, data gathering, analyzing data and writing up the findings. The design of the current study is including the organization of tape-recorded interviews, direct and participatory observations and qualitative questionnaire. The interview questionnaire is intended to explore the field of language study by taking into account Stephan Krashens' theory of SLA.

3.1.2 Reliability of the Research

The researcher has applied tri-angulation technique for confirming the accuracy, consistency and research reliability. As the merits of one technique can easily overcome the demerits and deficiencies of the other. In this way the results become more appropriate and authentic.

3.1.3 Ethical Considerations

Prior to data gathering, the researcher has informed the participants of the research about their voluntary participation. In the process of conducting study, he was meticulous to take the identity of the participants. He had taken all the necessary measures to reduce the risk of subjectivity in the research. He used pseudonyms of the participants instead of their real names for the purpose of ensuring confidentiality. The data was kept in safe cabinet subsequently labeled as T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5.

3.2 Data Collection

Merriam (1998) has specified that the interviews, observations as well as questionnaire procedures are juxtaposed in a triangulation technique of data gathering. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) have acknowledged several kinds of data gathering techniques in the form of triangulation. One form is involving the convergence of several sources of data collection. The credibility and authenticity of the findings is ensured through the multi-layering and follow up data checking processes. Merriam has asserted that the researchers' endeavors of developing appropriate interpretations and themes from the gathered data are reinvigorated by the follow up checking.

The triangulation technique in the current study has accomplished through three components namely interviews, observations and qualitative questionnaire. After gathering data

in a systematic way, all components were analyzed jointly to reach a tangible and concrete outcome.

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Triangulation Strategy

For the purpose of investigating the teachers' perception of grammar coaching and to discover whether it is essential to approach the pupils with modified teaching technique, the researcher observed undergraduate -level classes in five different institutions in Punjab, Pakistan..

So the researcher conducted a brief tape-recorded interview 'comprising 15 questions' of the target language teachers serving in private and public institutions in Punjab, Pakistan. It was a semi-structured interview transcription model as explored by Nigel Newton, (2010). Out of twenty five teachers, the researcher has selected only five teachers namely T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5 for the purpose of qualitative collective case study.

4.1.1 Interview Analysis

The tape-recorded interviews conducted by the researcher have provided him the clear picture of teaching practices in Punjab, Pakistan. The researcher has interviewed 25 teachers working in the public and private sector institutions. Ten teachers were of the view that they were teaching English through GTM. Most of them were not able to communicate in the TL fluently. Rather they were using broken structure during the course of giving this interview. There were using L1 for conveying their view point time and again. They were not confident and facing mental blockage. Their approach to grammar was purely prescriptive. They were not using the latest technology to make their lesson more comprehensive and interesting. They were teaching grammatical concepts through pure prescriptive approach. So they have not fully developed their monitor or editor to process the input of TL. That is why they were facing mental blockage and difficulties in communicating the TL.

Ten teachers were from the private sector. They were using the fusion (code switching and code mixing) of GTM and DM of teaching. They were more fluent and clear headed as compared to public sector institutions. They were communicating in the TL with confidence. Their approach to grammar was the fusion of Prescriptive and descriptive approaches. They were conscious of the concept of CI and its importance. They were adept to lesson planning and make use of latest technology for making the input more perceptible for their learners.

Five teachers were interviewed from the elite institutions by the researcher. They were found excellent in their ways of communication. They were not facing any kind of mental blockage and complication while communicating. They were using DM of teaching in their respective institutions. They were highly inspired and motivated to take their subject. They were preparing and delivering their lessons by using the multimedia resources. Their approach to teach grammar was purely descriptive. They were delivering their lessons through lecture method by giving detailed descriptions and explanation. They were encouraging their pupils for communication in the target language. So their method of teaching was quite appropriate for the acquisition of TL.

4.1.2 Analysis of Observation Based Data

After conducting tape-recorded interviews of 25 teachers from public and private sector, the researcher has selected 5 teachers and assigned them the pseudonyms of T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5. They were observed by the researcher while delivering lectures in their respective classes.

T4 and T5 were delivering their lesson through GTM and spending minimum time on reading of the TT and its translation. They were relying on L1 to communicate the meaning of complex lexical elements of TL. There was no interaction in the TL amongst teachers and students. So the complete input was in the L1 except reading of the Text. The classroom activities were involving the literary translation of TT into ST, reading comprehension and sentence filler practices. They were using prescriptive approaches to teach the rules of grammar. So the researcher has observed that the communication was a one way process on the behalf of teacher. It was limited to reading of the TT. So the entire practice of teaching was revolving around the conscious process of learning L2 through the structure of L1. There was no significant communication pertaining to target language. The students were cramming the structure of TL rather than understanding it. So it indicates that they were lacking to achieve the LC. It further created a hindrance in developing their monitor or editor in the TL.

In case of T1 and T3, there was a mixed approach witnessed by the researcher of teaching-learning. They were using both the methods of GTM as well as DM. The teachers were relatively well prepared and delivering their lessons in the TL. They were engaging their students in useful discussions by assigning group activities. They were teaching grammatical concepts through the fusion of prescriptive and descriptive approaches. They were encouraging their students to read the TT for the purpose of comprehension in the TL. They students were participating in the teaching-learning process. The teachers were using multimedia to make the input more understandable. There was a suitable atmosphere for the process of acquisition to take place in the TL. The students were acquiring the LC and were translating the ST to TT and vice versa.

They had developed their monitors or editors through achieving the LC. It was facilitating them in the process of smooth and accurate communication.

In observing T2, the researcher has met the best condition for the process of acquisition to take place. The teacher was delivering the lesson by citing the detailed descriptions of the characters, plot as well as the actions in the lesson. He was using DM only and has a firm command over language. His style of communication was quite lucid and easily understandable. He was doing reading aloud practice of the text along with simple explanation of TT in the TL. There was no concept of code switching to L1 and even the students were not using SL at all.

The teacher as well as students were highly motivated and focused on the procedure of teaching learning. The instructor was depicting the lesson related materials on projector to make the concepts of his learner more vivid. There students were asking questions without any hesitation and reluctance in the TL.

Apart from reading, listening and speaking activities, the students were assigned topics of their interest to write freely. So it was a complete package of acquiring L2 in the class room settings. There was no anxiety and mental blockage faced by either students or teacher. The teacher was using pure inductive and descriptive approach to communicate the concepts of grammar. The emphasis was on implementing the grammatical principles in communication rather than learning them consciously. So there was a plenty of CI in the classroom setting to materialize the process of acquisition of L2.

It was quite obvious that the teacher has achieved the AC and developed his monitor or editor. It made him quite accurate as well as fluent speaker in the TL. So the teacher was main source of providing CI, which was further supplemented by the assistance of multimedia. As Van Dijk, (2014) has said that we get most of our knowledge through text and talk.

4.1.3 Qualitative Questionnaire Data Analysis

Q:1- How would you define GTM and DM of teaching?

(T1): GTM has been a mode of teaching target language by using native language or first language. It helps the learner in enhancing and interpreting the second language within his own structured and inbuilt language. Whereas, DM is a straight flight and projection towards the targeted language without having any pedestal of native language.

(T2): Grammar teaching method is that method in which all types of grammar rules are applied in teaching of any language while the DM is that method in which natural environment is created of a particular language and through that environment all techniques are used which are required for DM learning.

(T3): GTM is about thinking in the MT and then translating it into TL.

DM is about thinking and communicating directly in the TL.

(T4): GTM stands for Grammar Translation Method. In this method, we teach or learn a target language by the using or with the help of first language. In direct method we teach or learn target language directly without using first language.

(T5): Both are foreign language learning methods.

Q:2- Which one of these two methods is adopted/opted by you for English language teaching and why?

(T1): It depends on learners with which language abilities and family background are they coming from? I usually adopt GTM as it provides comfort to my students to understand targeted language within their own already learnt language by finding equal words.

(T2): Direct Method because I think it is more useful and authentic method for learning target language. Its results are better than the traditional methods.

(T3): I personally use both methods while teaching English as a second language because we need little bit help from grammar as well as direct approach.

(T4): I adopted both methods side by side because both are important and have their own value in learning second language.

(T5): I use GTM because the students of our institution can easily comprehend it. Whereas, DM is difficult at initial stages.

ANALYSIS

The researcher has reached at the conclusion that the initial information provided by the teachers during tape-recorded interviews is validated by the written information provided by them in the questionnaire. Moreover, during the class teaching observations of these teachers, it is further made authentic that they are practicing the said methods in their respective classes. These teachers belong to the elite class institution system (T2), public sector institutions (T4 and T5) and private sector institutions (T1 and T3). The detailed responses given by them reveal that they are very well aware of the traditional and natural approaches of teaching English to undergraduate level students. According to Stephan Krashen acquisition and learning are two distinct processes. It has come to knowledge that our system of education is primarily concerned and laying emphasis on learning rather than acquisition.

Q:3 -Do you adopt any systematic approach to teach English grammar to your pupils? Explain.

(T1): From learners level to advanced level is a good systematic approach, as it covers all areas.

(T2): By adopting the technique of known to unknown.

(T3): Yes I do. I teach them part of speech separately and then their arrangement in sentences.

(T4): Different approaches are adopted for teaching so that the students won't get bored.

(T5): Yes, I use systematic approach for teaching the grammatical rules and then make them apply in the various constructions accordingly.

ANALYSIS

"As is well-known, studies have shown that we acquire the grammar of a language in a predictable order, and this order cannot be broken" Krashen(1985) P-37

So the above mention quote of Stephen krashen states the natural order of acquiring the grammatical rules of target language. Some of them are learned by acquirer earlier while some simple principles are acquired later. T1 is of the view that he instills grammatical rules amongst his pupils from learner to advanced level. T2 has adopted the direct approach of learning rules from known to unknown. T3 believes in providing scaffolding technique, which proceeds from small chunks to composition of these chunks in phrases, clauses and sentences.

T4 and T5 are interested in delineating the complex grammatical rules of L2 with the help of L1 structure.

Q:4- How would you develop and enhance the size of vocabulary of your students?

(T1): Firstly, I would myself use different words to make my class get some novel words.

Secondly, three to five new words per day as an assignment can help them get their vocabulary enhanced.

(T2): A deductive approach of reading the TT, in which I take care of my vocabulary.

(T3): I ask them to make use of English to English dictionary during the process of reading for knowing the meaning of complicated words.

(T4): By teaching new words through different activities.

(T5): By making them read something daily and write down the new words along with its meaning. Practice of using new words in sentences of their own.

ANALYSIS

According to Stephen krashen, *"Picking up word meanings by reading is 10 times faster than intensive vocabulary instruction."* Krashen(1993)by Ramos Aragón,(2017). P-725

So it's quite obvious that learning vocabulary through memorization is a hard task. Reading performs a pivotel role in this process of learning new words and its meanings. Teachers from public sector institutions follow the concepts of learning new vocabulary through seeking help from L1.

Whereas the deductive approach of learning vocabulary from thesaurus by knowing synonyms and antonyms is also in vogue. Anyhow the view point of T2 is coherent with Krashen's assertion. It reveals the significance of reading for enhancing the size of one's vocabulary.

Q:5- How does paraphrasing of a complicated passage of text, belonging to any of the specific genres, is helpful to communicate the meanings or message in it?

(T1): It has a great significance as the creator of text has poetic license to convey his thoughts in his own way. At times, it becomes very difficult for a reader to interpret the real meanings without paraphrasing.

(T2): Paraphrasing makes the difficult terms easy and makes it easy for new learners to understand.

(T3) Paraphrasing is breaking the complex sentences into simple sentences. It makes it easier to understand any text.

(T4): Paraphrasing elaborates and explains the text in simple wording. So, it is helpful in conveying the message in the text.

(T5): Paraphrasing does not convey message fully, so explanation of the original is helpful.

ANALYSIS

Paraphrasing is the process of rewriting the original text in a relative simple and easy structure. It maintains the message of the real content. Its length is mostly shorter than the original one.

T1 says that it is beneficial for communicating the meaning of the original text. T2, T3 and T4 assert that it is the process of decomposition of the complex lexical entities into simple and comprehensible for the readers. T5, more or less has the same view point with the further affirmation that it must remain close to the original text as far as its message is concerned.

Q:6 -Do you think it's an easy and accommodating process for the students to think in the target language while communicating? How does it leave an impact on their fluency and accuracy of speaking TL?

(T1): In the beginning, it is not easy and accommodating process but with patience and continuity, it can greatly impact fluency and accuracy.

(T2): It all depends on the teaching method, if you adopt this technique from the very first day, then it will not put your students in trouble.

(T3): Fluency can't be achieved unless you think in the target language.

(T4): Yes, it is easy because when students think in the target language, it would help them to speak in target language fluently.

(T5): It is difficult for students in our system. It takes time in developing.

ANALYSIS

It is not very much easy for L2 to liberate itself from the structure of L1, while communicating in target language. Mostly, the second language learners use form and functions of L1 by comparing it with the form and function of L2 for communication. In other words, they think in their mother tongue and translate the concepts into target language. As there are differences of linearity of the two languages, it creates pauses and mental blockage in the process of smooth and fluent conversations.

All the participants of research have acknowledged that thinking in the target language enhances one's fluency. As stated by T2 that if someone masters it from the very beginning, it proves beneficial for achieving the communicative competence.

Q:7- What is the role of A/V aids along with the demonstration of teacher in the target language to make it comprehensible for the pupils?

(T1):It provides them sound pedestal to do things in targeted language. It gives them sense of doing, being and learning.

(T2):Use of A/V aids is essential.

(T3): Audio material and video material for listening is very helpful.

(T4): A/V aids play major role in teaching. These tools make things interesting and comprehensible for students.

(T5): A/V aids are always interesting and mind grabbing for the students. So, there use is very helpful.

ANALYSIS

There is an old Chinese saying, "One picture is worth more than thousand words" It highlights the importance of A/V aids in the classroom, which is further supplemented by the

discussions and demonstrations of teacher. Now, the advancement in IT has revolutionized the method of teaching-learning. Teachers as well as students are benefitting from the e-learning processes at their doorstep. A teacher can play video, use ppt-slides on projector to show audio visual effects to its pupils. Students benefit from spoken dictionaries, Lap-tops and smartphones-apps even in their class rooms. They deliver presentations on the projectors by using their Lap-tops in the classrooms. But this facility is available only in the elite class institutions Punjab, Pakistan. Most of the public and private institutions are deprived of these facilities. It is still a dream in case of all public and private institutions to have this facility of A/V aids in near future.

Q:8- Direct Method is deemed as a natural method, laying more emphasis on communication and demonstration. It is similar to the way a pupil acquires his/her first language. How would you reflect on it?

(T1): In early years it is quite good for a child. He/ She has keen observation and a great sense of mimicry. This method gives them natural atmosphere, provided the child is interested.

(T2): Direct Method is as natural as a new born child learns his mother tongue in an easy and interesting way.

(T3): Direct Method is nearly similar to the way we acquire our first language.

(T4): Direct Method is more accurate and useful than GTM. Thinking and speaking a target language helps them to get perfection.

(T5): It is natural, but not for those, who have already some other language as a native language. We are bound to take help from our native language.

ANALYSIS

During the direct and participatory observations of classes of all the participants of this research, the researcher has observed that only T2 was practicing the direct method in its full sense in the class. All the students were communicating in the target language confidently. They were least reluctant to ask their queries from the teacher.

T2 has gone through the text followed by detailed discussions on various themes of the lessons. Students were found raising as many questions as they can. Moreover the teacher has shown them some chunks of information on the projector and explained it in the TL.

On the other hand T1 and T3 were found practicing the mixed approach “a fusion of GTM and DM” while delivering lectures in their respective classes. Whereas T4 and T5 were using the GTM to teach their classes. They simply read the target text and translated it into their L1 for the better understanding of students. The students were passive listeners and didn’t participate in the discussions.

The researcher has finally reached at this conclusion that DM is more convenient to achieve the communicative competence.

Q:9- How do the fluency and accuracy in speech improve one’s reading and writing skills, which are acquired through direct method? Explain.

(T1): These improve both reading and writing skills for they play a crucial part in picturing words and nipping of ideas to give a massive flow to thought.

(T2): Yes, fluency and accuracy in speech improves reading and writing skills.

(T3): Good readers and listeners are always good writers and speakers. Reading enhances their vocabulary and helps in improving fluency.

(T4): A fluent and accurate speaker can easily develop the comprehensive reading and effective writing skills.

(T5): When speech improves, it automatically becomes easy for the learner to improve his/her reading and writing.

ANALYSIS

While observing the classes in the public, private and elite system institutions, the researcher understood that the students of T2 were more accurate and fluent speaker of the target language as compared to the rest of institutions. It was all because they got early exposure in the target language through direct method of teaching. Soon, after developing the acquired competence, their reading and creative writing skills were automatically groomed and mushroomed. They were least bothered to ask any question from their colleagues and tutor.

On the other side, T1 and T3 were seen practicing the fusion of GTM and DM methods. They were of the view that the structure of L1 is very supportive in learning the accurate structure of L2. The respondents L4 and L5 were found translating the sentences from L1 to L2 for improving the speaking skills of their pupils.

It sounds almost topsy-turvy and paradoxically true when we have a first look on the statement of this particular question. But, if you really want to see its validity then visit any class room in which teachers like T2 are teaching by using the direct method. Once the students relish the taste of communicating in the target language, it is from here their journey of flying high get started.

The researcher can better explain this phenomenon by quoting this pearl of wisdom “*Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.*” By Ellis, (1996). So, it is job of a skilled and highly committed and motivated teacher to teach his/her students how to concentrate on the message of content. This is how the students forget for a moment that they are communicating in the target language. It all happens when the emphasis is on ideas, messages and functions of the target text and not on its form and structure. This flow of thought process in the target language ultimately improves ones comprehensive reading and creative writing skills.

Q:10- How do you ensure the participation of your students in the teaching-learning atmosphere of your class room by conducting various activities?

(T1): I form groups and each group has a leader, who helps in ensuring the participation of each and every student.

(T2): By role playing, dialogues & discussions.

(T3): Students are directed to write on any given topic. Speech is given equal importance in the class as well.

(T4): Activities in classroom give chance to both instructors and pupils to participate in teaching learning practice.

(T5): Total physical response will be used, so that students are fully involved.

ANALYSIS

Teacher's personality, classroom environment and available amenities determine the participation of students in a class. As narrated by T1 and T3 that they form different groups of students and then assign them various achievable tasks to ensure the participation of the whole class. T2 was found more vigilant in the class. He engages his pupils in useful discussions and dialogues. Sometimes, students perform specific roles of the tragic and comic characters of novels, dramas and plays. This is how the whole class atmosphere becomes conducive for teaching-learning.

On the contrary, T4 and T5 were not taking any measures to ensure the participation of whole class. They don't have the facilities of A/V aids as compared to private and elite class school system. The students were passive listeners and participating least in the process of learning. But one positive aspect that was witnessed by the researcher was that they were eager to learn the target language. They were found busy in completing the exercises of text book after the lecture was over. They were doing so in small groups as suggested by the teachers.

Q:11- How would you develop comprehensive reading skills amongst your pupils?

(T1): By putting them and engaging them in different reading activities.

(T2): By making reading a pleasure for them and by assigning interesting activities followed by reading.

(T3): They are given reading tasks on daily basis.

(T4): By making more and more practice of reading would improve their reading skills.

(T5): It will be improved only through practice.

ANALYSIS

All the participants of the research have laid stress on the significance of reading.

Stephan Krashen says,

"People acquiring a second language have the best chance for success through reading."
Krashen(1993) P-722

*"Without a reading habit children simply do not have a chance"*Krashen(1981)by Clark, (2006)
P-70

*"Those who read more, write better."*Krashen(1993) by Kim, (1997) P-724

So, in view of the above mentioned sayings of Krashen reading has a multifaceted benefit for the reader. It helps in building vocabulary, syntax and a decent writing style. Moreover, the researcher has found through direct and participatory observations that comprehensible reading is a source of rapid acquisition, which enables the readers to achieve communicative competence. Reading is an arduous task as we often find it difficult how to improve the reading skills of our students.

- When we read rapidly to find the main points of target text, it is known as Skimming.
- When the process of rapid-reading is done for finding particular piece of information, it is called Scanning.
- Prolong reading for pleasure seeking purposes by putting more emphasis on the general meaning of the text is named as Extensive reading.
- Reading a small piece of target text again and again to find out the detailed information is branded as Intensive reading.

The researcher has observed the preceding four types of reading practices followed by the students naturally while going through the target text.

Q:12- What measures do you take to encourage creative and free writing on any topic?

(T1): I advise my students to think freely on any topic and write without breaking the flow of pen and thought.

(T2): I always make my students to believe that what they are writing or delivering is correct. They don't have fear that they are wrong. It helps them to convey their thoughts.

(T3): I teach them grammatical rules and then ask them to do creative writing by applying those accordingly.

(T4): I suggest my pupils to write about their favorite topics in target language by making an outline.

(T5): They will be allowed to write whatever they want without any restriction.

ANALYSIS

The respondents have unanimous agreement on encouraging their students for creative writing. There are certain difficulties faced by the students in the process of writing. Difficulties in writing include the mental activity of comprehension, synthesis of information or physical activity. Physical writing difficulty causes disorder of joining letters and words. Disability of expressive writing is revealed, when the writer struggles to maintain its flow of thought on the paper.

However the inconsistency and inaccuracy in writing can be improved by comprehensible reading and free creative writing. It brings cohesion and coherence in the process of writing and makes it more fascinating.

Stephen Krashen says, *"Those who read more, write better."* Krashen(1993) P-723

Q:13- What tools and instruments do you use to enhance the listening and speaking capabilities of your pupils?

(T1) :For listening I prefer BBC 6 minutes English and for speaking I toss topics related to everyday life.

(T2): By arranging a collective listening activity in the Language Lab or Computer Lab.

(T3): I use no such tools. I ask them to watch English movies and talk shows.

(T4): Multimedia, Discussions in Class and Talk time in Class.

(T5): Lectures on different topics will be delivered for their listening.

ANALYSIS

In this respect the role of teacher is very vibrant and vigilant. He/she uses audio-visual tools to make his/her input more comprehensible for the learners. T1 and T3 suggest their students to listen native speakers on radio, watch movies and talk shows to develop their listening skill. T2 organizes listening sessions for his/her students in the language Lab and computer Lab. While T4 and T5 suggest their students to get help from the multimedia tools and classroom discussions.

Q:14- Do you force your pupils for an early production in the TL or wait for the voluntary self-production stage? How do you cope with it?

(T1): I wait for voluntary self-production stage.

(T2):I wait for the voluntary production stage by giving them space and time to think.

(T3): They are forced to form sentences from L1 to L2 and vice versa.

(T4): No, I don't force my students for early production.

(T5): I wait for the self-production stage after teaching them basics.

ANALYSIS

All the participants of research believe that they must wait for the voluntary self-production stage of their pupils.

According to Krashen (1981), *"Students learning a second language move through five predictable stages: Preproduction, Early production, Speech emergence, Intermediate Fluency and Advanced Fluency."* P-35

So it is first and foremost duty of teacher to identify in which stage his/her students fall. Only then he/she can work further for meeting the levels of learned and acquired competences of its students.

Q:15 -How do you build self-esteem and self-confidence amongst your pupils to achieve communicative competence?

(T1): Competence is always there in students, it just needs to be guided and chiseled to achieve self-esteem and self-confidence. What I do to achieve these, I make them do and repeat all these learnt things again and again.

(T2): By providing them with the chance to express their thoughts in target language.

(T3): I do this through GTM at initial stage and through spoken English environment at later stage.

(T4): By giving them respect and appreciating their constructive efforts.

(T5): Positive reinforcement will be the tool used to build self-esteem and self-confidence along with practical involvement in communication.

ANALYSIS

As Stephan Krashen says in his theory of SLA, self-esteem, self-confidence, high motivation and low level of anxiety reduces the Affective Filter and speeds up the process of acquisition. So, it is very crucial to take all the necessary measures to make it happen for achieving communicating competence. T1 and T3 motivate their pupils by appreciating and encouraging them. They make use of both the methods, initially GTM for building LC and later with discussions in the target language to achieve AC. T2 is seen building communicative competence amongst his/her pupils by creating a student-friendly atmosphere of teaching- learning. It is further made affective with the help of audio-visual aids along with thorough discussions of teacher in target language. Each and every student was given an opportunity to express his/her thoughts.

T4 and T5 have relied on the mother tongue to impart self-confidence and motivation amongst their students. But it was least working as compared to the private and elite institution systems.

4.4 Discussions and Findings

The above analysis of data suggested a number of details for discussions and meditations. The prime objective of English language teaching is to make students capable of reading, writing, listening and speaking in the target language. It has come to the knowledge of researcher during the process of conducting semi-structured transcribed interviews as well as classroom observations that a huge number of teachers as well as their students are facing a serious problem of mental blockage while communicating in the target language. There are multiple reasons behind it that are explored by the researcher.

Firstly, a large number of target language teachers in public and private institutions of Punjab, Pakistan are teaching through GTM of teaching. The teachers are laying more emphasis on translation, code switching, code mixing and grammatical rules of the target language. Mere translation as of L1 to L2 and vice-versa is not helping students to accomplish the communicative competence in target language. Similarly too much emphasis on learning the principles of grammar is not helping them out to speak in the target language (Nawaz et al., 2021).

Secondly, the structure of two languages is completely different. Comparing and contrasting them during the process of conversation, slows down the process of communication.

Thirdly, there is lack of proper facilities of A/V aids in order to make the input more comprehensible and understandable for the pupils.

Fourthly, all because of limited exposure in target language, pupils are more reluctant and shy to ask any question from the teacher. They are lacking motivation, self-confidence and self-esteem.

Fifthly, they were found memorizing the content of the text for passing the examination. On contrary, the teachers of elite institutions Punjab, Pakistan, who are teaching through DM of teaching are quite competent and meeting their goals. They are conveying their lectures quite comfortably in the target language. There was no concept of code mixing, code switching and translation. They were found reading, paraphrasing, discussing and explaining the various features of the text in target language. The pupils were quite vigilantly participating in the practice of teaching-learning by asking whatever the queries they have had. There was an ideal classroom atmosphere for teaching-learning. It shows that the students are acquiring language by having exposure in the target language (Chen & Ramzan, 2024).

To conclude, we can say that in public and private sector institutions, the emphasis is on learning through which students are achieving only learning competence. Whereas, a very small number of students in the elite institutions in Punjab, Pakistan are having the opportunities to achieve acquired competence.

Stephen Krashen's theory of second language acquisition proposed a solution for this problem. In his acquisition-learning hypothesis, he has put more emphasis on acquisition.

According to Krashen, "*Language Acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules, and does not require tedious drill.*" Krashen (1980)" P-14

So, Krashen here clearly says that one needs not to pay much heed to the principles of grammar while communicating. It does not mean that he is against achieving learned competence. Now, if we compare our system of learning grammar. In GTM, we are comparing and contrasting the grammatical categories of L1 and L2 for mastering them. It creates great confusion as both the structures are totally different in linearity. So here Krashen's theory offers the solution, if we learn these rules by residing in the target text through detail discussions and practical examples, it becomes quite easy to achieve learned competence. Moreover, it will later on become the part of acquired competence. This is how the AC will help one in its process of achieving communicative competence. It will not become a mental blockage and develop a balance in the process of communication, as we see in the case of 'T2' elite class institutions.

Dr. Krashen says, "*There is no need for deliberate memorization; rather, firm knowledge of grammatical rules (a feel for correctness) and a large vocabulary gradually emerge as language acquirer get more "comprehensible input," aural or written language that is understood.*" Krashen (1982)P-145

It is obvious from here that cramming and learning by rote method is not benefitting rather creates mental fatigue and confusion. Krashen emphasizes on the importance of comprehensible input through listening and reading. It is only possible when the acquirer is less focusing on form and more concentrating on the message of the content of target language.

Krashen says, "*People who do attempt to think about and utilize conscious rules during conversation run two risks. First, they tend to take too much time when it is their turn to speak, and have a hesitant style that is often difficult to listen to. Other over users of the Monitor, in trying to avoid this, plan their next utterance while their conversational partner is talking. Their output may be accurate, but they all too often do not pay enough attention to what the other person is saying!*" Krashen(1982)P-150

It is quite clear that the Monitor/Editor plays a significant role in accuracy and fluency of the speaker in the target language. The students who develop their Monitor through GTM have reached the level of LC which may or may not turn into AC. The overuse of Monitor creates mental blockage and long pauses in the process of conversation. We witness more accuracy and less

fluency in communication. The less use of Monitor makes conversation more fluent and accurate in this case.

On the other hand, the students who develop their monitor through DM, by having exposure in the target language achieve the level of AC through LC. They are the optimal users of Monitor. It imparts them good fluency and accuracy in their communication. They maintain a very good balance between their fluency and accuracy in speech. This balance between accuracy and fluency during the process of communication is known as communicative competence.

After thoroughly discussing the distinction between learning and acquisition, we are now to discuss the salient features of making input comprehensible and understandable. The two main sources of input are listening and reading (Nawaz et al., 2021).

Krashen has laid more emphasis on reading as well as listening as described in the following quotes,

"We do not acquire language by producing it: only by understanding it." Krashen (1993) P-723
"People acquiring a second language have the best chance for success through reading"
Krashen(1993) P-724

He further describes the content of reading that is more suitable for the process of acquisition to get happened. He suggests the material that is of the interest of reader, which provides him/her the pleasure and recreation. The reader is supposed to be absorbed in it and come out with innovative ideas and developmental thought process as we see in case of 'T2'.

Krashen asserts that, *"Free voluntary reading may be the most powerful tool we have in language education. In fact, it appears to be too good to be true. It is an effective way of increasing literacy and language development, with a strong impact on reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar and writing."* *Krashen(1993) P-725*

So, we need to relate the classroom reading with real life contexts in order to make it more appealing and tangible. The readers are supposed to go through between the lines and comprehend the messages of the content. It's the primary duty of the teachers to break the complex structures into simple and rephrase the difficult content to make it comprehensible for its pupils (Ramzan, & Alahmadi, 2024).

As Krashen says, *"Language acquisition proceeds best when the input is not just comprehensible, but really interesting, even compelling; so interesting that you forget you are listening to or reading another language. Krashen (1982) P-170*

Stephen Krashen has presented his input hypothesis in 1977 by Suazo, (2016). He has put forward SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observed Protocol) for measuring the effectiveness of teacher in a classroom. It includes

1. Lesson planning
2. Providing background information and settings(A/V aids)
3. comprehensible input
4. strategies of CI
5. Classroom Interaction
6. Oral and written practices
7. Delivery of lesson
8. Making Review and taking assessment.

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

Thus in the light of preceding data analysis followed by detailed discussions and findings, the researcher has reached at the conclusion that a very huge number of public and private sector

institutions in Punjab, Pakistan, are not providing the appropriate atmosphere and quality of content to its students for acquiring target language. The teachers are trying to achieve their goals through a traditional GTM or mixed method which is not sufficient to fulfill the prerequisites of achieving communicative competence.

On the other side, a very small number of students studying in the elite class institutions and the like are having a suitable and conducive environment along with the proficiency of English language instructors who are teaching them with DM. It's been a quite natural approach of teaching target language that is found quite in line with the Stephen Krashen's theory of SLA.

The textbooks content ought to be language acquisition oriented rather than language learning oriented. We need to switch our system of education from learning onto acquisition in the light of SLA theory of Dr. Krashen. It is only then possible that we can address the issue of debilitating communicating competence. This study has embarked upon the practical applicability of Stephen Krashen's theory of SLA. It stimulates and encourages the future researchers to further explore the strengths of this theory for second language acquisition in their own respective territories.

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Appendix:

QUALITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE:

(CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS & ORAL INTERVIEW)

Q:1-How would you define GTM and Direct Method of teaching?

Q:2-Which one of these two methods is adopted/opted by you for English language teaching and why?

Q:3-Do you adopt any systematic approach to teach English grammar to your pupils? Explain.

Q:4-How would you develop and enhance the size of vocabulary of your students?

Q:5-How does paraphrasing of a complicated passage of text, belonging to any of the specific genres, is helpful to communicate the meanings or message in it?

Q:6-Do you think it's an easy and accommodating process for the students to think in the target language while communicating? How does it leave an impact on their fluency and accuracy of speaking TL?

Q:7-What is the role of A/V aids along with the demonstration of teacher in the target language to make it comprehensible for the pupils?

Q:8-Direct Method is deemed as a natural method, laying more emphasis on communication and demonstration. It is similar to the way a pupil acquires his/her first language. How would you reflect on it?

Q:9- How do the fluency and accuracy in speech improve one's reading and writing skills, which are acquired through direct method? Explain .

Q:10-How do you ensure the participation of your students in the teaching-learning atmosphere of your class room by conducting various activities?

Q:11-How would you develop comprehensive reading skills amongst your pupils?

Q:12-What measures do you take to encourage creative and free writing on any topic?

Q:13-What tools and instruments do you use to enhance the listening and speaking capabilities of your pupils?

Q:14-Do you force your pupils for an early production in the TL or wait for the voluntary self-production stage? How do you cope with it?

Q:15-How do you build self-esteem and self-confidence amongst your pupils to achieve communicative competence?