

## The Grammar-cum Translation Method

This method is called the translation method. It is also called as the classical method. It is the oldest method of teaching English. It is used widely in Indian schools. This method has two philosophical bases i.e. Grammar is the soul of language and a foreign language can be easily learnt through translation. This method, as it is said: came to English Language teaching in most of Asia in general and India in particular with support in the long- established tradition of teaching classical languages in the United Kingdom. The system of education in the country served as a model for schools in most of its colonies. The psychological beliefs that prevailed then were: (a) that classical languages with their intricate systems of grammar were capable of training human faculties including memory, and (b) that learning these languages was part of a truly liberal education. Teaching and learning primarily aimed at the ability to read full texts rather than to communicate orally in everyday situations. Basically grammatical structures are kept in mind while teaching English language like "I am going to school" in this sentence the structure is grammatically analysed in terms of tense, subject, predicate, verb etc. and the is translated into native language as "Main ja rahi/raha hu" or vice versa.

### Principle:-

This method is based on three principles, i.e.

- Translation interprets foreign phraseology best,
- In the process of interpretation, the foreign phraseology is assimilated,
- The structure of a foreign language is best learnt when compared and contrasted with that of the mother-tongue.

### Characteristic of the method:-

In this method the English teacher translates each and every word, phrase and sentence of English into mother tongue of the students. This is the oldest method of teaching English in our country. The unit of teaching is word. Mother-tongue dominates. Grammatical rules are explained by the teacher. In this method text-book occupies an important place. The text-book has all reading material, specific graded vocabulary and each lesson has some new words. Thus the lesson starts with the meaning of words and then explains the meaning of phrases and sentences.

### Merits of Translation method:-

It saves time so it is economical method. It helps in enhancing the student vocabulary. It follows the maxim, "From known to unknown". It helps in having better and clear understanding of word meanings. This method can be easily used even in the



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overcrowded classrooms. It explains grammatical rules therefore it gives correct knowledge of English. This method can be used in every situation. This method tries to establish a strong link between new ideas and old ideas. It is convenient for the teacher because material aid is not needed. The unit of teaching is word and not sentence. This method saves teacher's labour. We can test the comprehension of our pupils by this method. Sometimes it is found very useful in the senior classes for explaining complex ideas, abstract thoughts and meanings.

#### **Demerits of Translation method:-**

In this method no emphasis is put on speaking, reading and writing. In this method speech is neglected. The students are not provided practice in oral work. This method fails to teach correct articulation, intonation and pronunciation. Translation method attempts to teach English through rules and not by use. It stops the power of thinking freely. Too much emphasis is given on grammar. This method is dull because the student does not take active part in learning process. This method is not based on psychological principles which are must for learning process. It is against the maxim, "from whole to part". It develops the translation habit among the students. Literal translation rains the sense and beauty of a sentence. It helps to develop booking English but prevents the delicate expression. In English language we come across some structure which cannot be translated into Indian languages. The structure of two different languages could not be similar. So the technique of teaching through translation delays the process of learning the structure of a foreign language. This method is unnatural because it does not help the learners to learn the foreign language as they learn their mother-tongue. It completely neglects silent reading, model reading and rapid reading. This method is uninteresting method because in this method students are only passive listeners. Learning by this method lasts only up to examinations, because students learn rules by cramming.

Grammar-Translation method is one of the reasons of following standards of English in India. In spite of so many demerits the translation method is still the most commonly used method in Indian school. It can thus be concluded that this method has been universally condemned. Even then it continues to be popular with most of English teachers as well as English medium schools also in India.