

THE GRAMMAR- TRANSLATION METHOD



The Grammar-Translation Method

late 1800s

present

THE GTM IS ONE OF THE OLDEST FLT METHODS.

A historical perspective

- **Object:** know everything about something than the thing itself.
- Originally used to teach **dead** languages and literatures (Latin & Greek).
- Latin was taught prescriptively.
 - **Prussian method**
 - **Classical method**

A historical perspective

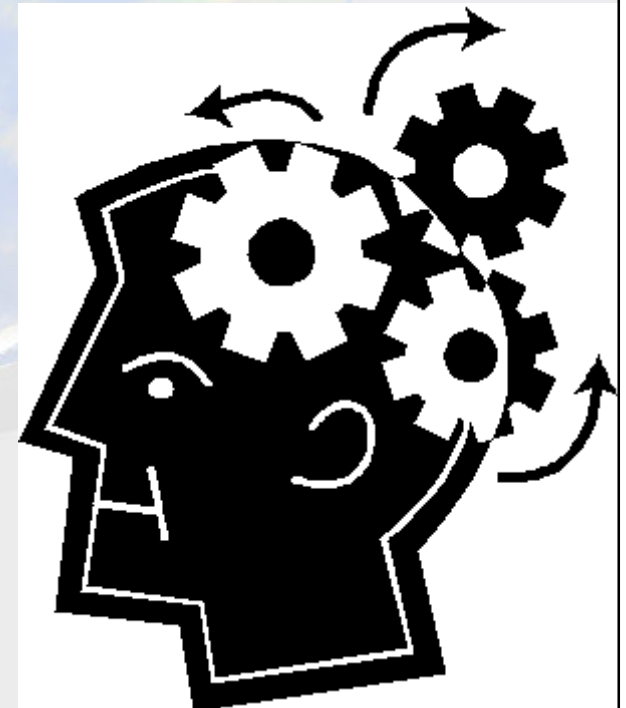
- As modern languages began to replace Latin, they were taught using the same basic procedures that were used for teaching Latin.
- focus on reading and writing.
- speaking was not a goal.
- no communication in the TL.
- translate sentences with no relation to real life.

A historical perspective

- By 19th century, GTM became the standard way of teaching a FL
 - the rules are listed,
 - their uses are explained, and
 - students practice them.
- A typical textbook in the mid-nineteenth century consisted of chapters or lessons organized around grammar points. Each grammar point was listed, rules on its use were explained, and it was illustrated by example sentences. Thus, textbooks are codified into frozen rules of morphology and syntax to be explained, and eventually memorized

Original purposes

- Helping students read and appreciate foreign language literature
- Students can become more familiar with the grammar of their native language also write and speak their native language better
- Helpful for mental exercise



Assumptions

- Studying TL grammar, STS will be more familiar with L1 grammar.
- This familiarity will help STS speak and write in L1 better.
- FLL will help students grow intellectually.
- Language learning is a mental exercise, learning a foreign language is a good mental exercise for students.
- Learning of the target language and the mother tongue empower students mentally (it was recognized that students would probably never use the target language, but the mental exercise of learning it would be beneficial anyway.)

Principles of the GTM

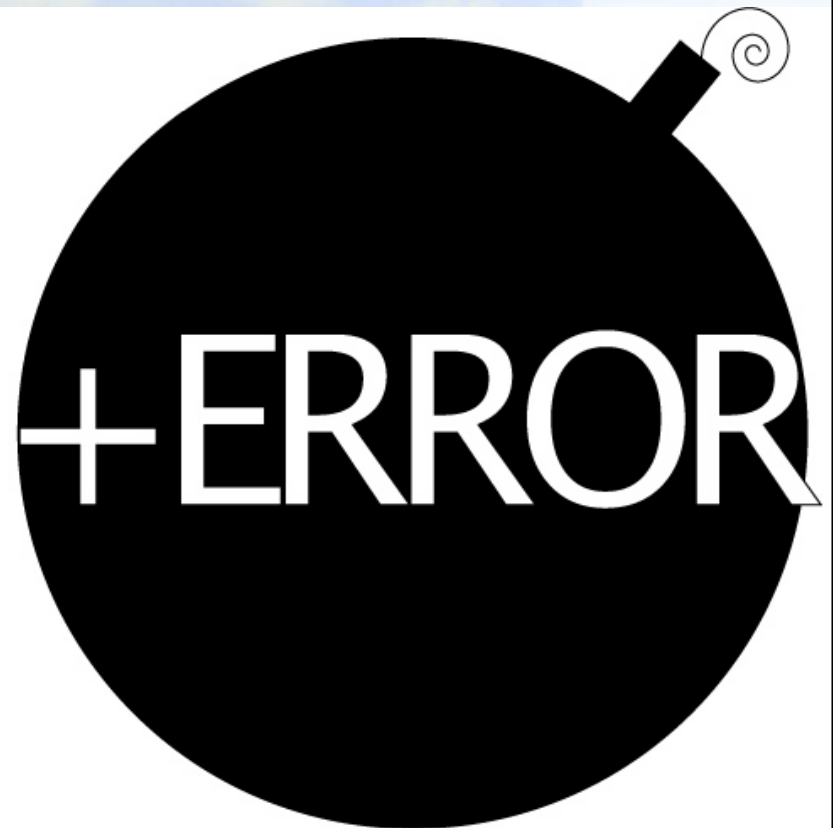
- The ultimate objective is to be able to read, understand and appreciate written target literature.
- An important goal is to be able **to translate** each language into the other.
- **Literary** language is superior to the **spoken** language.
- The ability to communicate in TL is not a goal of FL instruction.
- Primary skills: **reading and writing**.
- Little attention: speaking & listening, almost none to pronunciation.
- The teacher is **the authority** in the classroom.
- Attention to similarities between TL and L1.
- Deductive application of an explicit grammar rule is a useful pedagogical technique.
- Language learning provides good mental exercise.
- Students should be conscious of the grammatical rules of TL.
- Wherever possible, verb conjugations and other grammatical paradigms should be committed to memory.

Principles of the GTM

- Vocabulary is based on reading texts, and they are taught through their equivalents in the L1, and through memorization.
- **Accuracy** is emphasized as students are expected to attain high standards in translation.
- The medium of communication and instruction in class is L1.
- L1 is maintained as the reference system in the acquisition of L2 / FL.
- **Sentence:**
 - basic unit of teaching and language practice.
 - emphasis on the sentence rather than on the text (it is a distinctive feature of the method, it is an attempt to make language learning easier.)
- **Accuracy** is emphasized over **fluency**.
 - A prerequisite for passing the increasing number of formal written examinations.

Error correction

If a student's answer of a question is incorrect, the teacher selects a different student to give the correct answer or s/he replies himself/herself.



Teacher as the authority

- Teacher decides whether the students' answers are correct.
- It is important for students to get the correct answers.
- If students answer incorrectly, the teacher will provide the correct answer.



Objectives of GTM



- To be able to read literature written in the target language
- To be able to translate from one language to another
- To develop reading and writing skill

Key Features of GTM

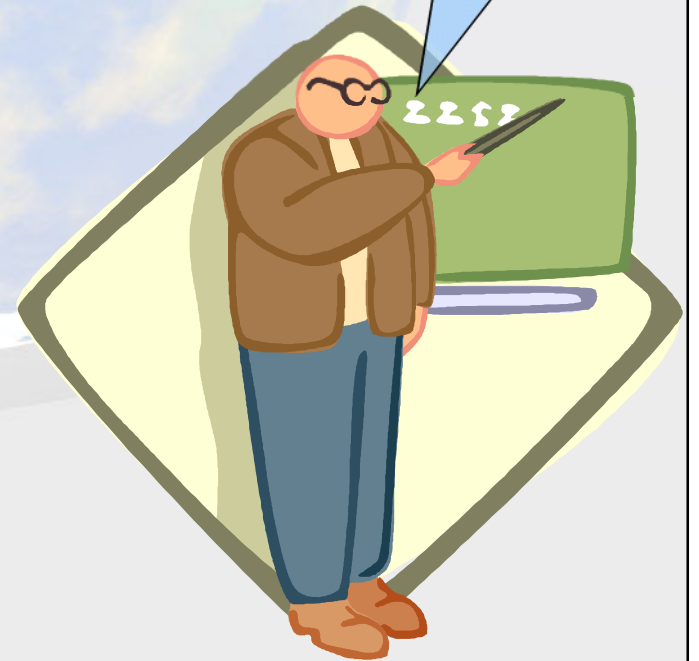
- L1
- Vocabulary / grammatical rules
- Accuracy / translation
- Deductive teaching

Advantages of GTM

- An effective way for application of grammar and sentence structure
- Few demands on teachers
- Least stressful for students

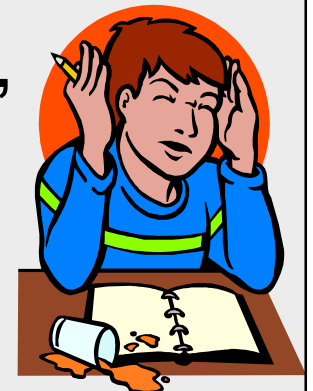
- The GTM is the easiest for a teacher to employ.
- No need to speak good English or make good lesson preparations.

**Özne 'you'
ise 'are' ile
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Disadvantages of GTM

- Invalid idea of what language is (Language is seen as a collection of words which are isolated and independent)
- Less learners' motivation
- Create frustration for learners
- Students remember language courses with distaste (memorizing unusable grammar rules and vocabulary)
- It seemed there was no need for students to master the four skills of English (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)
- Little use of TL.



Main disadvantage

**It does virtually nothing
to enhance the
student's communicative ability
in TL.**

Nowadays



- It is still used worldwide where literary texts are the main focus especially at the college level.
- It has no advocates.
- A method with no theory.

Procedure: Typical Techniques

- (1) Translation of a Literary Passage
- (2) Reading Comprehension Questions
- (3) Antonyms/Synonyms
- (4) Cognates
- (5) Deductive Application of Rule
- (6) Fill-in-the-blanks
- (7) Memorization
- (8) Use Words in Sentences
- (9) Composition
- (10) Transformations
- (11) Matching

Translation of a literary passage

- Read a literary text and then translate TL into L1.
- Translation: written or spoken.
- Translation shows they understand it.

Reading comprehension questions

- Answer questions in TL.
- Answers may be in the text, or based on the understanding of the students or students' own experiences related to the text.
- **Textually explicit questions:** both the question information and the correct answer.
- **Textually implicit questions:** find the answer by combining information across sentences.
- **Script-base (scriptually implicit) questions:** refer to background knowledge as the text does not contain the correct answer itself.

Antonym/synonyms

- Students are given one set of words and are asked to find antonyms in the reading passage.

Deductive Application of Rule

- Grammar rules are presented with examples.
- Once students understand a rule, they are asked to apply it to some different example.

Memorization



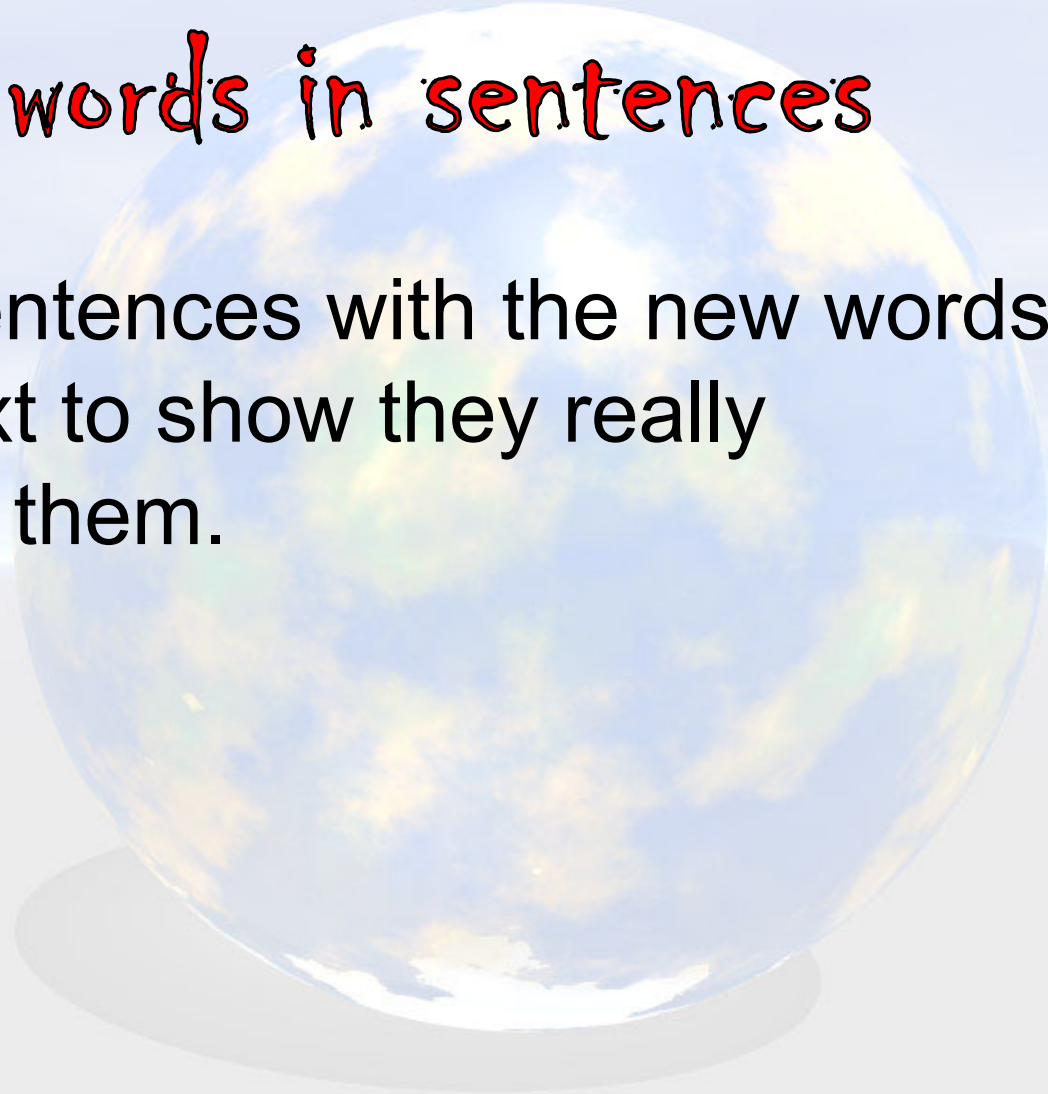
- Memorize
 - new words,
 - grammatical rules, and
 - verb conjugation.

Fill-in-the-blanks

- Sentences with missing words.
- Fill in the blanks with the new vocabulary or with a particular grammar type.
- He _____ listens to the radio.

Use words in sentences

- Make up sentences with the new words from the text to show they really understand them.



Composition



- Write a composition in TL.
- The topic is based on some aspect of the reading passage.

Activity Samples

- **Reading Comprehension**

- The class begins with a reading passage from the foreign language literature.
- Each student is called upon to read a few lines from the passage, then they translate into their mother tongue the few lines they have just read. The teacher helps them with suitable translations in case they lack the required vocabulary.

Reading Comprehension



- After finishing reading and translating the passage, the teacher asks them in their mother tongue if they have any questions. Questions and answers are communicated using the mother tongue!!!!

- The teacher asks students to write down answers to the comprehension questions at the end of the passage. The questions are in English and answers should be in English as well. (the written mode is dealt with in English while the spoken mode = questions are dealt with in the mother tongue. (see step 3). Questions on the passage include three types of questions. The first is "right here" or direct questions. These are the simplest type whose answer is stated directly in the passage. The second is the inference questions whose answers are not explicitly stated in the passage, students have to make inferences based on their understanding of the passage. The third type is the application questions that require students to relate the passage to their own experiences

Reading Comprehension

- After answering the questions, the teacher asks students one by one to read the question and their answer to that question. If the answer is not correct, the teacher selects another student to supply the correct answer, or the teacher himself gives the "right answer".

Vocabulary

- Students turn to a list of words taken from the passage, and are asked to give the mother tongue equivalent for each one of them. This is conducted as a whole class activity. If no one knows the equivalent of a certain word, the teacher provides it.
- Students are given another list of words from the passage and are asked to provide the opposites of these words (antonyms).
- The same procedure is repeated with words that look the same in English and Turkish (cognates). Students are asked to search the passage for examples of cognates and to translate them into their mother tongue.

Grammar activity

- The teacher reads a list of two-word verbs (phrasal verbs). He begins with phrasal verbs that are familiar to them, then moves to new phrasal verbs in the passage.
- Students are asked to translate them into their mother tongue.
- Then, they are given the rule of a direct object with two-word verbs (separable vs. inseparable phrasal verbs).
- After reading over the rule and examples, students are asked to tell which of the following two-word verbs are separable and which inseparable= all these verbs are taken from the passage.
- They are asked to fill in the blanks with one of these phrasal verbs.

Writing

- Students are asked to write a composition in the target language applying the information in the passage to some similar topic.

Miscellaneous activities

- At the end of the chapter: a list of words that appeared in the passage.
 - The list is divided into two parts:
 - the first contains separate words and
 - the second includes idioms.
 - They are translated into the students' L1.
 - They are asked to memorize them and to write sentence in TL using each word.
- Students are asked to write out the translation of the reading passage into their L1.
- State the grammatical rule and apply it to examples of their own.
- Take a quiz on the grammar and the vocabulary of this chapter.

Question 1

1a *What parts of the lesson are done in L2?*

Silent reading

Reading aloud

Writing (questions and exercises)

1b *What parts are done in L1?*

Teacher presentation of L2 grammar, etc.

Discussion of readings and questions

Question 2

2a *Does the teacher encourage students to speak in L2?*

No. When they speak in L2, she responds in L1.

2b *Do the questions encourage individual thought?*

No. There is only one “correct” answer.

2c *Do the students express any original ideas in L2?*

No. They only answer the teacher’s questions.

Question 3



3a *What are the advantages of the materials?*

3b *Do you like the GTM? Why or why not?*

3c *What personality of student would like it?*

ANALYSIS



- Approach
 - Theory of language?
 - Theory of learning ?

DESIGN



- Objectives
- Syllabus
- Types of learning and teaching activities
- Roles
 - teachers
 - learners
 - Instructional materials

PROCEDURES

- What happens in the class?

