

# **The Grammar Translation Method in the 21st century – a Pedagogical Tool for ESL Classes in Spain for Elementary Level**

by

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Submitted to the

**Department of English and German Studies**

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

**Master's in Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign /  
Second Language**

at the

**UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI**

June 6th, 2022



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## Abstract

This thesis focuses on the idea that Grammar Translation Method is a better tool to use than the Communicative Language Teaching approach when teaching English grammar to Spanish/Catalan native speakers at an elementary level (A2). The hypotheses behind this paper were that, first, students would learn better and more accurate English grammar, second, students could understand better how grammatical features work when doing translation-based activities, and, finally, they would be more confident in their linguistic knowledge when taught using GTM. These assumptions were tested by applying the two methodologies in two classes, separately. The data analyzed imply that, even though the Control Group was more advanced to begin with, the improvement gap between pre and post-tests was more significant in the Experimental Group who was taught using GTM. This study reconfirms that GTM still has a positive effect on acquiring English grammar; however, both methodologies have some level of improvement.

Keywords: *Grammar Translation Method, Communicative Language Teaching, English grammar, teaching approaches*

## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Mr. Fernando Romeu Esquerré, for all the help and guidance he has offered me. Without his continuous support, the experiment might not have been done in time and this paper would not have had such a solid basis. I would also like to thank both the headmistress of Escola Oficial d'Idiomes de Tortosa, Carlota Vallès Ferré and the teachers, Maria Cinta Lleixà Barberà and Joan Marc Lleixà Quadrat for accepting my experiment to be conducted in their school, respectively classrooms, with no hesitation.



# I. Introduction

## 1.1 Structure of the paper

The paper starts with the background that explains English language has a heavy influence on our everyday lives because of globalization, making it the new lingua franca thus, the importance of learning it is indirectly mandatory. Also, in this section it will be described the two methodologies (Grammar Translation Method and Communicative Language) that would be compared in terms of efficiency. Afterwards, the justification part will illustrate the reasons why this specific topic was chosen, presenting both the hypothesis, and delimitations, limitations and assumptions.

The literature review section of this paper is dedicated to show how the Grammar Translation Method and Communicative Language Teaching affect the linguistic development of students in Spain when studying English, presenting arguments for and against each approach.

For the Methodology part, there will be stated the following subchapters: the purpose of the experiment, the subjects or target audience, the instrument and the design, and procedures. Afterwards we will take a look onto data collection and the analysis of the results.

In the final part of the paper, there would be a conclusion to finish in full circle, and for visual representation, there would also be appendices.

## 1.2 Background

The English language, undoubtedly, has become one of the most spoken languages in the world and it has been used in many fields worldwide for a while now. Since it is a bridge of communication between people with different cultural background and first language, it is only natural for people to want to start learning English. This is also the case for Spain and its people.

This paper is about how the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) is viewed and used nowadays in a contemporary EFL high school setting in Spain. The GTM is compared here with another mythological approach, which is the predominant one in present-day: the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This is the method currently used in ESL classes across all Spain, as it [Spain] has joined this pedagogical trend that has its origins in the United States and which has been also deeply ingrained in Western Europe (Criado & Sánchez 2009).

In order to understand what methodology would be used more effectively in learning English grammar, it is important to comprehend how education in foreign languages works in Spain. Caraker (2016) analyzed the teaching of foreign languages in the previously mentioned country using the European Commission report of 2015 which states that in 2002, all European member states had been obliged to teach at least two foreign languages other than the maternal language from an early age. Hence, the introduction of foreign language educational reforms in Spain.

### 1.2.1 English language in Spain

Criado and Sánchez (2009) claim that teaching and learning languages in Spain have not been on top of its priority list throughout history, but starting with the 20th century, there were created language institutions such as Escuela Central de Idiomas in Madrid (1911), Departments of Modern Philology at the universities of Madrid (1954), Salamanca (1952, 1954), Barcelona (1955).

The first teaching approach that should comply with the teaching guidelines in the Primary Education was the Audiolingual Method. In these guidelines, the manuals and teachers should (1) intensify the practice of morphological and syntactic structures, and (2) delay the practice of reading and writing until a minimum of six classes following the onset

of oral learning (Criado and Sánchez, 2009). Alas, in the 1970s, the Audiolingual method and its variations received a bad reputation, being replaced soon after with the Communicative Language Teaching approach which made space for new ideas and guidelines, such as teaching all the four language skills and being able to acquire enough linguistic and communicative commands in order for the language learners to “express themselves, experience and understand the messages in the target language.” (Spanish Syllabus for Secondary Education, 1975)

In 2002, the new laws and regulations on Education have been promulgated, being mandatory for the Primary Education students to “be able to communicate fluently in one or more languages”. The same is for the Secondary Education too, but it is more specific in the way that “they must develop the communicative competence to understand and communicate adequately in one or more foreign languages, in order to have access to other cultures.” (Ley Orgánica, 1990 and 2002).

Despite the increased popularity of English language and the educational reforms that were promulgated, the Spaniards’ ability and performance of using English remained stagnant from various reasons. (1) Mass-media in Spain is almost completely, if not totally broadcasted using dubbing. Looking at countries with higher English proficiency such as Netherlands, Sweden, Portugal and Romania, their common element is the usage of subtitles for all foreign programs, the only possible exception being dubbing children’s channels, since they would gain the ability to read a bit later in life. (2) Since Spanish is top on the list of most spoken languages in the world, right before English, Spaniards can already travel around the world without encountering too many problems related with language barriers. Hence, they may have a lower motivation to learn English. (3) Another reason is the inadequate atmosphere in English classes due to a great number of students per class, due to

the limited time and sometimes resources, and, in some occasions, the English teachers do not prepare well enough, or their proficiency level is not sufficient. (Fabregat, 2019)

Some of the reasons above will be mentioned in the justification section.

### 1.2.2 Textbooks and materials

In the section above, it was presented a small history of how English language has spread across Spain and how it influenced the education system in terms of how institutions and governments try to incorporate English language into curricula. This also affects how textbooks and materials are analyzed and distributed throughout language classes and institutions in Spain.

As a reminder, nowadays, the methodology most used all around Spain is Communicative Language Teaching. Thus, textbooks and other teaching resources for English classes are made to comply with the new standard and methodology. Nevertheless, are these materials created to fully abide by the government instructions? Moreover, are English teachers using only the CLT in their classes, or are they combining methodologies according to what materials they have? These questions have Criado and Sánchez (2009) to analyze several textbooks and what elements determine the decision behind choosing the best materials among so many others for the English classes. Therefore, Criado and Sánchez (2009) describe that in Spain, being more or less outlined on how an ELT should go, the CLT facilitates the comparison between materials needed as it follows:

- 1) The activities designed for each English session should make the approach interactive and easy to proceed with
- 2) The activities are both a medium between the teaching process and the learners, and are conditioning the students' learning.

- 3) Due to the specificity of goals and the applications of unique strategies, activities are divided as units
- 4) Analysis of the activities will help predefine the teaching and learning way assumed by the textbook.
- 5) If the teaching materials are in line with the CLT requirements, then they are reliable to be used with this approach
- 6) Main features of CLT are:
  - a. Language is a tool for communication
  - b. Communication aims at the centrality of meaning
  - c. For the transmission of the meaning, it is necessary a formal code, which is essential for the process of communication. Yet, to be efficient, one needs to know and adjust the linguistic component
  - d. Learning formal code is important, but not so much so as the communicative functions, which refer to meaning. In other words, first comes the outline of the interaction events, and then be specific which linguistic code (grammar) should be needed to have as close as a flawless communication in those contexts.

The CLT activities have also their own features that should be taken into account when analysing teaching materials such as textbooks in order to choose the most appropriate one, depending on the requirements and learners' needs. Criado and Sánchez (2009) have enumerated some of these features:

- 1) The main goal should be the way the message is delivered and received, hence the need for meaningful lessons and usage of the language.
- 2) Formal elements must come second, as they provide specificity in speech
- 3) Formal element, when taught, they must be used for specific meaning.

- 4) The activities must rely on authentic interactions
- 5) There should be a myriad of communicative situations for a variety of activities
- 6) Strategies should involve engaging students to interact in different situations, being focused on meaning
- 7) Grammar and vocabulary activities are important so the linguistic forms can be learnt for the interaction purposes, but they are not considered communicative activities
- 8) Communicative tasks should be designed for the proper discourse context

Based on the criteria of the textbooks chosen and analysed, Criado and Sánchez (2009) come up with several common features and important differences that could speed up the process of choosing the right textbook. The criteria are: (1) textbook is allocated for the first year of each educational level, as the complexity of the language is mostly taught in the lower levels rather than advanced; (2) The materials started from Secondary Education up to language courses for adults; (3) the representativeness of the textbooks is an important criterion, as it would tell us the overall expectations of the institutions and governments towards the quality of the materials for ELT class.

In Spain, as claimed by Criado and Sánchez (2009), there is a great dissociation between the theoretical and practical parts in the textbooks, even though the Law of Education promulgated in 1991 that the materials should be designed for CLT classes. However, it is important to acknowledge the importance of grammar and vocabulary in all four skills of a language.

In the data analysis, Criado and Sánchez (2009) have discovered that 63.64% of the activities from all the textbooks selected had applied strategies compatible with CLT which we can interpret that, textbooks chosen in Spain, are indeed following the Education Law by implementing the Communicative Approach into the curricula via appropriate tasks. Alas, the

rest of the percentage prove the dissociation between what is in theory and how it is put into practice (Cerezo, 2007). Nevertheless, it also reveals that the non-communicative type of tasks is complementary to the communicative ones, as they are centred on formal linguistic elements such as grammar and vocabulary. For these aspects of the language, the strategies used are focused on repetitive practice, and information provided deductively or explicitly.

### 1.3 Justification

This topic was chosen because, firstly, because language learners of English from Romania are still being taught using both the GMT and the CLT, whereas Spanish educational system favour, the latter to an extent that the GMT is avoided almost entirely (Criado and Sánchez, 2009).

Although there is a general dissatisfaction towards GTM in Spain, in Romania it is still considered a great tool for learning grammar. There could be found enough evidence to prove that translation-based activities can still be part of nowadays languages curricula. For the sake of accuracy, this paper will be focused on English language. Obilişteanu (2002) claims that thanks to the GTM as a mean to reinforce grammar and lexicon, students are prone to have less fossilized language items such as false friends (vocabulary) or erroneous usage of grammatical features.

Another reason why is important to take into account when comparing the two methodologies previously mentioned is the motivation level that may or may not occur, within the language learners when using different approaches. Only by looking at the English Proficiency Index 2021, between Romania and Spain, the first is on the 15th place, whereas the latter is on the 33rd place <sup>[1]</sup>. These differences in rank may take place from various reasons: (a) due to geographical positions, where Spain is a more isolated country than

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ef.com/wwen/epi/>

Romania since it [Spain] is a peninsula; (b) as Spanish is the third most spoken language in the world, Spanish speakers may not feel the pressure of learning another language; (c) the use of dubbing is predominant in Spain whereas in Romania is mostly used for channels dedicated for children, thus making it harder for Spanish people to get familiarized with the vocabulary, grammatical structures and listening comprehension.

Secondly, this topic has been chosen in order to analyze the overall performance of both methodologies and how students may react and perceive the information given during the lessons.

Lastly, there may still be a chance for Grammar Translation Method to become, once again, a very important tool for acquiring different aspects of a target language, deserving its rightful place among other approaches that have a better reputation in the eyes of language teachers if this methodology is used as a means to teach English; however, it must not be regarded as an end in itself.

#### 1.4 Hypotheses and Research Question

The aim of this paper is to prove whether or not the GTM is more efficient compared to CLT in regards the teaching and learning process of grammar features and aspects of English language for language learners who are native speakers of Spanish/Catalan.

The research questions are the following:

- Do student results in grammar tests improve if they are taught using the GTM?
- Do students feel more comfortable learning the use of grammatical aspects through the GTM?
- Would the students feel more confident in regards the linguistic knowledge if they are taught using THE GTM more than CLT?



### 1.5 Delimitations, Limitations and Assumptions

As this research has an experiment involved, there were several elements to take in consideration.

Firstly, the delimitations of the research were the following: (1) the materials were both from students' textbooks and activities created, modified, as well as adapted, (2) the language used was only English.

Secondly, the limitations were (1) since the experiment was conducted during an examination period, it took place for just a few days, which it might have been too short of a time for the results to be accurate (2) the situation with the pandemic reduced a lot of interaction which might have altered even more the results. (3) The attendance was not consistent and (4) the sample of participants was too short.

Lastly, the assumptions were the following; (1) it would be difficult to use GTM, as the language barrier would be hard to break, (2) because they might not be used to THE GTM, they would feel overwhelmed and/or unmotivated.

## II. Literature Review

### 2.1 Nature of grammar

#### 2.1.1 Definition of grammar

Grammar is a set of rules of a language which govern sounds, words, sentences, and other elements, as well as their combination and interpretation (Thornbury, 2003). Also, the core of a language grammar is thought to be composed of *syntax* and *morphology*. Syntax helps us understand the importance of how words should or should not be combined, and morphology, as suggested by its etymology, transforms words through addition or

modification in order to be precise in our speech having a better understanding on concepts of time, number, and gender. It can also be defined as “multi-dimensional with multi-meanings.” (Batstone, 1994). Generally speaking, grammar is a set of rules of a language that builds sentences with words in a specific order for the sentence to make sense.

### 2.1.2 Importance of Grammar

Batstone (1994) states that without grammar and contextualization, the communication would be jeopardized, and dysfunctional. As a reinforcement for the bold statement previously mentioned, Thornbury (2001) explained how a sentence with little to no grammar such as “Annie, Sunday then. See you there. Tell Jack. Tom” can affect the perception and meaning. From the example provided by Thornbury, compared to a standard email, there can be found several elements that change how people perceive the message. The first element is the shared knowledge between the reader and the writer; another element is the lack of any formalities, or lack of social distance. All these elements and others will be presented in the following pages.

#### a) *Shared Knowledge*

Batstone (1994) claims that the less one is able to rely on the meaning of a context, the more dependent on the grammar they will be. Therefore, this is where the *bottom-up process* comes into place; from individual basic units of a text, one can “climb up” for a better understanding of the context. Thus, grammar is essential to make one’s message clear, specifically when the shared knowledge is less than ideal.

#### b) Given-new principles

Another important factor when it comes to grammar teaching and learning is to make sure that its process counterpart is not affected, and the message has clear “traffic signals”, as Batstone (1994) puts it. When referring to the given-new principles, he argues that in a

discourse, whether orally or in written form, the speaker should take into account what references has given so far in order to eliminate any confusion or misunderstanding. For example, a text can have a perfect grammar product; however, if a text provided only pronouns such as “she”, “he” etc, without any previous mentions, the message will be distorted. Moreover, another dimension of grammar is its nature of manipulating the order of the information and it is mandatory make language learners aware that the more distance is between the new and the given information, the more difficulties will appear in understanding one’s discourse.

### c) Social Context

Grammar has also a pragmatical role determining social functions. Usually, this type of language adds more grammatical structures than necessary when there is an emotionally distance between the speaker and the hearer, whereas, the more intimate the relationship is the less words would be used. Using Batstone’s (1994) example in which, on a social gathering, the guest sees exactly where the snack and beverages are, but the host would still present the appetizer table, there can be deducted that the latter, stating the obvious, has maintained the social dignity in front of their guests.

It is important for the students to learn these types of grammar usages because communication happens all the time in any regard with people that may be in a different hierarchy rank than the speaker and it is important to learn and understand how to use language effectively.

## 2.2 Learning grammar

To learn a language, it is not enough for the student to be exposed to the target language or input, they need to internalise what they have learned up until present to have a better

understanding on how to communicate and how to employ the L2. For this to happen, a learner needs to notice new features. However, as Batstone (1994) rightfully claims, “the language has to be significant for the learner to be noticeable.” This is where the teachers work very hard to make their students more aware. It is important to make it work not only when the grammar point stands out because the comprehension depends on it, but also when those features aren’t as dependable on the meaning as others, due to the fact that everything that is under the umbrella-term grammar has its significant role in one’s speech.

To be able to structure grammar that was taught, a student has to go through a fundamental method problem-solving series; trial and error, in which a learner, little by little comes with different “hypotheses”, and as they make mistakes, they are closer to the target language structures, registering progress each time. Despite the importance of trial-error method it is important that the language learners do not get to the point of fossilization. Fossilization is term explained by Selinker (1972), in which the learner persists to use the incorrect language use.

### 2.3 Teaching of Grammar

This section presents how grammar can be taught, the processes behind it, and the reasons why it should be taught.

In his work, Batstone (1994) has listed three manners on how to teach grammar and those are teaching as a *product*, as a *process* and as a *skill*.

#### 2.3.1 Teaching as a product

Batstone (1994) argues that, when seen as a product, grammar is thought to be something static, being focused on the divided parts rather than the whole language system. In this way, teachers can help their students to understand the meaning behind the particular grammar structure learnt, and to “develop their knowledge of the grammatical system.”

However, it is essential to know that the *product* part of grammar make only one half of what it really is as a whole, and to complete it, we need to see it as a *process*.

This variety of grammar teaching has two main stages; noticing and structure.

The initial step is to is for learners to notice a grammatical aspect before structuring it, hence, as teachers, we can encourage students to just do that before abounding them in activities, as suggested by Batstone (1994).

Noticing or focal awareness is the second level of Schmidt's (1990) consciousness as awareness that "refers to private experience, although noticing can be operationally defined as availability for verbal report, subject to certain conditions." The two conditions refer to (1) the lack of verbal report cannot be taken as evidence of unsuccessful focal awareness unless the report is gathered simultaneously or immediately after the experience. (2) There are also conscious experiences that are inherently difficult to describe

In this part, it is also important to see how we are going to teach our students grammar as a product, either doing implicitly with only some examples without further explanations, and let them figure the rule out, explicitly, by providing all the information needed, or a combination of both.

Batstone (1994) argues that the noticing process cannot be forced onto the learners, and it is them who need to be ready for it; however, exercises can always help in their linguistic discoveries. These types of tasks are called *consciousness-raising* which are based on "the discovery of regularities in the target language, whether blindly intuitive or conscious or coming in between these two extremes will always be *self*-discovery. The question is to what extent that discovery is guided by the teacher. The guidance, where consciousness-raising is involved ... can be more or less direct and explicit." (Smith, 1988)

The last step of teaching grammar as a product is by guiding the students on creating hypotheses on how the grammar aspect is structured and restructured until they get closer to

reality. In other words, students need to achieve language flexibility when using the target language. This kind of flexibility comes with practice; therefore, language learners need manipulation of language type of tasks. (Batstone, 1994)

Hedge (2000) puts emphasis on how the input provided by the educator can help the students notice (Schmidt, 1990) the output and accurate elements and forms of English; the more explicit the explanation is, the faster the learning process becomes. As Chang (2011) paraphrased it as “it can provide information about the communicative use of language structures by contextualizing them in spoken and written form; it can give information implicitly through exposure to examples or explicitly through instruction on the stylistic variation of language form.” Thornbury (2001) has provided us with six rules about teaching grammar: the Rules of Context, Use (teaching grammar as a mean, not an end), Economy, Relevance (focuses on the needs of the students), Nurture (teaching does not lead directly to learning, but it can be considered a guide throughout students’ learning process) and Appropriacy; Chang (2011) described it as “the interpretation of all the rules above according to the levels, needs, interests, expectations and learning styles of the students.” Moreover, Ellis (2006) defines the grammar teaching “according to the levels, needs, interests, expectations and learning styles of the students”.

### 2.3.2 Teaching as a process

It is crucial to distinguish what the *product* and the *process* are. If the product was the linguistical item that can be analysed, the process is something that we do while talking. In other words, grammar as process is the way we transmit the message using all the components placed together (the product). This process can be used in multitude of ways and it is invaluable if teachers want to help students employ the grammar properly in communication. (Batstone, 1994; Thornbury, 2003)

For this type of method, the learners are encouraged to use the L2 in a direct manner, but controllably. There is a different way of guiding the students to develop their skills. This teaching process, as claimed by Batstone (1994), is a journey of self-discovery, as well as self-expression of the language use.

### 2.3.3 Teaching as a skill

Finally, teaching grammar as a skill requires the combination of both methods, as they have complementary functions.

This approach three main points to take into account when teaching; (a) *focus on grammar*, (b) *noticing as a skill*, and (c) *reflection*.

(a) When learning using this method, the language learners need to be aware that they need to balance between focusing on grammar, and focusing on the meaning and self-expression. In other words, while guiding our students to pay attention to grammar, the design of the tasks should be focused on the application of the language.

(b) To exploit noticing as a skill even better, Batstone recommends to use listening and reading tasks, due to their enriching nature of opportunities.

(c) Last but not least, after getting familiar with all the information provided during the lesson, teachers should also guide their students to the process of reflection. This stage is of utmost importance, as the learners need to assimilate and understand that grammar has an important role in acquiring a language, even if the process may be at times more tiring than expected. To encourage students upon reflecting on the way they are using their language, teachers should point out their [students'] strengths and weaknesses. (Batstone, 1994)

#### 2.3.4 Teaching intensively versus extensively

*Intensive grammar teaching* refers to one or two grammatical structures that are taught during a long period of time (i.e. learners study for several days the topic of English passive voice), whereas *extensive grammar teaching* is focused on multiple grammatical aspects in a shorter period of time, for example teaching all past tenses in a single lesson (Ellis, 2006).

Ur (1996) claims that to practice grammar is for students to learn grammar structures as good as possible in order to be able to produce them correctly on their own. In other words, the intensive approach is compatible with this concept of practice make perfect. Hence, textbooks are actually made having the present-practice-produce (PPP) model in mind, assuming that grammar structures are taught inductively. (Ellis, 2006)

This approach has divided the pedagogical world, as there are papers which proved that students would remember structures better when they are marked intensively, but there are also others which argue in favour of extensive approach as it is possible for learners to identify quite often their own mistakes (Ellis, 1996; Cook, 1989).

#### 2.4 Grammar Translation Method

Grammar Translation Method is a tool that “promotes intellectuality through mental gymnastics” (Brown 1992), and a method “to know about anything more than the thing itself”. Richards and Rodgers (2001) emphasise this statement further by putting emphasis on its features: (1) to learn a foreign language via translations, and (2) to facilitate the comprehension of target language using the memorization of grammatical structure. As it was and still is considered the Classical Method of teaching languages, it has its origins in 15th -



early 16th centuries and it has been a popular instrument for teaching Latin and Greek<sup>2</sup>. Its downfall started in 19th centuries, when language teachers were frustrated on their students that, despite their high language proficiency in more theoretical aspects of the language, they could not communicate, as the GTM was more focused on reading, translation and accuracy than speaking and interacting in L2.

The GTM was being avoided as much as possible by language instructors when new approaches, such as the CLT, that had prioritized the communication and interaction in the target language were developed. However, Brown and Lee (2015) find it ironic how the GTM, after so many years of practicing, became so detestable among learners because of their seemingly never-ending and tedious experiences in memorizing and remembering long lists of words and grammatical structure, yet there are still people who find it intriguing. Also, for teachers, this approach is the most convenient, as it is quite easy to design tests for grammar and/or translations.

Mart (2013) remarks that GTM is a teaching method that should facilitate the learning process of grammar structures and vocabulary through translations from one language to another. Also, this approach should help students acquiring a better understanding of the target language, being able to read in the L2 too (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Moreover, to be possible to communicate properly and meaningfully, one must acquire the appropriate information and practice using Grammar Translation Method (Fish, 2003).

Since reading and writing are the primary skills that GTM focuses on, Mart (2003) observes that GTM students are more aware and more likely to improve accuracy and develop a sense of self-sufficiency when it comes to learning (Fish 2003). He also argues that translations can raise awareness over two cultures, and, as it emphasises the understanding of the context given, language learner use it as a tool to enrich the vocabulary, to practice the

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.tefl.net/methods/grammar-translation.php>

interpretation ability, and pay attention to the grammatical details, and help teachers to assess their students' improvement (Fazal, Majoka, Ahmad, 2017).

However, due to the lack of communicative development in students' learning, Hymes (1972) has developed the CLT approach that "counterattacks" and shifts its focus towards more practical use of language, because "language involves more than knowing a set of grammatical, lexical, and phonological rules" (Hiep, 2005). Moreover, not only CLT has gained a lot of popularity among language instructors and students, but GTM has become avoided, placing it on the list of infamous approaches.

Although there are several works against GTM, Mart (2013) has collected myriad of other papers that defend it, remarking the following benefits of this method, holding an important place in language learning:

- 1) Stern (1992) emphasizes that, by contrasting L1 with L2 through translations, learners would be able to understand better another language system as they perceive it via their system of their own native language.

- 2) Duff (1996) reinforces the previous statement, as he claims that not only does translation is a natural and necessary process, but it makes it better to understand the influence of the target language and corrects the fossilized elements that may have appeared during the first stages of learning the second language. He also claims that translation develops three quintessential qualities for learning languages: "It trains the learner to search (flexibility) for the most appropriate words (accuracy) to convey what is meant (clarity)"

- 3) Mart (2013) also claims that the more accurate an English word is translated for a student, the easier is for them to understand it; hence, without it, the comprehension may be jeopardized, and as a result, no progress can be recorded.

4) From Danchev (1983), we take that translation is a beneficial tool that can engage students in meaningful learning due to (1) natural and clear comparison between the native and target languages, decoding the difficult aspects of the target language, (2) effective comprehension control, (3) eliminate the transfer of the native language.

5) Cordero (1984) affirms that translation should be treated as a skill course, because, when taught appropriately, it can contribute to the development of other skills, and to higher competence, furthering the proficiency of the foreign language studied.

6) Chellapan (1982) argues that, when translating, “a simultaneous awareness of two media could actually make the student see the points of convergence and divergence more clearly and also refine the tools of perception and analysis resulting in divergent thinking”

7) It is said that translation is not dependent to the English skills; however, Malmkjaer (1998) states that the student would be actually forced to practice them because translation would not be possible without them.

8) Last but not least, Vermes (2010) opinionated that there should not be a reason to avoid translation, as it requires interaction and cooperation between the speaker and hearer, hence its potential to be a beneficial device in learning and teaching foreign language

Mart (2013) concludes with “the use of translation contributing to the use of the target language effectively. Learning gets meaningful via translation, and better comprehension promotes foreign language proficiency. The Grammar-Translation method is useful because learning process is clearer, thus accuracy will be acquired by students.”

On a positive side, though, Chellapan (1982) considers that “translation can make the student come to closer grips with the target language. A simultaneous awareness of two media could actually make the student see the points of convergence and divergence more clearly and also refine the tools of perception and analysis resulting in divergent thinking.”

Other great advantages found by Criado and Sánchez (2009) which are provided by the GTM that it is taught deductively, grammar rules are taught and students learn language by practicing them authentically, students learn to be familiar with literature in the L2, translation from L2 to L1 help learners memories vocabulary and grammar structures (Thanasoulas, 2002). Also, Cunningham (2000) argues that GTM is useful for all level students, and Damiani (2003) affirms that not only it is a great tool for teaching grammar and vocabulary, but also the instructor can make sure that their students really learn the language. Through this analysis we can interpret that, due to the GTM, students would be less likely to have fossilized elements stuck in their discourse and, due to the emphasis of appropriate use of language, students can be aware of subtleties. For example, in Japanese language there are multiple ways to express the first-person pronoun (私 *watashi* – neutral form for both genders; わし *washi* – elderly people; あたし *atashi* – feminine, informal; 僕 *boku* – masculine, formal) because the culture requires the usage of the appropriate manner of speaking depending on the context given.

On a negative note, Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, (2011) explain that the flaws of this method are the grammar features are crammed up, students only learn about the lexical meaning, almost “forgetting” about listening and speaking skills. In other words (the authors’), the grammar is taught religiously, but the language itself is missing almost completely.

## 2.5 Communicative Language Teaching

The Communicative Approach was developed in the late 1960s in opposition to Grammar Translation Method behavioural and structural approaches as they were considered incompatible with what real life use of a language was supposed to be like, and are thought to

be motivational draining (Criado and Sánchez, 2009). From its suggestive name, we can observe that its emphasis is on communicative competence rather than the language competence. CLT has become more and more popular starting with the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century, and as it helps to better integrate non-English language learners in a globalised world where English language is used as lingua franca and the communicative skill is required everywhere. Howatt (1984) claims that “the Communicative Language Teaching stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use English for communicative purposes and attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching.”

In theory, CLT is an approach that focuses more on acquiring the communicative competence and the ability to use language in any social encounter. This method was developed based on Hymes’ (1972) works, in response to GTM or traditional method where the focus was shifted towards grammar, vocabulary and accuracy of language usage.

Breen and Candlin (1980) have thought about five elements that should be incorporated in the CLT curriculum: (1) content is focused on the needs of the students, (2) sequencing is cyclical, not step by step, (3) interactive tasks and activities that subdivide the content of the lesson, (4) the continuity will take place within the materials and topics provided, and (5) there is a continuous negotiation between the learners and teacher.

Thornbury (2003) believes that because CLT is much more relaxed in regards the accuracy and has a more humanistic view of proceeding meaning rather than expressing a common culture, it may seem an inappropriate methodology, from a Western perspective, as teachers were believed to be “founts of wisdom” and in which cultural context accuracy is valued more highly than fluency.” Harmer (2003) puts even more focus on the inaccuracy of L2 as he described the dissatisfaction of the educators as it follows: “In promoting a methodology which is based around group and pair work, with teacher intervention kept to a minimum during, say, a role-play, the Communicative Approach may also offend against

educational traditions which it aimed to supplant. The Communicative Approach has sometimes been seen as having eroded the explicit teaching of grammar with a consequent loss among students in accuracy in the pursuit of fluency”.

### 2.5.1 Issues

One of the issues was that in some parts of the world, although teachers were enthusiastic about CLT, after workshops, they would continue to teach in the same manner.

Another issue, since many lessons are translated in L1, it is more difficult to incorporate CLT and create genuine communication classes. In order to create these types of classes, the tasks should be meaningful and the approach to them should be task-based and authentic (Hiep, 2005). Also, Brown (1992) argues that communication occur in classroom when there is enough pair/group work, the contexts given should have a real-life input, when the students are encouraged to communicate within the classroom space, but also out-side. However, some of those principles do not take place in a normal classroom, because, for instance, since most students share the same mother tongue, there is no need to switch to English. Another problem that rises from these principles is that it is difficult to choose authentic contexts due to the fact, English language has myriad of variations. Using the example provided by Hiep (2005), what is authentic in London can be different from California.

Last but not least, with CLT would be the debate of whether it would be appropriate in an EFL classroom to acquire the communicative competence of a native speaker of English. If so, to what extent should the teacher push? Since the norms and values are different within the Anglo-American countries, it is more than obvious that the learners of English language that have a distinctive native language and cultural background there may appear some clashes with the identity of the learner. Hance, some students may choose to have various non-native features such as thick accents Hiep (2005).

### 2.5.2 Misconceptions

1) Thompson (1996) argues that the misconception of the CLT means no grammar teaching is one of the most persistent and most damaging of them all. Although it has its focus on more practical and communicative areas, that does not mean that this approach does not have its way to teach this language aspect. It is more about the perspective that has changed. Moreover, there are several linguists who argue against an explicit manner of teaching grammar. For example, Prabhu (1987) claims that the linguistic knowledge that a speaker needs to have to be able to be taught grammar is too complex. Another reason is from Krashen (1987) in which he claims that language can be acquired only through exposure and this process takes place unconsciously.

Learning grammar through CLT is more of a “discovery journey” for students rather than the teachers covering their subject explicitly. Thompson explains that, whenever possible, the learners encounter a new language in a comprehensible context; therefore they could catch the function and the meaning easily. The teacher, in this case, is only a guide, letting the students convey the information to one another (Thompson, 1996).

2) Another problematic misconception refers to the fact that the CLT approach is only for teaching speaking. It is true that the earlier versions of CLT were heavily influenced by spoken language, and students were encouraged to interact in the target language, hence the emphasis on speaking and listening. Another reason for this kind of misconception observed by Thompson is that CLT classes are prone to offer time to practice; therefore, the TTT (teacher talking time) is reduced exponentially, being indirect proportional with the STT (Thompson, 1996).

To eliminate this misconception, Thompson (1996) claims that CLT can be used for other language skills too. For instance, the textbooks nowadays are designed to have more

authentic content to make the activities more interactable when it comes to reading tasks too. Also, CLT classes involve the need to reflect upon the topic studied.

Finally, Roleplays are a great technique to reinforce what has been taught and, even though they seem like rigid tasks in terms of creativity, this activity is actually quite flexible. However, Thompson suggests that there can also be other alternatives for pair work, such as grammatical exercises, solving a problem, analyse a new language feature etc.

As we could see in this section, no matter the perspective and the method, there would always be something or someone that would critique an approach.

### **III. Methodology**

#### 3.1 Purpose of the experiment

This research aims to discover if the learners from the experimental group would have a significant improvement in grammar after being taught using Grammar Translation Method and whether their progress is better than the Control Group which would be taught normally, meaning Communicative Language Teaching. Another purpose would be to try and identify if GTM has a more beneficial effect in terms of students' confidence and motivation when learning grammatical aspects of English language in comparison with CLT.

The number of participants that fully completed the experiment was seven in the first class and eight in the second, and the average level of English was elementary – or A2 based on the CEFR measurements.

The grammatical aspects brought up and taught to both Experimental Group and Control Group are the past simple and the present perfect.



Material-wise, there were used textbooks and workbooks<sup>3</sup> from students' the institution, as well as some modified activities for the teaching part of the experiment. For the pre-test and post-test, students received photocopies with exercises that were taken from the resource bank for teachers given by the published.

At the end of the experiment, the participants were given an online questionnaire, using Microsoft Forms that contained closed-ended questions based on Likert model and one open-ended question in order for them to explain what was their attitude and opinion about the two methodologies.

The following sections of this chapter will go more in-depth in terms of the subjects, instruments and procedures.

### 3.2 Subjects

The experimental and control group belonged to two classes from Escola Oficial d'Idiomes de Tortosa, Tarragona, Spain that were in the same academic year, same profile and same level of English. Each class was assigned in a group, class A as the Experimental Group and class B as the Control Group. Both classes were taught using GTM, respectively CLT within five days. Each session lasted for 135 minutes, including a 10-minute break. The class met twice a week, so the experiment extended over three weeks.

### 3.3 Materials and instruments

This section will describe what materials and instruments were needed in order for the experiment to take place, and to gather and analyze the data.

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<sup>3</sup> English File A2/B1 Fourth Edition, from OUP

### 3.3.1 Materials

For the teaching materials students have used English File A2 Fourth Edition both textbook and workbooks, as they provide a variety of grammar activities. They were used totally by the Control Group, and partially by the Experimental Group where two out of five grammar activities were adapted as translation activities.

As for the experiment in itself, the materials are the following:

- (1) Pre-test: The students from both classes received the same test to measure their English competence before the actual experiment. The paper contained two fill-in-the-blanks exercises (Appendix A) in which they needed to place the correct words using past simple or present perfect – the first exercise had a text as the context, and the other had isolated sentences. All the exercises have 0.43 points with a full mark of 10 points.
- (2) Post-test: After the experiment, both classes partook a test with similar format as the pre-test (Appendix A).
- (3) Questionnaire: to determine the overall attitude towards the methodologies used in both classes. It contained 14 closed-ended questions in a form of Likert and an open-ended question in order to see their personal view over this experience and how they felt during these lessons. (Appendix B)

### 3.3.2 Instruments

The instruments used to analyze the gathered data were JASP 0.16 for the quantitative data such as the pre- and post-test and the closed-ended questions from the online questionnaire created with Microsoft Forms (Office 365 version), and Atlas.ti 22 for the qualitative data, in order to quantify the opinions from the open-ended question from the questionnaire.

### 3.4 Procedures

The experiment was carried out during the last weeks of the 2021-22 academic year. The experiment was divided into three stages.

At the first stage (day 1), the pre-test paper was distributed to all the participants of the two groups. The purpose of this stage is to compare and analyse the pre-test scores of the two classes so we can observe the level of each class. Also, from the test result we can know their condition about grammatical competence. The students had to finish within 20 minutes.

The experiment was carried out in the second session (day 2). The grammar taught during this period was the contrast between the past simple and present perfect. All the participants used the same teaching materials and were taught one lesson, which lasted for 135 minutes approximately. Students from the Experimental Class were taught by adopting the Grammar Translation Method in two of the grammar activities, while the Communicative Approach was followed for the Control Class in grammar teaching.

The last stage (day 3), a post-test was conducted to all participants. Afterwards, the scores of the students from both classes were collected in order to test the effectiveness of the learner development program on their grammar performance. Analysis of data was done with JASP 0.16.

### 3.5 Statistical Analysis

As the design of the pre-test and post-test has been created to compare the progress between and within two groups, there were two different statistical tests. The first test was the independent t-test, in which the pre-tests of the Experimental Group and Control Group were compared. The same procedure was made for the post-tests of the two groups. As for the second test, the paired t-test that analysed the progress inside the groups was used; in other

words, the pre and post-tests of a group were compared to determine the progress in English grammar learning after the treatment was given. The same test was followed for the other group as well.

## **IV. Results**

Based on the eligible participants from both groups that participated on the experiment, the sets of pre and post-test were compared to assess the eventual difference between and within the two groups, having a brief discussion about the quantitative data, following, the questionnaire results which will be further explained in details in the qualitative data analysis.

### 4.1 Quantitative Analysis

This section has been split in two parts, each having a subdivision – (1) independent t-test, analysing the pre-test of the two groups and the post-test; (2) paired sample t-test, analysing the sets of pre and post-tests of each group – which would thoroughly analyse the development of the Experimental and Control Groups from the moment the participants took the pre-tests until the session of the post-test.

#### 4.1.1 Independent t-Test

An independent t-test was conducted to determine whether English grammar could be better learned using Grammar Translation Method rather than Communicative Language Teaching. Two classes have the same level (Elementary or A2 based on CEFR) have been selected to participate in the experiment. Class A was assigned to be the Experimental Group,

having seven eligible participants, and Class B was designated as Control Group with eight participants. The Experimental Group was taught using GTM, and the Control Group had CLT as a teaching approach. Both classes completed a pre-test to determine a starting point, received the treatment designed for each group, and then they were assigned a post-test to observe a potential progress made throughout the teaching sessions.

a. Pre-test

Based on the scores of the pre-tests from both groups, it can be seen that the assumption is normality using the Shapiro-Wilks test (Figure 1) was not met ( $p > 0.15$ ). Also, Levene's test of equality of variances (Figure 2) that the difference between the Experimental Group and Control Group was significant ( $F = 0.24, p = 0.63$ ). In other words, the homogeneity of variance had not been met. Furthermore, the data explains that the Experimental Group underperformed notably compared with the Control Group which is an unfavourable variable for the hypotheses.

*Figure 1 Test of Normality (Shapiro-Wilk)*

		<b>W</b>	<b>p</b>
Pre-test	Experimental	0.922	0.485
	Control	0.871	0.153

*Note.* Significant results suggest a deviation from normality.

*Figure 2 Test of Equality of Variances (Levene's)*

	<b>F</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>
Pre-test	0.244	1	0.629

Moreover, both the t-test itself (figure 3) and the descriptive table of the groups (Figure 4) show a significant difference between the two classes to begin with. The first one had  $t_{(13)} = -2.82$  which exceeds the critical value ( $CV_{(13)} = \pm 2.16$ ),  $p = 0.014 < \alpha = 0.05$  and  $d = -1.45$ . In the group descriptive table, there can be observed that the mean between the two groups greatly differ ( $M_{EG} = 4.59$ ,  $M_{CG} = 7$ ), as well as the standard deviation ( $SD_{EG} = 1.51$ ,  $SD_{CG} = 1.78$ ).

Figure 3 Independent Samples T-Test

	Test	Statistic	df	p	Cohen's d
Pre-test	Student	-2.819	13.000	0.014	-1.459
	Welch	-2.853	12.994	0.014	-1.468

Figure 4 Group Descriptive

	Group	N	Mean	SD	SE
Pre-test	Experimental	7	4.590	1.506	0.569
	Control	8	7.008	1.776	0.628

b. Post-test

Surprisingly, even though the treatment was given to the participants of the EG, the results had another outcome than expected. The Shapiro-Wilk's test (Figure 5) still had an obvious difference between the two groups ( $p > 0.15$ ), and the Levene's (Figure 6) test has proved to be quite distinctive too ( $F = 0.6$ ,  $p = 0.45$ ). However, these changes were not necessarily in the favour of EG, as it still was weaker in performance than the CG. Despite all

this, the Experimental Group was closer to Control Group in regards the results. Hence there is a need of changing the perspective of the hypotheses mentioned at the beginning of this paper, which will be presented in the discussion part of the quantitative data.

Figure 5 Test of Normality (Shapiro-Wilk)

		<b>W</b>	<b>p</b>
Post-test	Experimental	0.860	0.151
	Control	0.906	0.327

Note. Significant results suggest a deviation from normality.

Figure 6 Test of Equality of Variances (Levene's)

	<b>F</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>
Post-test	0.606	1	0.450

Both the t-test (Figure 7) and the group descriptive table (Figure 8) show a slight difference between the Experimental Group and the Control Group after the post-test. The t-test has showed that  $t_{(13)} = -1.31$ , which does not exceed the critical value ( $CV_{(13)} = \pm 2.16$ ),  $p = 0.212$  being greater than  $\alpha = 0.05$ , and  $d = -0.68$ .

Figure 7 Independent Samples T-Test

	<b>Test</b>	<b>Statistic</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Cohen's d</b>
Post-test	Student	-1.314	13.000	0.212	-0.680
	Welch	-1.300	11.989	0.218	-0.676

Finally, the group descriptive table show that the mean between the two groups have come closer in terms of performance, but still having a significant difference in favour to the

Control Group ( $M_{EG} = 6.27$ ,  $M_{CG} = 7.49$ ). The same goes for the standard deviation of the two groups ( $SD_{EG} = 1.94$ ,  $SD_{CG} = 1.67$ ).

Figure 8 Group Descriptives

	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>SE</b>
Post-test	Experimental	7	6.270	1.944	0.735
	Control	8	7.496	1.674	0.592

#### 4.1.2 Paired Sample t-Test

The paired sample test was conducted from several reasons: (1) the sample for the data was less than 30 participants, hence the independent t-test could not have enough power to confirm or negate the hypotheses, (2) since the difference between the Experimental Group and the Control Group was already visible from the pre-test, it was needed to be analysed the amount of progress reported for each group individually, and (3) by using this type of test, it can be evaluated which group, despite of their marks, had the best improvement. Also, at the discussion of the quantitative data section, every point mentioned above will be explained so any doubt can be cleared away.

##### a. Control Group

Comparing the tables from Figure 9 and 10, there can be seen that the score deviates from normality (Shapiro-Wilk test)  $p = 0.21 > 0.01$  quite significantly. Not only that, but the same outcome can be seen thanks to  $t_{(7)} = -3.14$  which exceeds the critical value that is  $\pm 2.37$ ,  $p = 0.02$  that is greater than  $\alpha = 0.05$ , and  $d = -1.11$ .



Figure 9 Paired Samples T-Test

Measure 1		Measure 2	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Pre-test	-	Post-test	-3.135	7	0.017	-1.108

Note. Student's t-test.

Figure 10 Test of Normality (Shapiro-Wilk)

			W	p
Pre-test	-	Post-test	0.886	0.214

Note. Significant results suggest a deviation from normality.

Moreover, for the Communicative Language Teaching, in the descriptive table (Figure 11) the mean of the pre-test was statistically lower ( $M = 7.01$ ,  $SD = 1.78$ ) than the post-test ( $M = 7.49$ ,  $SD = 1.68$ ), and the effect size was large ( $d = - 1.44$ ). Therefore, these findings demonstrate that this method can improve the process of learning English grammar.

Figure 11 Group Descriptives

	N	Mean	SD	SE
Pre-test	8	7.008	1.776	0.628
Post-test	8	7.486	1.675	0.592

b. Experimental Group

Looking at the paired sample t-test table (Figure 12), compared to the Shapiro-Wilk's normality test (Figure 13), it can be seen that the  $p = 0.28 > 0.02$ ,  $t_{(6)} = - 3.82$  that is greater

than the  $CV_{(7)} = \pm 2.45$ ,  $p > \alpha = 0.05$ , and  $d = -1.44$ . This signifies that a critical improvement has happened after the treatment was given.

Figure 12 Paired Samples T-Test

Measure 1		Measure 2	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Pre-test	-	Post-test	-3.135	7	0.017	-1.108

Note. Student's t-test.

Figure 13 Test of Normality (Shapiro-Wilk)

		W	p
Pre-test	-	0.892	0.283

Note. Significant results suggest a deviation from normality.

From a descriptive point of view, the table below (Figure 14) there can be seen a better portrayal of the improvements that the Experimental Group has felt during the sessions taught using the Grammar Translation Method. The post-test ( $M = 6.27$ ,  $SD = 1.94$ ) got greater results, as expected, than the pre-test ( $M = 4.59$ ,  $SD = 1.51$ ). Thus, GTM has proved to be a great approach of teaching English grammar as well.

Figure 14 Group Descriptives

	N	Mean	SD	SE
Pre-test	7	4.590	1.506	0.569
Post-test	7	6.270	1.944	0.735

## 4.2 Qualitative Analysis

After observing how the participants increased their knowledge on two aspects of English grammar, quantitatively, through tests, it is also important to understand how was their attitude during the experiment.

To measure their satisfaction or, on the contrary, dissatisfaction towards the procedures, the participants needed to complete 14 closed-ended questions in a form of Likert and an open-ended question (Appendix B), using the Atlas.ti 22. This program will collect the written speech of the answers of the questionnaire and quantify.

Unfortunately, not all participants have completed the questionnaire; however, looking at the general attitude of the students, as seen in Figure 15, we can see that both groups had a positive experience during the experiment period. Moreover, in terms of lack of data, one student of each group that has indeed finished the questionnaire did not participate through the whole process, but their answers could be taken into account as they only missed the post test. Therefore, they could still opionate over how the sessions with the treatment went.

Looking at each group, there can be seen that there were slight differences, as the Experimental Group (GTM) was a bit less confident than the Control Group (CLT), having a participant abstain from answering the open-ended questions.

Figure 15 Sentiment Analysis

	Group::A (Grammar Translation Method) □ 6 (U) 6	Group::B (Communicative Learning Teaching) □ 7 (U) 7	Totals
◆ abstain (U) 1	1 16.67%		1 7.69%
◆ negative (U) 2	1 16.67%	1 14.29%	2 15.38%
◆ neutral (U) 2	1 16.67%	1 14.29%	2 15.38%
◆ positive (U) 8	3 50.00%	5 71.43%	8 61.54%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6</b> 100.00%	<b>7</b> 100.00%	<b>13</b> 100.00%

Lastly, as far as the closed-ended questions about the opinion in regards methodology and materials went, the answers had a slightly positive outcome, as can be seen in Figures 16 and 17.

Figure 16 *Questions for Materials from both groups (made with Microsoft Form)*

### 3. Materials

[More Details](#)

1 Highly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Neutral 4 Agree 5 Highly Agree

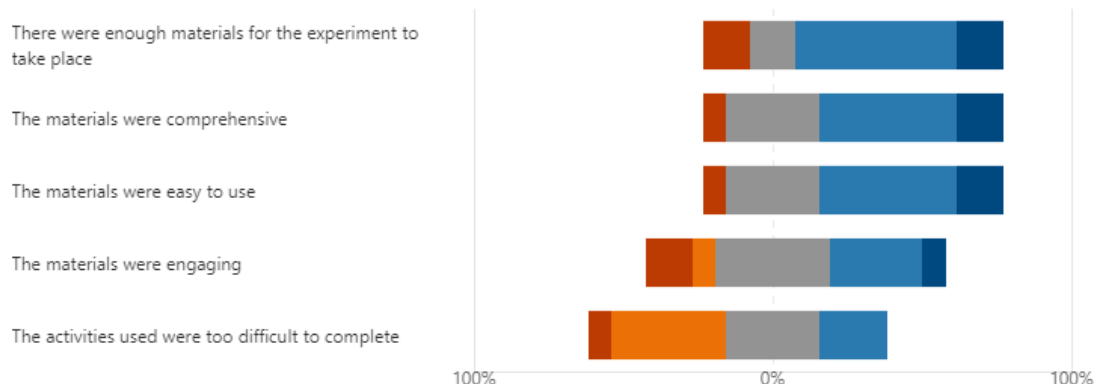
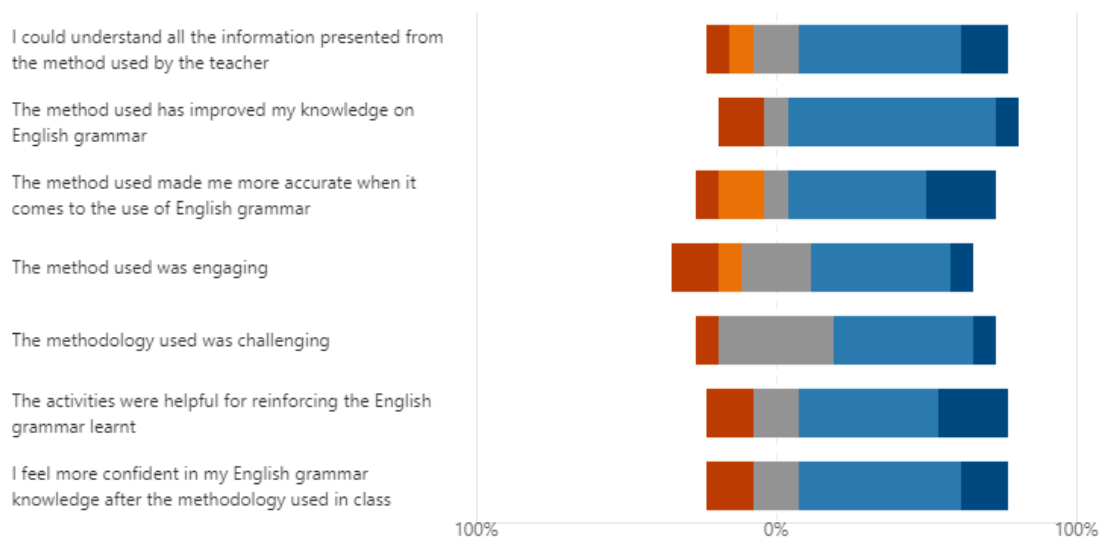


Figure 17 *Questions for Methodology from both groups (made with Microsoft Form)*

### 4. Methodology

[More Details](#)

Highly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Highly Agree



Nevertheless, if we have to delimitate the results for each group, based on Appendix C, Figure 18 shows that almost half (46.67%) of the group taught with Grammar Translation Method pleased with the materials, the other half (36.67%) had a neutral attitude and the rest (16.67%) was dissatisfied, whereas the group with Communicative Language Teaching had a greater mental outlook, having 62.86% participants that found the materials given interactive and helpful, 22.86% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and only 14.26% did not appreciate the quality. From the point of view of the methodology used, the Experimental Group felt less reassured than the Control group, where the first one had only 57.14% participants confident in GTM, and the latter had 77.55%.

Figure 18 Attitude distribution towards material and for each group

	materials	method
GTM	14/30(+), 11/30(0), 5/30 (-)	24/42 (+), 11/42 (0), 7/42 (-)
CLT	22/35(+), 8/35 (0), 5/35 (-)	38/49(+), 5/49 (0), 7/49(-)

Legend:

(+) = positive attitude

(0)= neutral attitude

(-)= negative attitude

In the next section of this paper, there will be a discussion on the reasons why not all the participants completed the questionnaire, why there is a visible difference in attitude

between the two groups, and how it may or may not be in sync to the quantitative data previously analyzed.

## **V. Discussion**

This section of the paper is dedicated to analyse what the quantitative and qualitative data represent and if the hypotheses could be confirmed or not. Also, this discussion can reflect on future possible research regarding this topic.

### **5.1 Discussion of the Quantitative Data**

As it could be observed from the independent t-test that the Control Group had a clearly higher level of proficiency at the beginning of the experiment. Hence the homogeneity value has not been met.

The activities carried out during the experiment clearly led to improvement in the experimental group; however, the Experimental Group could not surpass the Control Group, since the latter had a better start than the other class. Moreover, due to the fact that the number of participants was less than 30 (seven participants for the Experimental Group and eight participants for CG), the data has not had enough power to determine a closer outcome to the reality, therefore an additional test was needed to look at the progress within each group. This is why a paired sample t-test was carried out.

Using the paired sample, it could be observed thoroughly how well each group improve their English grammar regarding the past simple and present perfect.

Although, the Control Group has had better marks in both pre and post-test, the gap between the sets of means and standard deviations were slightly significant, the gap of the mean being 0.48 points and the one of the SD being – 0.10. Whereas the Experimental Group had a more potent change, the pre-test and post-test having a mean gap of 1.68 points and a SD gap of 0.43 points.

## 5.2 Discussion of the Qualitative Data

Having seen the results of the qualitative data, it can be claimed that both groups have improved quite a lot, especially the experimental one. Now it is important to see how this experiment might have affected the students in terms of confidence and overall attitude towards each teaching methodology.

Firstly, the lack of answers to the questionnaire may have been caused by the fact that there was not a clear explanation in the questionnaire description to what a pre-test really signifies; therefore, they might have felt as if they were treated unfairly.

Secondly, there is a gap in the confidence level of the between the Experimental Group and the Control Group due to two major factors, (1) the students are used to CLT approach and it feels familiar and tangible to learn English in this manner, and (2) the translation-based activities may not be as motivation-inducing as other types of tasks, or students may even feel a bit overwhelmed because they are not used with exercises as such. This appears to be quite an interesting discovery, since the results from the quantitative data confirm that the students, notably the EG, have had a great improvement from where they started, which leaves space for the last discussion point; that of synchrony between the real results and the attitude of the students.

This asynchrony may actually prove the expression “hold the vision, trust the process” since the results were full of promise to the progress in acquiring English, although it may have felt otherwise for the students.

### 5.3 Further Research

In this section there are presented reasons on a possible new research regarding the fusion between the Grammar Translation Method and the Communicative Language Teaching Approach.

From Cook (1992), the authors observed how L1 influences the L2, as “two or more languages cannot be separated from one mind”. Moreover learners, create their own mnemonic pattern in order to understand the L2 getting them through the filter of L1. Therefore, the authors claim that in an SLA class the L1 only becomes invisible, but not inexistent, to make space for the target language to take place. That being said, the combination of the maternal and target languages in classroom had a very positive outcome on the students’ performance, and create an appropriate learning environment (Fazal et al., 2017)

Due to the fact that language acts like a living organism, it has an ongoing change process in which there is a need to develop and redevelop strategies and methodologies. As Fazal et al. (2017) rightfully argues that every approach has its predominant area (for instance, GTM is great for grammar and vocabulary, but not so much on the communication part of the language, whereas CLT is the exact counterpart, great with interactivity in the targeted language, but not so good with the theoretical part), Richards and Rodgers (2001) state that the quality of the teaching languages is determined by the choice of the teachers who need to use the best approaches.



Fazal et al. (2017) illustrate, thanks to the work of Richards & Rodgers (2001), that an integration of two methodologies is possible and it can be actually a ground-breaking innovation in order not only for students to have the courage to use the target language, but also learn it in the best possible manner so their usage of the language can be as accurate as possible.

Figure 19 Language Teaching Methodology (Richards & Rodgers, 2001)



Figure: Language Teaching Methodology (Richards & Rodgers, 2001)

This hybrid can actually help students psychologically as it can be challenging enough to make them like they are learning something, but interactive enough to make them feel more motivated. Thus, teachers can provide their students lessons on each aspect of a language. This hybrid called CGT, as the authors describe it, was developed in Pakistan, in order to minimize the weaknesses (Fazal et al., 2017). It appears to have a more beneficial impact on the learners of a second language, as each component of the fusion has a focus on some set of skills (CLT part with speaking and listening; GTM, with reading and writing).

There are several ways that these methodologies can be combined in lesson plan that (Fazal et al., 2017) have researched about. One example is taken from Swain and Lapkin (1998) in which the goals and language tasks are more effectively completed when a minimum amount of L1 comes along with the L2. In other words, to use L1 for abstract or more complex structure, to facilitate the understanding of the grammar aspect learned. Moreover, translation makes Krashen's input more comprehensible and meaningful in learning. Another example is given by Kobayashi and Rinnert's (1992) where Japanese students were allowed to use their L1 in writing skill, as it was a prompt manner of organizing their own thoughts and ideas which is quite ideal for beginners or slow language

learners; however, it should be used as little as possible, and teachers should observe the classroom when the students use L1 in a target language context in order to find the needs of the learners. Lastly, multiple linguists (Eadie, 1999; Bialystok, 1998;) suggested that translation have several benefits such as increasing the intellectual ability and it is used as the best strategy for language learners.

## **VI. Conclusion**

Throughout the paper it was observed how important it is to choose and adapt the proper teaching methodology for the needs of the language learner to be able to gain the information in an optimal environment.

Based on the qualitative and quantitative data collected, we can say that the hypotheses mentioned above were confirmed with slight alterations. (1) Language learners can learn grammar better using GTM; however, improvements were showed with CLT too. (2) Translation-based activities are great tools to understand better the use of grammatical aspects, but it also depends on the motivation level of the students. But, despite the development clearly showed by the quantitative data, the third hypothesis in regards the confidence level increased for the students that where taught using GTM was rather inaccurate, as the qualitative data demonstrate.

Although Grammar Translation Method has become avoided by the teachers and professors alike in favour of a more communicative approach, the experiment proved that as long as we know how to adapt the materials we have, it is very well possible to help the students understand grammar aspects of languages. What it is also good to give GTM credits

for is for the focus on accuracy which can be beneficial for the learners due to the improbability to have fossilized structured memorized in their long-term memory.

As it is essential to know the language theoretically, it is also crucial to be able to use it and be confident when doing so, hence the desire for many language teachers to focus on interaction and speaking. However, as instructors it is imperative to be able to find a balance when teaching a language, because a language does not have only grammar or speaking, but it is an amalgam of skills that for one language.

To conclude, language instructors should not teach using one method, but to mix them up as much as possible because each skill requires different types of activities and distinctive ways to present these features.

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## APPENDIXES

### Appendix A (Pre and Post-test)

#### 1. Put the verbs in brackets into the *past simple* or the *present perfect*.

Dear Margaret,

Thank you very much for your letter which I received (receive) last week. I ..... (be) really happy to hear from you after all this time.

I've got a lot of news to tell you about myself. I ..... (get) a new job nine months ago. I work as a reporter for our local TV station now. I ..... (have) many interesting experiences so far. When I first ..... (start) work, the manager ..... (ask) me to interview our old school headmaster. He ..... (be) so surprised to see me with a microphone in my hand!

Last month, a fire ..... (break out) in a big factory in the area. I ..... (be) the only reporter who ..... (manage) to talk to the owner! That ..... (make) me feel very proud.

As you can see, I enjoy my job very much. I ..... (meet) a lot of important people and I ..... (have) the opportunity to see lots of new places. I ..... (buy) a new car because my old one ..... (break down) a couple of weeks ago.

I have to go now because they ..... (just / inform) me that I have to fly by helicopter to Middleford. I have to talk to people whose homes were damaged by the storm which ..... (hit) the area last night. You see, I don't have a moment's rest!

Keep in touch.

Love,

Rosie

#### 2. Complete the sentences. Put the verbs in brackets in the *present perfect* or the *past simple*.

We ..... (not see) Micaela since she moved to Valencia.

Peter and his wife ..... (buy) a holiday home in Greece last year.

How long ..... you ..... (work) in this factory?

Monica ..... (not say) goodbye when she left.

My grandmother ..... (live) in Italy for ten years. She's really happy there.

I ..... (not study) German when I was at school.

What time ..... they ..... (arrive) at the airport?

# Grammar Translation Method (GMT) vs Communicative Learning Teaching (CLT)

This questionnaire was created in order for both students and teachers of English classes to express their opinion about how they felt while the two methodologies (GTM AND CLT) were used in learning and teaching English grammar.

\* Required

## Participants' details

This section was made to identify in which group each participant was in. (There is no personal information involved in it.)

1. I participated in Group \*

- A (Grammar Translation Method)
- B (Communicative Learning Teaching)

2. Have you been present throughout the whole experiment? \*

- Yes
- No



## Attitude towards the methodologies

This section is created to see the attitude towards the

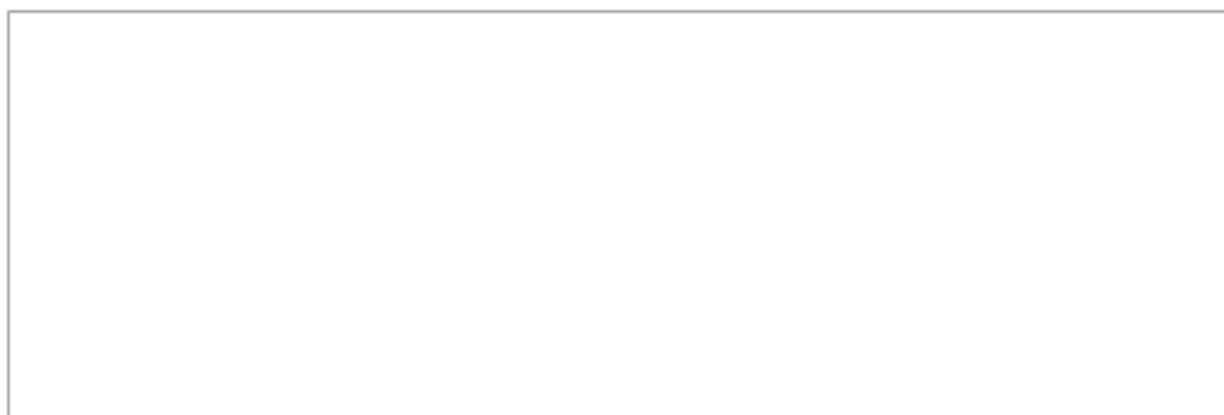
### 3. Materials \*

	1 Highly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Highly Agree
There were enough materials for the experiment to take place	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The materials were comprehensive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The materials were easy to use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The materials were engaging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The activities used were too difficult to complete	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### 4. Methodology \*

	Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree
I could understand all the information presented from the method used by the teacher	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The method used has improved my knowledge on English grammar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The method used made me more accurate when it comes to the use of English grammar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The method used was engaging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The methodology used was challenging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The activities were helpful for reinforcing the English grammar learnt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel more confident in my English grammar knowledge after the methodology used in class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Please describe your overall experience attitude in learning English grammar using the methodology adopted in your group. (You can write your answer either in English, Spanish or Catalan) \*



Appendix C (Results of the questionnaire: close-ended questions)

ID	Group	Have you been present throughout the whole experiment?	There were enough materials for the experiment to take place	The materials were comprehensive	The materials were easy to use	The materials were engaging	The activities used were too difficult to complete	I could understand all the information presented from the method used by the teacher	The method used has improved my knowledge on English grammar	The method used made me more accurate when it comes to the use of English grammar	The method used was engaging	The methodology used was challenging	The activities were helpful for reinforcing the English grammar learnt	I feel more confident in my English grammar knowledge after the methodology used in class
20	A (GTM)	Yes	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
23	A (GTM)	No	Highly Disagree	Highly Disagree	Highly Disagree	Highly Disagree	Highly Disagree	Highly Disagree	Highly Disagree	Highly Disagree	Highly Disagree	Highly Disagree	Highly Disagree	Highly Disagree
26	A (GTM)	Yes	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree	Agree
27	A (GTM)	Yes	Agree	Agree	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
28	A (GTM)	Yes	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Agree	Highly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
29	A (GTM)	Yes	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
21	B (CLT)	Yes	Highly Agree	Highly Agree	Highly Agree	Highly Agree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Agree
22	B (CLT)	Yes	Highly Disagree	Neutral	Neutral	Highly Disagree	Agree	Neutral	Highly Disagree	Disagree	Highly Disagree	Neutral	Highly Disagree	Highly Disagree

24	B (CLT)	Yes	Highly Agree	Highly Agree	Highly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Highly Agree	Highly Agree	Agree	Highly Agree	Highly Agree
25	B (CLT)	Yes	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
30	B (CLT)	Yes	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Neutral	Agree	Agree
31	B (CLT)	No	Agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Highly Agree	Highly Agree	Highly Agree	Disagree	Highly Agree	Highly Agree	Highly Agree
32	B (CLT)	Yes	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Highly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree