Impediment in Advancement of Bilingualism in Schools: Grammar Translation Method and Communicative Language Teaching Approaches

Misbah Rafat
Mphil Scholar at Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi
Email: misbahrafat19@gmail.com

Abstract

Purpose: This study is designed to analyze the impact of socio-economic condition, variant teaching methods, learners’ attitude, and environment of school in the overall learning of English as a second language in different school types. In countries where English is a second language, the access to English in school has been limited to the upper strata of society while lower strata can only bear the fee of government schools which obstruct the acquisition of second language. Bilingualism is highly associated with the ability to use two language and this research is conducted to investigate the basic differences between teaching strategies, school environment and learners’ attitude towards English as second language in different school types. All these factors are considered to address the contrasting ideologies of private schools and government schools which foster or restrict the process of bilingualism.

Methodology: This study was designed quantitatively to gather data from 36 participants (12 from each school type i.e., government school, private school and semi government school). Questionnaire contained three sections and were distributed to participants between 20-30 years of age. Two particular teaching methods i.e. Grammar translation method and Communicative language teaching approaches are focused to investigate the impediment in advancement of bilingualism.

Findings: Socio-economic condition of family affects the choice of school where people with strong financial background prefer to admit their children in highly famous English language school. Bilingualism is prioritized in private school where appropriate environment is provided to the learners while other school types do not implement effective strategies which can help students in learning highly prestigious language.

Conclusion: English grammar translation method and communicative learning teaching approaches are used differently in public and private schools which formulate different communicative competency of students.

Recommendations: Future studies can be conducted to scrutinize the role of other teaching methods such as direct method, audio-lingual method, total physical response, and structural approach in different types of classrooms to assess the learning of English as second language.

Keywords: Bilingualism, English, grammar translation method, communicative language teaching, public and private school types, socio-economic condition.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In post-colonial world, Pakistan, like many other countries, has always faced obstacles in implementation and formulation of language policy in educational institutions (Manan, David, & Dumanig, 2014; Mansoor, 2004a, 2004b; Mustafa, 2011; Rahman, 1999, 2002, 2004a; Rassool & Mansoor, 2007). This unresolved issue still exits due to negligence and political issues. Language policy in a certain country provide a way to encourage or discourage any particular language. Many countries have policies to preserve and promote regional or ethnic languages whose viability is threatened. Official policy of the Pakistan since 1947 has tried to promote national integrity and unity through Urdu language. Despite of making efforts to replace English with Urdu language, English continued to flourish and has gained status of second official language of Pakistan.

Best jobs are reserved for those who are fluent in English language and it is associated with the upper class. In Pakistani context, teachers are asked to incorporate communicative practices in classroom due to the benefits associated with the usage of English. English language is thought to have a passport to privilege (Rahman, 2005a). In this scenario, powerful and affluent upper-class children have access to English language in private schools while rest of the population to whom Rahman (2005b) has referred to as the haves-not, have no choice except to attend government or low-fee second-tier private schools. Malarz (2014) has organized goals of bilingual education into four categories; cognitive development, affective development, linguistic growth and cultural enrichment. Central theme of bilingual program shouldn’t be only transition to the mainstream and maintenance of native culture (Malarz, 2014).

Purpose of research is to critically evaluate the phenomenon through which schools promote different ideologies regarding practical implication of second language learning experience in Pakistan. Obtained data has been analyzed to draw out contrasting beliefs which focuses on different teaching methodologies by providing discrete environment to the students in schools.

1.1 Research Questions

Q.1. How does the contrasting ideologies of public and private school affect the learning of English as second language?

Q.2. Which factors are predominant in the advancement of bilingualism in schools?

1.2 Research Objectives

Objectives of the research are as follow:

i.  To equate the socio-economic condition of students with the learning of second language in school.

ii. To highlight the differences in teaching strategies of public and private schools.

iii. To discuss the attitudes of learners towards English language.

iv. To determine the nature of the subject materials and role of the instructors.

v. To analyze the overall environment of the school in fostering bilingualism

1.3 Research significance:

This research has considered inter-related factors which affect acquisition of second language in Pakistani schools. There are not only few factors which restrict or foster the learning of English language rather different components determine the progress level of the students. Learners’
attitude is foremost facet in highlighting the ideology of authoritative figure. This research has dealt with these inter-related features in order to draw a sharp boundary between English language learning experience in government schools and in private schools.

1.4 Research Limitation

This research is limited to responses of 36 participants due to time constraint and in-depth analysis for better valid results. There are varied factors which affect bilingualism process at school and it involves the role of higher authorities and perception of parents towards second language which is indirectly influenced by the ideology of society in which they live. For this study, only few factors such as socio-economic condition, learners’ attitude, instructors’ roles, and overall environment of school are taken into account which elevate or delimit second language learning in schools.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

In a multilingual country like Pakistan, best education is provided to the students in English language while government schools provide education to the students in Urdu language. The study was conducted to analyze the implementation of bilingual education at primary level. In case of non-familiarity of students with Urdu and English language, they find difficulty in comprehending the knowledge. Cognitive development and comprehension abilities of students who are given the basic primary education in their native language is better (Ruhin & Jernudd, 1971). Numerous factors are attributed to multiple languages in educational system such as heterogeneity of languages in a country, religious or social attitudes, or the ideology of promoting national identity. Language policy is a conscious process of future and overt oriented change in the structure of language code or speaking in any societal context (Ruhin et al., 1971). Due to reserved portion of budget for villages’ primary schools, pluralistic society, tug-of-war between Urdu and English, absence of well-developed curriculum, and availability of reference material for teachers, there is a strong feeling of general dissatisfaction regarding bilingual education in Pakistan. (Uddin & Raja, 2014).

Acquisition or learning of two languages holistically bridge a way to aspire bilinguals with more opportunities in social and economic life (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). People define ‘bilingualism’ differently as Beardsmore (1982) has described bilingualism as a term which has open ended semantics. It means that there is no particular definition of this phenomenon. Famous linguist Bloomfield who is known for his passionate work in the field of bilingualism has defined it as ‘native-like competency in two languages’. This means the equal and perfect level of competency in both languages at the same time (Chin & Wigglesworth, 2007). Common five categories of bilingualism include balanced bilingual, dominant bilingual, passive or recessive bilingual, and semilinguals or limited bilinguals. Success of bilingualism can be affected by the factor of age, quality and quantity of interaction, socio-cultural, psychology, and cognitive ability factors, child’s personality, and motivation (Alforidi, 2016).

In one letter of Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan to the heads of colleges and universities in Pakistan, it is advised that students’ proficiency and communicative skills in second language should be enhanced in order to make them efficient for academic and professional purposes (Zaffar, 2008). In a research study, public school teachers in Pakistan claimed to use GTM (grammar translation method) in classroom for making the learners competent in the rules
and regulations of second language through the frequent use of L1 by reducing the innovation techniques. Students’ assessment depends on the correct use of language structure and appropriateness of language grammatical use. On the other hand, private school teachers’ have shown close methodological association with CLT (communicative language teaching) method to enable the learners to use second language in real world situation. There is frequent use of English language which enhance the learning compatibilities of learners. But feedback shows that they still lag behind in the real implementation of CLT in classroom (Ahmed & Rao, 2012). There was no student-student interaction, pair group and group-work activities, life-like situation, interaction in English, usage of teacher made materials, fluency, speaking and listening skills in public schools. It means that CLT strategies are best adopted by private sectors which shows the level of inequality students are facing due to different background and socio-economic situation (Ahmed & Rao, 2012).

Time to time announcement of language policies have always been inconsistent and never been implemented either in its full form (Mustafa, 2011). National education policy (GOP, 2009) declared that Provincial and Area Education Departments will have authority to select medium of instruction up to class 5 (5th grade)’ and science and mathematics subjects should be taught in English language from class 4 onwards (GOP, 2009, p. 28). These two statements are self-contradictory in nature as policies should be clear and pragmatically realistic in nature (Mustafa, 2011). Shamim (2012) has termed present educational system in Pakistan as ‘linguistic apartheid’ while Rahman described it as ‘educational apartheid’ Urdu and English medium schools (2004a, p. 74). A study in 11 low-fee English-medium private schools in Quetta, capital city of Balochistan province, has shown in their findings that there is a gap between policy, perception and school practices’ (Mustafa, 2011). Term ‘fever’ for English is a motivation behind English-medium policy (Ferguson, 2013; Manan et al., 2015). Most students do not achieve even the lower level of benchmark that UNESCO has set out for definition of literacy. Ten years of being in a system where English language is taught in a bad way cannot reduce gap between elite and lower classes. These schools are doing nothing except duping illiterate parents who still believe that their children are learning English language for better future opportunities (Mustafa, 2012). There is no effective monitoring system and capacity-building of students. Growth of private schools and collapse of public schools shows disengagement of government from commitment to public schooling (Mustafa, 2012).

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Grammar Translation Method

Classical method in 19th century came to be known as Grammar translation method and was proposed by Prof. Karl Plotz (1819-1881). It is one of the required courses in English majors. ‘Grammar’ is a set of rules which combines to formulate a meaningful utterance in any language (Penny, 2000). Grammar translation method is a traditional teaching method in which language structures are taught by teachers and are learned by students. It helps the student in the mastery of grammatical rules but they feel difficulty in applying those rules flexibly in any communicative natural environment. It doesn’t develop communicative competence because this is a teacher-centered method which requires effort of teacher only in elaborating the grammatical rules in classroom while students listen to them silently or take notes. Passive learning occurs in typical method of translation of English text to Urdu or vice versa, to fill in the blanks with accurate word
and sentence correction errors after rote learning which doesn't build any interest or self-confidence in the students.

2.1.2 Communicative Language Learning

In 1960s, Noam Chomsky's theories focused on competence and performance in language learning. It gave rise to communicative language teaching (CLT) but basic concepts in CLT was laid by Michael Halliday in 1970s. This approach enables learners to apply their knowledge in a real-world situation because it involves the integration of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills which are effective in learning second language. Grammar learning is emphasized through the approach of ‘learning by doing’ through participation of students and co-operative discussion among students and teachers. It can be acquired naturally by learners in realistic environment, instead of focusing on rote learning. This approach aspire learners to focus on the functional part of language rather than memorizing structural component of target language.

2.1.3 Teaching Strategies in Second Language Acquisition

More effective and less effective students in classroom need special treatment according to their own learning compatibilities. Second language learning depends to some extent on the teaching strategies and it requires to calculate the prior knowledge of the students such as active or passive learning, the monitoring of language production, communication in target language, effective performance of task or mental nervousness during learning process.

Teacher and students should share their responsibilities where teacher take the role of model and facilitator while students become active participants by taking responsibility of their own learning. During learning process, teacher can facilitate, guide, and present material clearly. These learning tools should appropriately be used by students sincerely for desiring output. Learners’ motivation, self-efficacy, value, and attributions should be at higher level while learning any target language.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Method

This study is quantitatively designed in which data is gathered through the questionnaires. Close ended questions were formulated in accordance with the research purpose whose basic aim was to elicit the responses and participants’ information about their socio-economic condition, English language learning environment in their school, their attitude toward second language and role of instructors in classroom. Theory triangulation method is used for substantiating the points from multiple perspectives. As this research is based on classroom teaching strategies, three theories were considered beneficial for this research i.e. grammar translation method, communicative language teaching and second language acquisition.

3.2 Participants and Materials

A total of 36 participants voluntarily took part in this research and they were given invitation through social media. In this convenient purposive sampling, all female participants were divided into three groups according to the school they attended i.e., government school, private school and semi government school types. Each category of school contained 12 participants aged 20-30. Respondents were asked to fill three sections of questionnaire which aimed at obtaining information regarding their experience of second language learning as a student in their respective schools. Material obtained was analyzed on the basis of differences in teaching method,
environment outside the classroom, and personal attitude towards prestigious language. These factors were associated with socio economic condition and respondents’ place of hometown.

4.0 FINDINGS

Quantitative responses of the participants who were selected for research purposes has shown distinct dissimilarities regarding bilingualism at school. Among 36 participants, 12 were students from private school, 12 were from government schools and 12 participants were student from semi-government schools. First, background information was given in the first section of questionnaire to see the effect of socio-economic life on the choice of school.

Table 1: Relative comparison of socio-economic status with choice of school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family per month income</th>
<th>Total number of participants</th>
<th>Private school participants</th>
<th>Gov. School participants</th>
<th>Semi-Gov. school participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Above 30,000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 50,000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 lac</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants with 70,000 or 2.5 lac per month income have studied from private sector or semi-government sector. In this survey, out of 36 participants, 13 were city residents while 23 were from villages.

Table 2. Correlation of location of hometown with choice of school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>Total no. of participants</th>
<th>Private school Students</th>
<th>Gov. School students</th>
<th>Semi gov. School students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total of 9 participants from private school, and 5 respondents from each sector of government and semi government schools have responded positively and mentioned that their teachers have always encouraged them to speak in English language in classroom, while rest of the students were sometimes, rarely or were never motivated by their teachers to speak in English language in classroom.

DOI: [https://doi.org/10.58425/llj.v1i1.89](https://doi.org/10.58425/llj.v1i1.89)
Teachers have ______ encouraged me to speak English language in classroom.
36 responses

30.8% always
11.1% sometimes
52.8% rarely
never

Figure 1: Responses on how often teachers encouraged learners to speak in English

Environment outside the classroom was also influential in learning English language for private school students who agreed on the fact that they were used to speaking Urdu-English mix language with friends during break time. However, all of these participants accepted that their listening and speaking skills in English language increased in school. On the other hand, 7 students from government school haven’t used Punjabi with friends in school while rest of 5 used to talk with their friends in Urdu and Punjabi language. Total of 6 participants were in the view that their listening and speaking skills of English language was not improved during school time. Semi-government students used to avoid Punjabi language in school except one student who responded in favor of using Punjabi and Urdu language outside the classroom in school. 8 participants who were student of semi-government school were assured that their listening and speaking skills in English language was improved.

In school, I used to talk with friends in ______ language.
36 responses

83.3% English / Urdu
16.7% Punjabi / Urdu

Figure 2: Responses on language preferred by learners in school to talk wit friends

DOI: https://doi.org/10.58425/llj.v1i1.89
English language in school has improved my listening and speaking skills.

36 responses

Figure 3: Response on whether English language improved learners’ listening and speaking skills

When instructors themselves adopt and use the language they teach to the students, then it ultimately enables the learner to speak language fluently. Total of 5 participants from private schools, 8 from government schools and 6 from semi government responded that their teachers have always used Urdu language to explain complicated concepts while rest of the participants said that Urdu language was sometimes or was rarely used by their teachers to explain difficult things in school.

In school, Urdu language was ____used by teachers to explain complicated (difficult) things.

36 responses

Figure 4: Responses on how often Urdu languages was used by teachers to explain complicated things
Washback and feedback are milestones in the academic year of a student in which they analyze their progress level after learning something new. Frequency of teachers’ feedback to students about their English performance in school is the same for both private and government sectors i.e. 4 students from each sector responded that they have always got feedback from their teacher. While this ratio was lower in case of semi-gov school sector where only 3 participants responded positively.

**Figure 5:** Responses on how often teachers provided feedback on learners English language

Progress level of students in class also differs in accordance with the use of teaching strategies. Use of English language in real-world situations needs development of critical thinking within students for making them able to express their ideas in target language. On the contrary, memorization process focuses only on the structure of target language and doesn’t prepare the learner to tackle difficulties in real-world scenarios. Total of 8 participants from private school, 4 from government schools, and only 1 participant who studied from semi-government school responded that they can express their ideas in target language at any situation while rest of them were exposed to ratalization system.

**Figure 6:** Responses on what quality English education was mostly based on

*DOI: [https://doi.org/10.58425/llj.v1i1.89](https://doi.org/10.58425/llj.v1i1.89)*
Grammar translation method is used to teach basic grammatical rules and regulations of target language to the learners while communicative language teaching integrates all essential skills whose purpose is to enable learners communicating efficiently in target language. Only 6 participants from private school, 2 respondents of each sector of government and semi government school responded that their teachers have used communicative language teaching method instead of GTM.

**Figure 7: Responses on what English language was taught through**

Attitude of learner toward language is important because without self-motivation there would be less chance of progress. In this study, it was found that only 5 participants who studied from private and 1 participant of semi government were inclined toward choosing English as a language which can help them in their professional life while similar response was given by 3 from government school.

**Figure 8: Response on which language that learners felt has impact on their professional life**
Majority of the participants have considered both English and Urdu as a language which has an ability to make them more civilized and educated. Among these 9 participants from Private school, 6 from semi government schools and only 1 participant from government school.

![Pie chart showing language ability](image1)

**Figure 9: Response on which language that learners felt can make them civilized**

Those lectures which are delivered by instructor in target language enhance the listening skills of students unconsciously and it last in their memory for long time which helps them in delivering ideas in target language. Total of 9 participants from private school, 1 of government and 6 participants from semi-government school agreed that their teachers mostly used to deliver lectures in English language while rest of them have responded that Urdu language was mostly used by their teachers to deliver lectures.

![Pie chart showing language used by teachers](image2)

**Figure 10: Response on which language teachers delivered lectures**

In last section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with given five statements. In response to the question of whether English learning was beneficial in school or not, all 12 participants from private school 8 from government and 11 from semi
government school strongly agreed/ strongly agreed that their school environment was beneficial for them in learning English language. In response to the question of whether English language gives more confidence, 12 participants from private school, 5 from government school, and 9 respondents from semi government school agreed/ strongly agreed on this statement. In this world, all the development in scientific field is booked or published in English language so for purpose of connecting learners to technological world, it is necessary to teach them the existing knowledge in English language. Private school has all the material in English language while 6 participants from government school and 9 from semi government school mentioned that their courses were in English language. When teachers already announce objectives in classroom, then it becomes easy for students to focus on desired outcome. In second language learning classroom, about 11 participants from private school, 4 from government school and 10 from semi government school participants agreed that their classroom objectives were accomplished in school.

The final question on the questionnaire was; by keeping in view the overall environment and learning experience of English language in your school, how much do you agree with the following statements?

1. English language learning in school was beneficial for me.
2. My school environment has helped me a lot in learning English language.
3. English language gives me more confidence.
4. Material for science subjects was in English language.
5. My school has always accomplished its objectives by providing efficient English language learning environment in classroom.

The learners gave the responses to the questions in order of the statement as shown in figure 11.

Figure 11: Responses on different views concerning overall environment and learning experience of English language

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6.0 DISCUSSION

Bilingualism at school direly need the cooperation of authoritative figure, working staff and students in order to stimulate environment where additive bilingualism takes place. Data analysis has revealed that contrasting ideologies work behind running of educational institutes in Pakistan. Private school sectors are at more advantage where conscious efforts are carried out by providing effective environment to the students where they can become bilingual. Socio-economic level affects the choice of school as parents with more strong financial background prefer private or semi government schools for grooming of their children. Parents with low income and resources don’t feel safe to admit their children in private schools because they cannot afford to pay all the expenses. It indirectly make two societal group the one who have full access to learning of highly prestigious English language. Second group is the one who have no direct access to become bilingual due to different teaching strategies in government schools.

Village residents mostly join government schools. Positive motivational encouragement from instructor reduce anxiety and raise self-confidence among students and this role is again practiced in private schools while semi government schools adopt effective strategies in enhancing listening and speaking skills of students in second language. On the other hand, environment outside the classroom plays major role in developing positive attitude towards language. Students of government school use Punjabi language along with Urdu while conversing with their friends in school. In frequent cases, it is assumed that English language open gates for stable professional lifestyle because it is an international language and have high status. Private schools adopt teaching strategies where outcomes involve the practically enabled learner who can communicate in target language without any difficulty.

Use of Communicative language teaching and provision of environment where students can express their ideas in target language by getting feedback from teachers is also seen in private schools' culture because teachers themselves mostly use English language to deliver lectures by minimizing the use of Urdu language. Learners’ attitude toward any language decides the level of success or failure at the end as it depends on the interest of students to comprehend and understand language by keeping the ultimate goal in their mind. Home environment and parental training affects learners' attitude. However, people from Punjabi speaking background do not prefer English as a language which can make them more civilized or can help them in professional life. It means different factors combine together to make compatible bilingual in a society. Family ideology is pivotal indeed but role of school is also crucial because it is a place where a child spend 6 to 8 hours in a day. Ideologies of schools determine the learning level of the students as effective strategies lead to the changes in behavior of a learner because sense of achievement is a kind of inner satisfaction. Private school students accept that their English learning experience in school has given them benefits because they also study course material in English language which helps them in making bilingual. On the contrary, government school students mostly do not consider their English language learning experience in school as a beneficial one because their teachers do not focus on achieving second language learning classroom objectives in a proper way.

7.0 CONCLUSION

This quantitative study has brought forth the issues at surface level where the responses of the participants have drawn a clear boundary between the ideologies of the public and private schools. There is lack of effective teaching strategies and learning environment in government schools.
which act as obstruct in learning English language while it is also directly linked to the socio-economic condition of a family and place of living. Mostly people in cities have open access to famous private schools in which they feel motivated to learn English language due to productive staff and accomplishment of overall objectives. This study has dealt with frequently embedded hidden techniques of the school sectors. It has proved that there is not only a single factor which formulate competent bilingual in a society, in fact many factors influence the cognitive abilities of the learners through which they associate language learning experience with certain phenomenon and inner attitude. Grammar translation method in gov schools doesn’t generate any critical thinking while communicative language strategy in private schools helps the learners to know about two different cultures which makes them more open minded and creative.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is suggested to equally implement the teaching strategies on all the educational institutes so that learners can get equal access to learn the highly prestigious second language for better job opportunities in future.

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