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Teaching translation courses, back to basics, desirable or not?

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Abstract

This paper puts focus on the traditional teaching tools. In order to find their answers the authors conducted a course of advanced translation using the traditional blackboard where students were only allowed to use paper dictionaries and conducted the same course in another class where data projectors and PowerPoint slides were used and students were allowed to bring all sorts of electronic devices and tools to the class including laptop and digital dictionaries. At the end of both courses students sat a test in order to see which method has been more successful. Students were also given a questionnaire to see which method is more appealing to them and motivates them more. Translation is one of the major contributing factors in the development of science and technology especially in non-English speaking countries. The reason is that an understanding of the flood of the new science and technology in these countries is gained mostly through translated texts. It is an open secret that providing translators who are the link between the world's science and technology and the university students with a teaching approach capable of stimulating their internal talents and motivations is of prime importance. A major part of the teaching approach is the facilities used in the process of teaching. Today teachers have lots of new technologies, electronic instructional and communicational technologies at hand that are deemed as basis for institutional reforms and powerful agents for the development of new teaching strategies and material. Moreover, nowadays lots of pedagogues, psychologists, teachers and politicians are worried about the level of knowledge of the young people and wonder if they can keep up their steps with the development of science and technology.

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1. Introduction

Translation is one of the major contributing factors in the development of science and technology especially in non-English speaking countries. The reason is that an understanding of the flood of the new science and technology in these countries is gained mostly through translated texts. It is an open secret that providing translators who are the link between the world's science and technology and the university students with a teaching approach capable of stimulating their internal talents and motivations is of prime importance. A major part of the teaching approach is the facilities used in the process of teaching. Today teachers have lots of new technologies, electronic instructional and communicational technologies at hand that are deemed as basis for institutional reforms and powerful agents for the development of new teaching strategies and material. Moreover, nowadays lots of

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pedagogues, psychologists, teachers and politicians are worried about the level of knowledge of the young people and wonder if they can keep up their steps with the development of science and technology. Despite all efforts some teachers complain that the rate of school (or university) failure is higher and higher every year and the level of knowledge and competency of our students is constantly rolling back and point the figure of blame at the new technologies used in learning contexts. This was the motivating factor for our research team to investigate if there are any possible advantages for traditional teaching of translation over the new trends for our teachers and students. Traditional education means following traditional teaching methods used to be found and respected in schools for long that most teachers and students still have in their minds. In the traditional approach, new technologies had little or no place while in the modern ones students are given free rein to use electronic devices like laptops, electronic dictionaries, internet and the material presented to them, in most places, via data projectors. So, there's little sign of heavy paper dictionaries and blackboards in the classrooms.

The quality of a country's educational system is not only an indicator of its current levels of development and social wellbeing, but also that of its future. It is not surprising that providing a universal education which is capable of stimulating the integral development of children and adolescents is also a strategic objective of great importance in the most advanced nations. Nowadays, students are helped to learn by lots of new technologies, electronic instructional and communication technologies that are seen as engines for institutional reforms and powerful agents for the development of distance education programs. Moreover, nowadays lots of pedagogues, psychologists, teachers and politicians are worried about the level of culture of the young people. Despite all these efforts, the rate of school (or university) failure is higher and higher every year and the level of our students are each time lower. This is the main point for reflection and our research team has investigated the advantages had the traditional teaching that it is necessary rescue and preserve in our docent practice. Traditional education or back-to-basics refers to long-established customs found in schools that society has traditionally deemed appropriate. Some forms of education reform promote the adoption of progressive education practices, a more holistic approach which focuses on individual students' needs and self-expression. In the eyes of reformers, traditional teacher-centered methods focused on rote learning and memorization must be abandoned in favor of student-centered and task-based approaches to learning. However, many parents and conservative citizens are concerned with the maintenance of objective educational standards based on testing, which favors a more traditional approach (Wikipedia).

Depending on the context, the opposite of *traditional education* may be progressive education, modern education (the education approaches based on developmental psychology), or alternative education (Robert, 2009).

Much research has been carried in the field of learning, and suggestions as to what factors intervene in learning among humans, and how most effective learning occurs abound in the literature on learning issues. Various authors, Kolb (1975), Schunk (2008), Skinner (1960), Ausubel (1968), Rogers (1951) and Knowles (1959) among others have expressed their views on the concept of learning and have proposed learning styles, learning models and learning cycles.

Learning is defined as actions under the guidance of the teacher aiming at bringing some relatively permanent change in the way students think, feel or act. Some of the guiding principles are:

- Learning should be RELEVANT to existing knowledge and any future tasks.
- Learning should comprise of appropriate SEQUENCING of INSTRUCTION.
- Learning should have ACTIVE STUDENT'S INVOLVEMENT
- Learning is incomplete without FEEDBACK on PERFORMANCE

There is growing consensus in society on developments must undergo the traditional teaching, considering that this development should occur at the same rate as do information technology which would give rise to a new teaching model, without changing the advantages of the traditional, to meet the demands of a society that is increasingly using new technologies. However, for a long time have developed theories of learning, most of which after an initial success ended up forgotten. The educational process is very complex and does not support drastic solutions as has been demonstrated throughout history. Many suggestions that seem so attractive and common sense in educational journal articles are not very effective in the real classroom and practical, since the number of students can be great, and many of them have not had the opportunity to establish the concepts necessary prerequisites, or do not have sufficient capacity to abstract logical reasoning.

In clear that traditional teaching has a number of limitations that makes the model necessary. Some of these limitations are:

- The conditions of space and equipment that have the classrooms where classes are developed.
- The number of students attending class that must be suitable for everyone to follow proper classes and have

personalized with each other and the teacher.

- The duration of the course.
- Number of hours.
- Lack of flexibility and availability for the sense that students cannot access information anytime and anywhere.

Over time alternative forms of education have evolved from distance courses through correspondence courses to the video or satellite, however, none have managed to have the same efficacy as classroom teaching. But today, the possibilities of Internet and new generation software lead to a better quality education and flexibility called virtual learning, which are included the so-called "wikis." This new model enhances traditional education especially in relation to the flexibility and availability (anytime, anywhere.) It is very useful because it provides training products interactive, more accessible, with no time or geographical limitations open, funny... and so on

It is clear that new technologies can support students in the acquisition of new knowledge and provide motivation for some students in a more relaxed and less demanding environment.

However, any new technology can replace the professor, not only as teacher but as a Teacher, as someone who transmits knowledge but also teaches how to express themselves, how to behave, how to speak, and write and how to communicate with others.

Traditional learning is attached to blackboard. Blackboard is the indispensable element of any master class and serves to support and highlight the essential points of what is being explained.

This paper reflects about the traditional teaching tools. So, the same lesson has been imparted using the traditional blackboard or power point projections. At the end of the class a test was answered by students in order to investigate which of the two approaches were more successful.

2. Method

The experiment was conducted in two classes of translation with about 45 students each. The same lesson of translation was explained in a classroom using traditional blackboard and in the other through power point slides as well as computers and internet.

At the end of class, students answered a questionnaire and one on satisfaction foreground.

3. Results

Interestingly enough, the results indicated that students in the technologically equipped class were satisfied with the lesson taught while The knowledge test showed that students who had received the materials in the class using the board had acquired more knowledge than those who had been taught using power point, internet, etc. The explanation, according to students' questionnaire, could be that the class with technological equipment is less monotonous and more rapid because the teacher does not have to spend time to write anything and students always have something different to do. A possible explanation for the fact that students learn more in a traditional class is that when the lesson is taught using the blackboard the students take notes while using more sophisticated technologies need not take notes because then you can print the information. Another reason is that students who participated in the study were used to learning through the traditional classroom. The presupposition that students might learn better if their learning habits change from a traditional to a modern setting is a good point for further research. In the traditional method teachers shouldered too much of responsibilities for teaching in the classroom to make sure everything they thought were understood by the student. Thus it was a good method, where there was efficient communication between teacher and students. There was also the typical way and a controllable class where the teacher would teach on the blackboard, explained, asks students to copy and made sure students paid attention and listen. Besides that, the traditional way in disciplining students in school and teaching them was an effective way in building a good characteristic student where students were afraid of their teacher and respect them. They also believed that due to the nature of translation a face to face interaction with teacher and using pen, paper as well as the blackboard makes translation seems more tangible to the students and the facial interaction in translation workshops and the exchange of ideas among students is much more effective while doing it in the traditional classroom.

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