Nativist and Behaviorist Theory: A Comparison which is More used in Teaching in Pakistan

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Abstract— This research aims at Nativist theory and Behaviorist theory, and it also reflects light on which theory is more followed or used in teaching Pakistani curriculum. Nativist theory says that grammar rules are already built in our minds and language is learned with the help of a language acquisition device (LAD). Whereas Behaviorist theory says that language is learned through imitation and reinforcement. The study of this research paper shows that Nativist theory is more logical than Behaviorist theory but here in Pakistan; Behaviorist theory is more followed in teaching children at the school level. The data was collected through qualitative research. We just distributed some questionnaires among the children of different age groups and asked them to solve some grammatical questions. The aim of writing this research paper is to identify which theory is more pursued in teaching in Pakistan.

*Keywords— **Nativist Theory, Behaviorist Theory, Language Learning, Pakistani Curriculum.***

I. INTRODUCTION

Behaviorist and Nativism theory both help in language acquisition. Behaviorist Theory was proposed by B.F Skinner. Behaviorists believe that a child imitates the language from its surroundings, parents, and teachers. This theory believes that humans learn language through seeing and hearing, as well as through reward and punishment. They say that second language students learn from repetition and being rewarded for the right answers. For the student to acquire the second language, the teacher must use reinforcement and give reward or punishment after the student has produced the second language. Teachers should design the activities based upon repeating to form habits. For example, dialogue memorization, Audiolingual Method, drill, chain drill, and transformation drill. In the 1950s the behaviorist theory was quickly adapted to second language learning and in the future to L2 teaching methodologies.

Noam Chomsky gave the theory of nativism. In 1980, Noam Chomsky criticized the behaviorist theory, stating his view that language can't be a habit that could be learned. Chomsky's "Theory is based on the hypothesis that innate knowledge of the principles of Universal Grammar (UG) permits all children to acquire the language of their environment." (Lightbown & Spada, 1999, p.36). His theory is based on the concept that humans have an inborn language acquisition device (LAD), but animals do not have this ability. He says that humans are capable of learning language only until a certain age which is also called the Critical Period and after that human are incapable of acquiring language. Nativists believe that the grammar of a language is based on universal principles or structures which is only needed to be used, not to be learned because they are part of the human mind. Noam Chomsky disagrees with B.F Skinner's theory as he believes that humans are born with

basic knowledge of the language and don't have to learn it from start. Chomsky believes that language is biologically inherited, but Skinner believes that a child learns to talk through the use of positive reinforcement. Chomsky's view is against Skinner's view he says that the use of reward and punishment does not help children learn. He does not with Skinner's method of positive reinforcement because he believes that the use of praise and rewards doesn't assist a child's development or encourage them to learn. He reflects that each child is born with a language template that is developed throughout their education. In second language acquisition, both theories are applicable and both theories are used to teach L2. We are studying in this research paper which method is used more in language teaching and which is more effective.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

No related studies were found connected to our topic in previous studies. One previous study related to these theories is by Mehdi Dastpak (2017) his study was on A Comparative Study of Vygotsky's Perspectives on Child Language Development with Nativism and Behaviorism. This study aimed at investigating the similarities and differences between Vygotsky's perspectives on child language development with nativism and behaviorism. Proposing the idea of the Zone of Proximal Development, Vygotsky emphasized the role of collaborative interaction, scaffolding, and guided participation in language learning. Nativists, on the other hand, believe in the existence of the Language Acquisition Device. They say that language is innate, and acquisition is instantaneous. They also believe that acquisition happens despite inadequate input. Behaviorists claim that environment or input is necessary for language development. They believe that language is

taught through reinforcements in the environment. Children associate certain stimuli with certain behaviors and responses.

The other study was by David B Hopkins9(2017) An Outline of Nativist and Behaviorist Theories of Language Acquisition. Following Noam Chomsky's 1959 critical analysis of the BF Skinner, in his now-famous book about language acquisition 'Verbal Behavior', Chomsky developed the generative theory of language acquisition (LA). From which Chomsky eventually proposes the concept of 'Universal Grammar' (UG). Since then, several other key approaches have been theorized, which argue both for and against the validity and defining terminology of Chomsky's seminal 'Nativist' work. This paper investigates theories related to the early stages of LA, the ongoing influence of Skinner's 'Empiricist' and Chomsky's 'Nativist' theories and touches on how the fundamental ideas in these conceptual frameworks have been refined by later linguistics research. Have the considerably diversifying modern approaches to tackling the science of LA, managed to reinforce or refute Chomsky's and Skinner's theories? The conclusion to this paper will consider whether these concepts are indeed mutually exclusive.

So, this study is new research in this field. It aims at investigating which theory is most used by the teachers to teach in the Pakistani curriculum and which study is more beneficial in learning. There are previous studies on the differences between the two theories, but no study is so far done according to this point of view and especially related to the Pakistani curriculum. This study is different from other studies in terms of its method findings and aims. The aim of writing this research paper is to identify which theory is more pursued in teaching in Pakistan.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Level: 5th - 9th class	Unit/Theme: Grammar Topic: Parts of speech\tenses\ essay writing\ passive voice\ translation		Area of Experience: Grammar/Linguistics	
Attainment target/s: 1) Students will be able to improve their grammar/sentence structure/essay writing/passive voice	Date/Day:5th May/Day 1 Total time: 1 hour			
Learning Outcomes	Methodology	Time	Resources	Assessment
By the end of the lesson students should be able to: -Students should be assessed on	Introduction–Strategy: Whole class activity Give them an introduction about yourself first Tell the children that today	15min	The school (Dar-e-Arqam)	Students should be assessed on their ability to identify different parts of speech/essay

Their ability to identify different parts of speech/essay writing/passive voice/translation	we are going to solve a quiz Give them the quiz and tell them how to solve it Tell them about the topics like parts of speech and grammar Main activity (Whole class): Solve grammatical exercises Decided activities according to the topic Students will solve the test after understanding the topics and their requirements Activities Identify parts of speech Tenses Translation Essay writing Active Passive Wrap Up: Ask students to solve the quiz according to the instructions.	15min 5min		writing/passive voice/translation

Name_____

Class_____

Date_____

Grammar Exercise:

Q: 1) Underline the adjectives in the following sentences.

1. Karen always wipes her runny nose with paper towels.

2. Teasing a junkyard dog is a bad idea.

3. An intelligent person will never put his head into an empty pickle jar.

4. I hear that apple juice is a healthy drink.

Q: 3) Fill in the correct form of the verb – All tenses

1. They _____ in Chicago for 20 years (be).

2. I _____ a wonderful film in the cinema last night. (See)

3. The sun _____ at 6:38 yesterday morning (rise)

4. The sun _____ when the climber reached Mount Everest. (Shine)

5. I promise that I _____ this secret

IV.   ANALYSIS & RESULTS

Our research paper topic is about Nativist theory by Noam Chomsky and Behaviorist theory by Skinner. In this research, we analyzed the student's grammar. Are they good in grammar or not? So, to analyze this we went to Dar-e-Arqam school where we distributed some activities regarding grammatical exercises. In these activities, we gave them some exercises of tenses, active-passive voices, translation paragraph, identification of parts of speech & essay writing. During activities, we found the following factors regarding our research methodology.

The strength of this lesson was that students were actively involved and things that are relevant in their lives were used as part of the lesson. Also, presenting this unit at the same time general education students were experiencing similar lessons turned out to be important.

Students were able to participate, although minimally, in conversations with their peers regarding the information presented. Students are still talking about grammar for example active and passive voice tenses etc. Although it is hard for them to convey their knowledge in a way that is meaningful to those around them, we can tell that some of them took some knowledge away from the lessons because they will randomly bring the topics to attention. This tells that they are still processing the information.

Our formal assessment needs some work. The way we presented the questions was confusing. We need to be sure that if we use a multiple-choice format then students will easily be able to complete their activities. We also need to be clear about what we are assessing for each student. We might know what we are looking for from each student but with many of Para's helping, they need to understand the expectations for each student as well.

We used staff placement, varying prompt levels to help my students find success. We also gave them a friendly environment.

We changed to two groups because this allows us to give more attention to each student during their learning time. We think we will continue to use this strategy. In the future, we will change the assessment to an easier-to-understand format. We will also be sure to inform the other adults in the room of the desired level of participation for each student.

As result, we can say that nativist theory is not common nowadays. In Pakistan English medium and high-level schools follow behaviorist theory instead of nativist theory. Even in government schools, Nativist theory is not followed properly. During our research, we created different grammatical activities for children from different age groups like 10-14 years. But according to our research,

we have found common mistakes like students were having a weak sentence structure, overgeneralizing the tenses, spelling mistakes, lack of confidence or hesitation while answering. As a result, they did not even fill the blanks and left it empty. So this sums up that nativist theory is no longer applied to this generation.

So according to our research, we have found many grammatical mistakes as we mentioned in the above paragraph. We analyze that these all mistakes should be correct if we ask our children to read books and novels in schools. In our research work, the most common mistake that we found is spelling mistakes even the students of grade 9th made spelling mistakes. The spelling mistakes are happened due to poor pronunciation and lack of reading, so to improve this mistake we should ask our students to read books and listen to sounds of every spelling and they should pronounce the word properly due to this, they will feel improvement. Another mistake that we have found is poor sentence structure. Sentence structure should be correct in writing any piece of paper. We analyze that if students read novels, newspapers, articles, and magazines then they can improve their writing skills. This mistake is happened due to the lack of reading. Another mistake that we have found is overgeneralizing which means overuse of rules where there is no need for that rule for example, we had given them to write a paragraph on any topic, then in paragraph writing we have seen that the students overgeneralize the rules, especially students are confused in using "s" & "es" they are confused that where we put "s" and "es". We think that students should improve these mistakes when their teachers guide them properly and teach them the proper mistakes. So these are the results that we have found in our research.

V.   CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, the Nativist theory is not common today in Pakistan. High-class schools teach their children through behaviorist theory. They do not follow the Nativist theory because it's an old theory. According to our research, we also think that if teachers learn their students through behaviorist theory, they can easily get the main point of their topics. In behaviorist theory teaching style is modern, teachers teach their students by audio-lingual method and drilling. Due to these methods, students do not hesitate while communicating with anyone and are confident. But in nativist theory, students feel hesitant to communicate to anyone because they think that if we speak incorrectly and make grammar mistakes then people will make fun of them. But in behaviorist theory students speak fluently and confidently. In nativist, theory grammar is very important

and there is no chance to make mistakes. But in behaviorist theory students are free to make grammatical mistakes in this theory functions of the language are important.

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