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MANAGING COMMUNICATIVE CLASSROOM

Abstract: It is researched in this work, the teaching of communicative language and its effective ways as well as managing communicative classroom and how to contact with students. It is also highlighted the effective use of communicative language teaching methods and techniques while teaching. Information is provided about the current focus and importance of foreign language teaching.

Key Words: CLT (Communicative Language Teaching), communicative competence, grammatical competence, realia.

Introduction

Communicative language teaching sets as its goal the teaching of *communicative competence*. What does this term mean? Perhaps we can clarify this term by first comparing it with the concept of *grammatical competence*. Grammatical Communicative competence refers to the knowledge we have of a language that accounts for our ability to produce sentences in a language. It refers to knowledge of the building blocks of sentences (e.g., parts of speech, tenses, phrases, clauses, sentence patterns) and how sentences are formed. Grammatical competence is the focus of many grammar practice books, which typically present a rule of grammar on one page, and provide exercises to practice using the rule on the other page. The unit of analysis and practice is typically the sentence. While grammatical competence is an important dimension of language learning, it is clearly not all that is involved in learning a language since one can master the rules of sentence formation in a language and still not be very successful at being able to use the language for meaningful communication. It is the latter capacity which is understood by the term

communicative competence. Communicative competence includes the following aspects of language knowledge:

- Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions
- Knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g., knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication)
- Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interviews, conversations)
- Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g., through using different kinds of communication strategies)

Materials and Methods

Practitioners of CLT view materials as a way of influencing the quality of classroom interaction and language use. Materials thus have the primary role of promoting communicative language use" (Richards & Rodgers,1986:79).The role of instructional materials might be specified in the following terms:

- 1) Materials will focus on the communicative abilities of interpretation, explanation, and negotiation.
- 2) Materials will focus on understandable, relevant, and interesting exchanges information, rather than on the presentation of grammatical form.
- 3) Materials will involve different kinds of texts and different media, which the learners can use to develop their competence through a variety of different activities and tasks. (Richards & Rodgers, 1986:25)

The materials should be authentic. Cook (1991:94) states three justifications for the use of authentic text in communicative teaching:

- 1) Motivation and interest. Students will be better motivated by texts that have served a real communicative purpose.
- 2) Acquisition-promoting content. Authentic texts provide a rich source of natural language for the learner to acquire language form.
- 3) Filling-in gaps. Designers of course books and syllabuses may miss some of the aspects of language used in real-life situations. This lack can be filled most easily by giving students the appropriate real-life language.

The authentic materials are pieces of language, either spoken or written, which were originally messages produced for communication in a non-teaching situation. They are genuine pieces of communication designed for native speakers, so not structurally graded. Nor are they organized in order to demonstrate a language teaching point. On the contrary, they are linguistically rich and give students opportunities to extend their experience of English. Moreover, they are potentially more interesting than texts which have been especially contrived for language teaching purposes.

Because the authentic materials are designed for native speakers, they are may be too difficult to be materials to L2 students with lower proficiency. Larsen-Freeman (1986:136) has two solutions to this problem. One is to use simpler authentic material (e.g. the use of a weather forecast when working on predictions), or at least materials that are realistic. The

other is to use realia that do not contain a lot of language, but about which a lot of discussion could be generated. Menus and timetables are two examples.

Many materials have been compiled to support CLT. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986:80), CLT materials come from three sources. One way of choosing materials is based on the "authentic" realia which includes language-based realia, such as signs, magazines, advertisements and newspapers, or graphic and visual sources around which communicative activities can be built, such as maps, pictures, symbols, graphs, and charts." Another source is "text-based materials". There are numerous textbooks designed to direct and support CLT. Still another is the "task-based materials". These typically are in the form of one-of-a-kind items: exercise handbooks, cue cards, activity cards, pair-communication practice materials, and student-interaction practice booklets.

Research and Discussion

Text-based materials - there are numerous textbooks designed to direct and support Communicative Language Teaching. Their tables of contents sometimes suggest a kind of grading and sequencing of language practice not unlike those found in structurally organized texts. Some of these are in fact written around a largely structural syllabus, with slight reformatting to justify their claims to be based on a communicative approach. Others, however, look very different from previous language teaching texts. Morrow and Johnson's *Communicate* (1979), for example, has none of the usual dialogues, drills, or sentence patterns and uses visual cues, taped cues, pictures, and sentence fragments to initiate conversation. Watcyn-Jones's *Pair Work* (1981) consists of two different texts for pair work, each containing different information needed to enact role plays and carry out other pair activities. Texts written to support the Malaysian *English Language Syllabus* (1975) likewise represent a departure from traditional textbook modes. A typical lesson consists of a theme (e.g., relaying information), a task analysis for thematic development (e.g., understanding the message, asking questions to obtain clarification, asking for more information, taking notes, ordering and presenting information), a practice situation description (e.g., "A caller asks to see your manager. He does not have an appointment. Gather the necessary information from him and relay the message to your manager."), a stimulus presentation (in the preceding case, the beginning of an office conversation scripted and on tape), comprehension questions (e.g., "Why is the caller in the office?"), and paraphrase exercises.

Task-based materials – a variety of games, role plays, simulations, and task-based communication activities have been prepared to support Communicative Language Teaching classes. These typically are in the form of one-of-a-kind items: exercise handbooks, cue cards, activity cards, pair-communication practice materials, and student-interaction practice booklets. In pair-communication materials, there are typically two sets of material for a pair of students, each set containing different kinds of information. Sometimes the information is complementary, and partners must fit their respective parts of the "jigsaw" into a composite whole. Others assume different role relationships for the partners (e.g., an interviewer and an interviewee). Still others provide drills and practice material in interactional formats.

Realia - many proponents of Communicative Language Teaching have advocated the use of "authentic," "from-life" materials in the classroom. These might include language-based realia, such as signs, magazines, advertisements, and newspapers, or graphic and visual sources around which communicative activities can be built, such as maps, pictures,

symbols, graphs, and charts. Different kinds of objects can be used to support communicative exercises, such as a plastic model to assemble from directions.

Conclusion

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a teaching approach which has gained interest in recent years. Unlike the other teaching methods (Reading Method, Audiolingual Method, Grammar Translation Method...), CLT emphasizes the appropriateness of language use in all the contexts of communication. That is to say, the knowledge of the type of language to be used in any social context or situation. This knowledge is also referred to as 'communicative competence'. If we know that the main aim of teaching a language is to allow communication, the importance of such a method becomes therefore very obvious. Language teaching is considered as a technical operation. This view of language teaching as a purely technical operation with no broader educational overtones needs however to be treated with suspicion. By emphasizing the learner's active role, CLT forces teachers to ask what kind of classroom activity will most satisfactorily enable the learner himself to act as an unconscious analyzer of the language data presented to him.

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