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COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

The goal of teachers who use Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is to enable students to communicate in the target language. To do this, students need knowledge of the linguistic forms, meanings, and functions. They need to know that many different forms can be used to perform a function and also that a single form can often serve a variety of functions. They must be able to choose from among these the most appropriate form, given the social context and the roles of the interlocutors. They must also be able to manage the process of negotiating meaning with their interlocutors.

According to Communicative Language Teaching, the teacher facilitates communication in the classroom. In this role, one of their major responsibilities is to establish situations likely to promote communication. During the activities they act as advisors, answering students' questions and monitoring their performance. They might make a note of their errors to be worked on at a later time during more accuracy-based activities. At other times they might be 'co-communicators' engaging in the communicative activity along with students. Students are, above all, communicators. They are actively engaged in negotiating meaning – in trying to make themselves understood – even when their knowledge of the target language is incomplete. Also, since the teacher's role is less dominant than in a teacher-centered method, students are seen as more responsible for their own learning.

The most obvious characteristic of CLT is that almost everything that is done is done with a communicative intent. Students use the language a great deal through communicative activities such as games, role-plays, and problem-solving tasks.

In this article the methodology known as communic ative language teaching, or CLT has been examined, and the assumptions it is based on have been explored and its influence on approaches to language teaching today has been mentioned. Some of the main principles of the communicative approach have been listed and some of the basic features and techniques of communicative language teaching have been enumerated.

Key words: *communicative, language teaching, teaching method.*

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КОМУНІКАТИВНИЙ МЕТОД ВИВЧЕННЯ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ

Мета викладача, який використовує комунікативне вивчення мови (CLT), – спонукати студентів спілкуватися іноземною мовою. Для цього учням потрібні знання мовних форм, засобів і функцій. Вони повинні знати, що різні форми можуть використовуватися для виконання різних функцій, а також що одна форма може часто виконувати різноманітні функції. Студенти повинні мати можливість вибирати найбільш доречні форми, враховуючи соціальний контекст та ролі співрозмовників. Вони також повинні бути здатними вияснити потрібне значення слів чи виразів під час розмови.

Згідно з комунікативним мовним методом вчитель сприяє комунікації в класі. Одним із його найважливіших обов'язків є створення ситуацій, які сприяють спілкуванню. Під час занять викладачі є радниками, відповідаючи на запитання учнів та стежачи за їх роботою. Вони можуть зробити помітку про помилки учнів, які потрібно опрацювати пізніше, виконуючи необхідні вправи, орієнтовані на грамотність. В іншому випадку вчителі можуть бути співрозмовниками, що спонукають до комунікативної активності студентів. Студенти виступають насамперед співбесідниками. Вони активно задіяні в передачі певного сенсу для того, щоб їх зрозуміли, навіть коли їхні знання мови недосконалі. Крім того, оскільки роль вчителя є менш домінуючою, студенти несуть відповідальність за власне навчання.

Провідна характеристика CLT – це те, що майже все, що відбувається на уроці, робиться з комунікативним наміром. Студенти часто використовують мову для спілкування під час таких видів діяльності, як ігри, рольові ігри та вирішення проблем.

У цій статті розглянуто комунікативну методологію, або CLT, її принципи, прийоми та характерні особливості, а також її вплив на інші підходи до вивчення іноземних мов.

Ключові слова: *комунікативний, навчання мові, метод викладання.*

Setting of the subject. There has been a huge increase of demand for good communication skills in English and therefore English teaching around the world. More and more people today want to hone their knowledge of English or to make sure that their children achieve a good progress of English. ESL is taught at kindergartens, schools, universities, courses, workplaces and online. People mastering English have opportunities to learn it with the help of formal instruction, travel, study abroad, as well as through the media and the Internet. The much higher demand for English has motivated authors and teachers to provide quality language teaching, language teaching materials and resources. Learners also feel higher responsibility and set goals to master English and have a high level of accuracy and fluency. Employers, too, require that their employees have good command of English, and fluency in English is a necessary condition for success and promotion in many spheres in today's world. A communicative teaching methodology is being used, developed and researched all over the world to teach English properly.

Overview of publications. The method of communicative teaching was studied by such authors as D. Hymes, M. Halliday, D. Wilkins, H.G. Widdowson, S. Savingon, J.C. Richards, and others.

The purpose of this paper is to define the principles, features and techniques that are the most appropriate and effective in communicative language teaching.

Main content of the article. The aim of most of the English language teaching methods is for students to learn to communicate in the target language. In the 1970s some doubts appeared if teachers were teaching foreign languages in the correct way as some students could make sentences accurately in class, but could not use them accordingly when they communicated in real-life situations. Others noted that being able to communicate demanded more than knowing grammar rules and structures, because language was basically social (Halliday, 1973). Within a social context, language users needed to perform certain functions, such as promising, inviting, and refusing invitations (Wilkins, 1976). Students may know the rules of linguistics, but be unable to use the language (Widdowson, 1978).

In short, forming communicative skills required not only linguistic competence, but also communicative competence (Hymes, 1971) – knowing when and how to say what to whom. Such observations contributed to a change in the field in the late 1970s and early 1980s from a linguistic structure-centered approach to a Communicative Approach (Widdowson, 1990; Savignon, 1997).

Activities that are truly communicative, have three features in common: information gap, choice, and feedback (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011: 161). An information gap exists when one person in an exchange knows something the other person does not. If people know some information, but all the same ask each other questions about it and answer them, their exchange is not really communicative. These questions are called display questions, questions educators use to ask students to display what they know, but they are not questions that ask you to give the information that I do not know. In communication, the speaker has a choice of what she will say and how she will say it. If the exercise is tightly controlled, so that students can only say something in one way, the speaker has no choice and the exchange, therefore, is not communicative. In a chain drill, for example, if a student must reply to her neighbour's question in the same way as her neighbour replied to someone else's question, then she has no choice of form and content, and real communication does not have place.

True communication occurs when an interlocutor can assess whether or not their goal has been achieved based upon the information they receive from another person. If the listener does not have an opportunity to provide the speaker with such feedback, then the exchange is not really communicative. Using transformation drilling for forming questions may be useful, but a speaker will receive no reply from a listener. Therefore they cannot evaluate whether their question has been understood.

Another characteristic of CLT is the use of authentic materials. It is considered desirable to give students an opportunity to develop strategies for understanding language as it is actually used.

Additionally, activities in CLT are often d oneby students in small groups. Small numbers of students interact to give as much time as possible to each student for communicating, and this way students practice functional and socially appropriate language.

As for student–teacher and student–student types of interaction, the teacher may present or rather elicit some information. More often, they are the facilitators of the activities, but they do not always themselves interact with the students. Sometimes they can be co-communicators, but more often they organize activities that result in communication. Students interact a lot with one another in different ways: pairs, triads, small groups, and whole group (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011).

One of the basic beliefs of CLT is that by learning to communicate students will be more motivated to study another language because they will feel they are

learning to something which they can apply in real life. Students are also given an opportunity to express themselves as they share their ideas and views on the regular basis. Finally, students feel more secure since they have many opportunities for cooperative communication with their groupmates or classmates in pairs or small groups and the teacher. Frequent regrouping provides diversity in interactions and thus more experience in talking to different types of people.

Language is for communication. Linguistic competence, the knowledge of forms and their meanings, is only one part of communicative competence. Another aspect of it is knowledge of the functions that language is used for. Lots of forms can be used for a function. A speaker can make a logical assumption by saying, for example, 'He might be late,' or 'He must be late.' On the contrary, the same form of the language can be used for a variety of functions. 'Must,' for instance, can be used to express strong obligation ('You must come in time.'). Thus, the learner needs knowledge of forms, meanings and functions. Moreover, to be communicatively competent, they must not only use this knowledge but also take into consideration the social circumstances in order to interact appropriately and make themselves understood (Canale and Swain, 1980: 45).

Students should also be aware of the culture which is the everyday lifestyle of people who use the language. There are certain features of it that are crucial to communication – the use of more polite forms, softening phrases or nonverbal behaviour (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011: 145).

Language functions might be more important than forms. A functional syllabus is sometimes used, and even a special function type of lessons is conducted. A variety of forms are introduced for each function. The simpler forms are introduced at lower levels, but at higher levels, more complex function forms are learned. Functions refer to what items of language actually do in a real context, and not to what they might mean literally. Some of them are suggesting, criticising, refusing, agreeing and disagreeing, enquiring, talking about the past, and giving advice.

Students work with language at the discourse or suprasentential level. They learn about cohesion and coherence. For example, students' attention is drawn to linking adverbial phrases, e.g 'So, … In conclusion, .. To sum it all up,… .' These phrases are cohesive devices that bind and order sentences to the other sentences and make the parts of the text more logically connected.

Students work on all four language skills from the beginning. There are various types of lessons: Speaking, Reading, Grammar, Writing, Listening, Function or combined ones. They focus on different skills and students have opportunities to concentrate on honing certain competences.

Justified use of the students' native language is allowed in CLT. However, as often as it is possible, the target language should be used not only during communicative activities, but also for giving instructions before the activities or for setting homework. The students learn from these classroom management phrases and interactions, too, and understand that the target language is a tool for communication, not only a theoretical object to be studied.

A teacher evaluates not only their students' accuracy, but also fluency. The student who has good knowledge of the structures and vocabulary is not always the best communicator. A teacher can assess their students' performance informally in the role of an advisor or co-communicator. For more formal evaluation, a teacher uses an integrative test with a real communicative function. In order to evaluate students' writing skill, for instance, a teacher might ask them to write an informal letter.

One of the goals of CLT is to develop fluency which is natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence. Fluency is developed by creating classroom activities in which students must negotiate meaning, use communication strategies, correct misunderstandings, and work to avoid communication breakdowns.

Fluency practice can be compared with accuracy practice, which focuses on creating correct examples of language use. There are some differences between activities that focus on fluency and those that focus on accuracy. Activities focusing on fluency are connected with reflecting natural use of language, focusing on achieving communication, requiring meaningful use of language and the use of communication strategies, producing language that may not be predictable, seeking to link language use to context, etc.

Activities focusing on accuracy are based on reflecting classroom use of language, focusing on the formation of correct examples of language, practicing language out of context, practicing small samples of language, not requiring meaningful communication, controlling choice of language, and so on (Widdowson, 1998).

Teachers use a combination of fluency activities and accuracy and use accuracy activities to support fluency activities. Both make use of pair or group work, and it means that group work is not necessarily a fluency task (Brumfit, 1984).

Accuracy work could either come before or after fluency work. For example, based on students' performance on a fluency task, the teacher could organise accuracy work to deal with grammatical or pronunciation problems the teacher noticed while students were doing the task. An issue that arises with fluency work, however, is whether it develops fluency at the expense of accuracy. In doing fluency tasks, the focus is on getting meanings using any available communicative resources. Students also depend on vocabulary and communication strategies, and there is little motivation to use accurate grammar or pronunciation. Fluency work demands extra teacher attention to prepare students for a fluency task, or feedback on accuracy.

Dialogues, grammar, and pronunciation drills are still present in textbooks and classroom materials, they are part of a sequence of activities that move back and forth between accuracy activities and fluency activities.

And the arrangement of classrooms is different. Instead of teacher-fronted teaching, teachers organize pair or small-group work. Pair and group activities gave learners greater opportunities to use the language much more often, overcome language barriers and to develop fluency.

Errors of form are tolerated during fluency-based activities and are seen as a natural result of the development of communication skills. Students can have limited linguistic knowledge and still be successful communicators (Richards, 2006).

Conclusion. Some of the main principles of the communicative approach are the following: students' language must be appropriate to the situation, the roles of the speakers, the setting, the register, of a formal and an informal style. Communicative activities are essential and should be presented in a situation or context and have a communicative purpose which must be engaging and meaningful. Typical activities of this approach are: games, problem-solving tasks, and role-pl ay. There should be information gap, choice and feedback involved in the activities.

Learners must have permanent interaction in pairs or groups and instructions are given in the target language. Development of the four macroskills – speaking, listening, reading and writing – is essential from the beginning. The materials are chosen and graded depending on learners' age, needs, level, and interest. Teachers should motivate students and make an interesting warming-up stage from the beginning of the lesson. The teacher has a role of a guide, a facilitator or an instructor. A delayed errors and mistakes correction is practised, it depends on the situation, though. Evaluation is based not only the learners' accuracy but also their fluency. The usage of authentic materials, role-play, picture strip stories, language games and scrambled sentences is typical for CLT.

Some of the main features and techniques of communicative language teaching are: focus on meaning; dialogues are not normally memorized; meaning cannot be understood out of context, grammar topics are presented in a meaningful context; effective real communication is practiced; drilling is sometimes necessary; comprehensible pronunciation is essential; translation may be used where it is justified; students are expected to interact with other people, either in person, through pair and group work, or in their writings (Widdowson, 1998).

Taking into consideration the second language acquisition theory and current understanding of language use as social behaviour, purposeful, and in context, learners need to participate in communicative events and self- assessment of progress. Methodologists advise learners to take communicative risks and to focus on the development of learning strategies.

Since its beginning in the 1970s, CLT has influenced language teaching practice around the world. Many of the directions of by a communicative teaching methodology are still relevant today. CLT is seen in loads of course books and other teaching resources that consider CLT as the basis of their methodology. In addition, it has impacted many other language teaching approaches that support a similar philosophy of language teaching.

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