Communicative language teaching

Muattar NASIMOVA[1]

Samarkand state institute of foreign language

ABSTRACT

Communicative language teaching is an approach to learning that is a reaction to previous methods that were considered non-communicative in terms of teaching materials ɸnd teaching methods, especially GTM and ALM, which were popular in the period before the 1970s. The two components that are being reviewed by the CLT are teaching materials that are translated into language that is actually used in everyday life, in addition to learning activities into language activities performed by students in the classroom, as a substitute for teaching grammar in the classroom.

Kommunikativ tilni oʻrgatish

ANNOTATSIYA

Kommunikativ tilni oʻrgatish bu oʻquv materiallari va oʻqitish usullari nuqtai nazaridan kommunikativ boʻlmagan deb hisoblangan oldingi usullarga, ayniqsa, 1970-yillargacha mashhur boʻlgan GTM va ALMga munosabat boʻlgan oʻrganishga yondashuv hisoblanadi. CLT tomonidan koʻrib chiqilayotgan ikkita komponent bu kundalik hayotda qoʻllaniladigan tilga tarjima qilingan oʻquv materiallari, oʻquv faoliyatidan tashqari oʻquvchilar tomonidan sinfda grammatikani oʻrgatish oʻrnini bosuvchi til faoliyatiga qoʻshimcha sanaladi.

[1] 2nd year master student, the faculty of foreign language and literature, Samarkand state institute of foreign language. Samarkand, Uzbekistan. E-mail: nasimovamuattar@gmail.com.

Обучение коммуникативному языку

Ключевые слова:
коммуникативное,
язык,
обучение,
общение,
лингвистический,
реальная жизнь.

АННОТАЦИЯ

Коммуникативное обучение языку – это подход к обучению, являющийся реакцией на предыдущие методы, которые считались некоммуникативными с точки зрения учебных материалов и методов обучения, особенно GTM и ALM и были популярны в период до 1970-х годов. Два компонента, которые рассматриваются CLT, – это учебные материалы, переведенные на язык и фактически используется в повседневной жизни, в дополнение к учебной деятельности в языковую деятельность, выполняемую учащимися в классе, в качестве замены преподавания грамматики в классе.

A. BACKGROUND

Historically, CLT originated from the dissatisfaction of the linguist to the traditional methods which emphasis on grammar: GTM, ALM and SLT, emerged in 1970s. The centrality of grammar in language teaching (emphasized in these three methods) was questioned, since it was argued that language ability involved much more than grammatical competence. Linguists began to look at language, not as interlocking sets of grammatical, lexical, and phonological rules, but as a tool of expressing meaning [2]. Language was no longer seen as abstract grammatical rules, but of having applications in social contexts and as such it is not just about 'grammar' but also about functions and notions [3]. Nowadays, it is not easy to imagine any practitioner, anywhere, arguing against this.

The common components of **communicative components** in the field of language teaching today are: **linguistic, socio-cultural, and strategic and discourse competence**.

The notion of CLT was very soon spread and accepted by linguists worldwide. It has been the most dominating method in the world of language teaching ever since. CLT keeps the most domination in language teaching until today. The other emerging approaches remaining such as CBI, CBLT, TBLT and the GBLT are actually those which adopt the same paradigm but take different directions in developing communication ability in part of students. This is what Richards identified as "The Current Trends in Communicative Language Teaching" [6]. They are grouped upon an umbrella called 'The Communicative Approaches [7]. Therefore, this article presents theoretical description of the communicative language teaching as itself.

B. DISCUSSION

Lexically the term 'communicative' is derived from the word 'communicate', which means to express ideas, feelings or information from one to another. Therefore, the addition of affix 'ive' changes the verb to be adjective, that is to make something posses certain characteristic. Accordingly, the term 'communicative' should mean 'to make students communicate' or 'to make students express ideas, feelings or information each other' in the classroom.

In general term, the goal of CLT is argued to develop students' communicative competence. To arrive at the goal, Richards requires CLT material development to cover the following features:

1. As detailed consideration as possible of the purposes for which the learner wishes to acquire the target language. For example, using English for business purposes, in the hotel industry of travel.

2. The communicative events in which the learners will participate: everyday situations, vocational or professional situations, academic situations, and so on. For example making telephone calls, engaging in casual conversation, or taking part in a meeting.

3. The variety or varieties of the target language that will be needed, such as American, Australian, or British English, and the levels in the spoken and written language which the learners will need to reach.

4. The grammatical content that will be needed.

5. The lexical content or vocabulary that will be needed [7].

This characterization leads to composing appropriate syllabus in 1970s and 1980s. Richards [7] identifies the two major syllabus proposed to advocate CLT in that era:

1) Skill Based Syllabus which focus on the four communicative skills; reading, writing, listening and speaking, and breaks each skill down into its components microskills

2) Functional Syllabus which organized according to the functions the learner should be able to carry out in English, such as expressing likes and dislikes, greetings, thanking, introducing and giving explanations.

In addition to making the appropriate syllabus, communicative language teaching encouraged to classroom methodology. The principles derived from the arguments that learners should learn language through the process of communicating in it, and that meaningful communication provides better opportunity to learn than the grammar based approach. Richards summarizes the principles of CLT at this time as follows:

1. Make real communication the focus of language learning

2. Provide opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know

3. Be tolerant of learners' mistakes as they indicate that the learner is building up his or her communicative competence

4. Supply with opportunities for learners to develop both accuracy, and fluency

5. Connect the various skills such as speaking, reading and listening, together, since they usually occur together in the real world

6. Allow students discover grammar rules

1. Language Theory

In the view of CLT, language is perceived as communication [6], which, in one side is argued to be attached with all surrounding situations–event, participants, purposes, location and so on–at the time it happens. Consequently, the teaching of languaae should be the teaching of communication provisioned with contextual elements which influence the way people express and perceive meaning of the messages. The other important belief about language upon communicative language teaching is 'the language use' which means that language should be taught and or used as it is. Advocates of CLT believe that language should be taught in form which the native speakers use when they communiaate in reality. Grammatical incompleteness rising in the communication is not

viewed as mistakes, they are perceived rather as surface structure resulted by the surrounding contexts keeping the deeper structure, which is understood by the communication participants. In spite of the 'incomplete forms', language that are used at the situations fulfills the purpose of message transfer and perception.

2. Learning theory

One of the best known learning theory of CLT is 'people learn language best when using it to do things rather than through studying how language works and practicing rules [6]'. It signs the reaction to the previous learning practices which focused on learning grammatical rules but the students failed in oral communication. An interesting statement relating to this principle is from Brown [1], who reminds that teacher should not expose students to learn grammar too much, because students are to be English communicator, not grammarians.

A rather comprehensive package of learning theory in CLT is summarized by Richards and Rodgers [4], as follows:

a. Activities that involve real communication promote learning.

b. Activities in which language used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning

c. Language that is meaningful to the learners supports the learning process.

Consequently, Richards and Rodgers [5] add that learning activities should be selected according to how well they engage learner in meaningful and authentic language use (rather than merely mechanical practice of language patterns). They must involve real communication, have students carry out meaningful tasks and use meaningful language.

3. Principles

The basic features of CLT was described by Nunan [3], in which he list five features that are generally accepted by most linguists and practitioners in their explanation about CLT today. These features are:

a. An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.

b. The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.

c. The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on the language but also on the learning process itself.

d. An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.

e. An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

4. Goal

As having been described above, the goal of CLT is to develop communicative competence in part of students. There have been a number of theories about it, but the best known elements of the competence in communication are as follows:

a. Linguistic competence. It is also commonly acknowledged as grammatical competence, which concerns with mastery of language elements: grammar, vocabulary and morphology.

b. Sociocultural competence. It also known as sociolinguistic competence, which demands the appropriate use of language toward social values and system.

c. Strategic competence. It concerns with strategies which can be used to maintain communication and or to communicate effectively.

d. Actional competence. It concerns with physical performance of communication when one does speaking, for example: pronunciation.

e. Discourse competence. It is also known as pragmatic competence, which refers to shaping language and communicating purposively in different genres, using cohesion (structural linking) and coherence (meaningful relationship in language) elements appropriately.

Therefore, every language teaching material is considered to be as means to develop the five components of communicative competence above. Materials designed to involve all the elements above in activities that are to be conducted in the classroom.

5. Techniques and Procedure

Technique for teaching language in CLT is actually open to varieties as far as they fulfill the CLT principles. However a number of them which are very common in the classroom summarized from Richards [7] as follows:

a. Fluency versus accuracy activities

Flueency activities are those which expose students to use language naturally by engaging them in meaningful interaction and maintain comprehensible and ongoing communication despite the limitation in their communicative competence. To acquire fluency the students are required to use communication strategies, correct misunderstanding and work to avoid communication breakdown. While fluency focus on natural production of language, accuracy activities engage students to use language accurately in term of grammar and pronunciation.

b. Mechanical, Meaningful and Communicative Practice

1) Mechanical practices are those which expose students to use language successfully although without understanding of it. This is the common practice used in ALM or Army Method.

2) Meaningful practices engage students to communicate by involving meaningful choices to a contextual set of communication. At this activity, a teacher is required to create the context and task of communication, from which students explore language to express ideas.

3) Communicative practices are those which engage students to use language freely from their own source and their own real life situation and experience. At this activity the teacher is expected to use students' knowledge and experience as integral part of learning activities.

At the time of learning in the classroom, experts recommend that those three kinds of activities conducted after a brief grammatical explanation, in the order of mechanical-meaningful-communicative practice.

Information Gap Activities

This activity is derived from reality fact in which people often ask for information from other people, which they do not have. This condition is imitated into classroom practice by giving students two or more package of related information, which onee students possess different package from the other. Communication occurs as they are requesting information from the other. This activity usually is facilitated by the use of media, such as list, picture or series of pictures.

Jigsaw activities

This activities demand students to be divided into groups. Every group has certain piece of information. Every group is given task to share information they have to the other groups. The process of interaction becomes like jigsaw, at the time they transact information.

Task completion activities

This activity make student complete a task, such as puzzles, games, map-reading, by using their own language resource.

Information gathering aativities

At this activity, students are required to conduct surveys, interviews to collect information.

Opinion sharing

This is the activity in which students are engage to compare values, opinions, beliefs. Example, the students are given task to make order of important qualities to choose someone to be wife or husband.

Information transfer activities

This activity engage students to take information that is presented in one form, and represent in a different form. For example, students are given task to read a travel experience. After that, they are asked to draw a map of it.

Reasoning gap-activities

This activity demands students to derive some new information from source information through process of inference, practical reasoning, and conclusion and so on. For example, working out a teacher's timetable on the basis of a given class timetable.

6. Material development

Development of material in CLT is very widely open as far as they fulfill the principles. However, the shape and or media used to make the communication activities happen in the classroom will be very closely bound with the topic and teaching techniques to be applied in the classroom. At this point of view, a teacher must understand the nature of every communication activity, techniques of teaching and to make relevant material and media to perform in the classroom. A simple description of the elements is as follows:

Techniques Media Topics

– Role Play – Task sheets for different roles – Any topic
– Interview – Interview guide for interviewer – Any topic
– Information gap Task – sheets with missing information – Any topic
– Information transfer – Reading, listening, video materials – Any topic
– Games – Depends on game type – Any topic

7. Evaluation

Evaluation in CLT focus on covers students' mastery of language and their ability in communication. Since the purpose of teaching is different according to the lessons and proficiency levels, the emphasis and elements of evaluation can be vary broadly. For example: for beginner level, the focus of development is on the fluency rather than accuracy; it should demand the teacher not to take too much attention to grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary choices while they do communication orally or written while the teacher scores the performance. In contrast, the focus will be different if the teacher is to evaluate students in intermediate levels.

C. CONCLUSION

Communicative Language Teaching is a reaction to the GTM and ALM which was considered uncommunicative in term of language and teaching techniques in 1970s. Linguists and practitioners at that age began to view language as what people actually use in real life communication other than what is written ingrammar books. This view was actuated in the slogan 'language as communication', which recommend the teaching of language directed to provide real life language use in the society.

Teaching techniques for classroom use of language was also required to make students use the language in real communication. This principle lead to the creation of language use teaching techniques which can make students use the language features for real communicative purposes, such as role play, games, information gap, and other teacher-created techniques. Thus the evaluation focus should be graded from fluency before accuracy.

REFERENCES:

1. Brown D.H. Teaching By Principles. Prentice Hall Regents: New Jersey, 1994.

2. Jarvis H and S. Atsilarat. Shifting Paradigms: from a Communicative to a Context-Based Approach. Asian EFL Journal, 2006.

3. Nunan D. Language Teaching Methodology. Newmon: London, 2000.

4. Nunan, David. Methodology. In David Nunan (Ed). Practical English Language Teaching. McGraw Hill: Singapore, 2003.

5. Richards J. and T. Rodgers. Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2001.

6. Richards J. and W.A. Renandya. Methodology in Language Teaching. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2002.

7. Richards, Jack. Communicative Language Teaching Today. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2006.