

Communicative Language Teaching

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Since mid-seventies, communication and communicative competence has been a key concept in the theories and researches developed in educational linguistics and language pedagogy. The communicative approach origins in comes to the development of language programs in Europe and the United States to meet the language needs of a growing group of immigrants and temporary workers. E The functional aspects respond to factors related to the situation and the social environment. Therefore, the formal and structural theories see language teaching outside a particular context of use of it, while the communicative theory presents the teaching of second languages in a clear social context.

Ключевые слова: communicative competence, Second Language Teaching, methodologies, native speakers.

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1. Introduction

Since mid-seventies, communication and communicative competence has been a key concept in the theories and researches developed in educational linguistics and language pedagogy. The term communicative competence, coined by Hymes (1971) contrasts with the language proficiency of Chomsky (1957). The first attends the grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic aspect, reflecting the social aspect of language. Instead, Chomsky's linguistic competence covers the phonological, syntactic, semantic, lexical and morphological appearance of the tongue. Throughout the eighties, the concept of communicative competence merged with the idea of communicative language teaching and became the backbone of the new thoughts and approaches to second language teaching (Stern, 1992).

2. Origin

In the early and mid-twentieth century, methods in Second Language Teaching were under the influence of structural linguistics and behaviourist psychology (Savignon, 2001). Teachers of second language communication alluded to the term to refer to four language skills: speaking, writing, listening and reading. Savignon (2001) states that at present the failure model of the four skills is evident as:

The short-comings of audiolingual methodology are widely acknowledged. There is a general acceptance of the complexity and interrelatedness of skills in both written and oral communication and of the need for learners to have the experience of communication, to participate in the negotiation of meaning.

The communicative approach origins in comes to the development of language programs in Europe and the United States to meet the language needs of a growing group of immigrants and temporary workers. Thus, the Europe Council (1971) developed a curriculum on the basis of notional-functional use of language. On the other hand, in the United States, Hymes (1971) proposed the term communicative competence to refer to the use of language in a social context or observation sociolinguistic rules in context.

Therefore, (Savignon, 2001) Communicative language teaching can be seen as the result of a dispute arising from the union of several disciplines including at least, linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology and educational research perspective. This method focuses on the development and implementation of programs and methodologies that promote the development of functional language ability through student participation in communicative activities.

3. The communicative approach

Before delving into the communicative approach it should be clarify the distinction between method and communicative approach. Sanchez (2009) states that there is some ambiguity, the first is whether the new method should be called communicative approach or method, and the second question is about whether one or more methods. After doing various researches on this conceptual dichotomy, Sánchez (2009) notes that the term approach is more generic than the term method, so that the latter is more accurate in the means used to achieve their goals, and therefore, both may be used depending on what you want to express, that is, they are not incompatible concepts. In this sense Sánchez (2009: 107-108) states that:

Cuando hablamos de enfoque comunicativo hacemos referencia al movimiento pedagógico que orienta su acción docente hacia el aprendizaje de la lengua con fines comunicativos. En un enfoque caben muchas opciones concretas, de igual manera que caben muchos caminos diferentes para trasladarse de Madrid a París, por ejemplo, siendo así que el objetivo final no varía. Cada una de las opciones concretas conserva, no obstante, los elementos esenciales sobre los que se fundamenta la orientación comunicativa de la enseñanza. Dentro del enfoque comunicativo cabe hablar de un método comunicativo, pero en este caso ya se hace referencia a las acciones concretas en que se materializa la acción docente. Naturalmente, hay más opciones comunicativas.

From the communicative approach, the goal of foreign language teaching is the development of communicative ability, and one of the features of this teaching is that it pays attention to both functional aspects and structural aspects of the language:

El punto de vista estructural de la lengua se concentra en el sistema gramatical, describiendo cómo se pueden combinar los elementos lingüísticos [...] el conocimiento intuitivo de éstos y otros muchos hechos y procedimientos lingüísticos constituye la competencia lingüística del hablante nativo y le capacita para producir nuevas frases que se ajusten a los significados que necesite expresar (Littlewood, 1996: 1).

The functional aspects respond to factors related to the situation and the social environment. Therefore, the formal and structural theories see language teaching outside a particular context of use of it, while the communicative theory presents the teaching of second languages in a clear social context.

Such theories and thoughts originated the design of a curriculum based on communicative principles, The Europe Council of Modern Languages Project was one of the pioneering efforts in this regard, the rationale for this project and others of a similar nature was to determine what language functions should be included in the learning from the needs of the learners. Stern (1994) notes that the definition and identification of these language needs has been an important first step in the procedures for establishing a communicative language teaching. The second step was the definition of the language categories in terms of semantic and sociolinguistic categories and examples of language issues. He adds that these processes have stimulated much interest among practitioners, but there is a gap between inventories of programs, techniques, teaching materials and assessment procedures involved in implementing these approaches.

Thus, the communicative approach focuses on real communication in real situations where the student is the center of the teaching-learning process and the teacher assumes the role of guide or coach. Teaching materials and techniques that are based on sociolinguistic principles, the learner is usually identified with a specific role of language in use, such as tourists:

Eventually the linguistic manifestations of the speech act or acts are presented in a text, a dialogue, a flow-chart, a table with explanations or an excerpt from a newspaper, etc. Learners are usually invited to enter vicariously into the situation so that they become participants. The learning tasks, therefore, frequently involve problem solving, simulation, or role playing. There may be conventional drill-type exercises, but the difference from structural practice lies in the fact that the linguistic forms to be practiced have an identifiable place in a sociolinguistic context which is presented to learners as a concrete, practical situation in which they can feel at home and in which they need the language item to be learnt (Stern, 1994: 260).

These tasks provide the opportunity to practice the L2 as in a natural environment and played a spontaneous communication that offers multiple choices. These same principles are used for evaluation; the aim is to assess not only the formal correctness but also the appropriate social use of L2 in a given context.

Theorists and practitioners agree that the sociolinguistic component complements the structural or grammatical approach of languages, the problem that has engaged the attention of several linguistics is how to combine for teaching purposes a structural and sociolinguistic approach to language most effectively (Stern, 1994: 261). He notes that education should approach to learning languages objectively and analytically through the study and practice of structural, functional and socio-cultural aspects, offering opportunities for living the L2 learning experiencing the use of language in a community of native speakers of that language.

In this sense, Littlewood (1996) points out that Communicative Language Teaching is mainly characterized by systematic attention paid to both the functional aspects and structural aspects of language, combining them in a more globally communicative perspective (Littlewood, 1996: 1). He argues that there are four different fields from the perspective of the L2 learner's communicative competence that make up a person, all equally important for the teaching of foreign languages, these four areas are: the learner must achieve the highest possible in the target language, so you can use it spontaneously and flexibly; he must assume that the

linguistic system is part of a communication system, he must also develop skills and strategies to use language to communicate meanings as effectively as possible in specific situations (Littlewood, 1996: 6). In the last field is referred to the conscience of the student to assume the social meaning of linguistic forms. As noted above, the four areas of knowledge would be grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence.

This approach distinguishes from pre-communicative activities and communicative activities. The first aim is to provide communication skills; these activities are aimed at the production of linguistic utterances helping the learner at the same time to use the language for a specific purpose. The pre-communicative activities are structural, based on repetition and transformation exercises where the focus lies in the implementation of structural operations. Communicative activities encompass the activities of functional communication and social interaction activities, although there is no clear distinction between them but represent differences of interest and guidance.

After performing the pre-communicative activities, learners can distinguish between communicative function and structure of linguistic forms. Littlewood (1996: 9) states that:

Un paso más para añadir vínculos entre la estructura y la función es, pues, relacionar la lengua con su contexto y pedir a los estudiantes que practiquen con respuestas que sean, por una parte, formas realistas de llevar a cabo actos comunicativos útiles y, al mismo tiempo, se desarrollen en situaciones con las que previsiblemente podrían encontrarse en alguna ocasión.

With activities of these features, the learner can relate the L2 with its communicative function even if the activities are basically structural and can be performed without conscious attention to the meaning or context. In these activities learners carry linguistic options corresponding to the meanings to be expressed.

Activities related to situational language teaching, allow students to relate the contextual reality L2 using the general knowledge of the learner. Students also must be able to relate the L2 with social meanings and use it as a vehicle for social interaction, so that meaningful learning framed in a particular social context occurs.

Littlewood (1996: 13) also points that enabling activities of partial communication skills are designed to: enable students to acquire the linguistic forms and relate the communicative function, non-linguistic reality and social context. They are pre-communicative activities that prepare the student to perform communicative activities as it provides them the linguistic forms and links between forms and meanings necessary for the next step, although the focus in teaching is more in form than in meanings.

In communicative activities the student uses linguistic repertoire learned to communicate meanings with specific objectives. Among the communicative activities Littlewood (1996) outlines the activities of functional communication and social interaction activities, whose contributions are practicing global tasks, improving motivation, promote natural learning and create an environment conducive to learning. In functional communication activities students must solve problems or receive information so that the learner transmits meanings consistent with the resource you have. In contrast, the activities of social interaction become an

important aspect adequacy. Through these activities, the student must select the language repertoire depending on the social context in which it is located.

Lopez, Guntern, Lodigiani and Encabo (1999: 53) summarizes the advantages of communicative-functional approach with the following words: permite evocar y convertir en realidad las capacidades expresivas del alumnado, potencia su competencia comunicativa, hace posible alcanzar un nivel aceptable de eficacia en la producción de los actos verbales y modular la lengua, es decir, adaptarla constantemente a la gama variadísima de las situaciones de uso.

4. Components of communicative teaching

Among the components of communicative approach it is distinguished three blocks: the underlying principles and beliefs, learning objectives and the type of activities. Within the first block they are found various assumptions (Sánchez, 2009), including assumptions about the theory underlying language: language is used by humans to communicate, interpersonal communication system is the content and communicative competence is the result of a combination of various competitions. As for the assumptions on sociolinguistics, first, cognitive psychology has an important role, therefore, it has a very important role in the learning process; secondly, an active learning process develops individually. Among the assumptions related to pedagogy, learning is considered a process in which the mind performs a crucial role, it is a cumulative process occurring in a relevant communicative context for partners, the teacher plays the role of guide in the classroom while the student is an active agent assuming the role of the learning process. Among the assumptions concerning sociolinguistics, teaching extends to all social groups, el modelo de lengua objeto de la docencia resulta del uso comunicativo, que es primero oral y se cifra en las situaciones más habituales de la vida cotidiana. Pero en cuanto medio de comunicación, no se rechaza ningún tipo de lengua (Sánchez, 2009: 125). Finally, among the assumptions concerning the management of education it is found that the class should be interesting and participatory, with a suitable learning environment where the teacher is a facilitator of this climate and the student is aware of their learning, materials are varied and represent the communicative reality, considering the error as normal in the process.

In the second block we place learning objectives, where we distinguish between the general linguistic objectives, specific, pragmatic, and finally the management of education. The general linguistic objective is effective communication in the target language; among the specific objectives are to learn certain exponents that allow communication in a real context, acquiring grammatical competence needed to strengthen communication, learn vocabulary related to the exponents and earlier linguistic contexts and acquire skills that comprise communicative competence. As for the pragmatic goals, are learning the L2 in a relevant communicative context, and acquire sociolinguistics, discourse and strategic competencies. Finally, we found the management objectives of education, including those who are organizing the class and activities to take into account the difficulties of the communication process, define the contents given to students, their opinions and communication needs, and encouraging interactive participation.

The last block to which we alluded above corresponds to the type of activities, they must adhere to five conditions (Sánchez, 2009) must be interactive activities; must be based on the transmission of content containing interest among members of the media; the use of various materials such as drawings, tasks, or movies; should be based on something that requires the use of language to achieve its implementation;

and finally, should be varied. Furthermore, the type of activities are various factors to be taken into account, among them are the pedagogical elements in the design of activities, the psychological elements to determine procedures, motivators and procedural elements related to the pragmatic and sociological context.

5. Conclusion

From the 70s, methods born out of the linguistics field and that focus on the who, under the theme: first you learn, then learning that place the student at the center of the acquisition process and it will serve as background for the genesis of the communicative approach in the 80's. The communicative approach is a fundamental change in the area of L2 learning as the change from the perspective of the teacher, the textbook and the method to an interest in the learner and the procurement process will be the basis for new approaches and contemporary theories of second language acquisition. It was this shift in perspective which introduced a new research agenda and gave definition to the field that has come to be known as second language acquisition (Larsen Freeman and Long, 1991: 5).

Communicative English Teaching (CET) is an attempt to reconcile what is taught and to whom, that is, content and participants of the learning process. This method stresses the importance of meaningful communication and communication skills that are useful for L2 instruction. It poses a change in the concept of L2 teaching whereby the rote system of learning rules should focus on communication and language is conceived as an active tool to create meanings. This methodological principles focus the attention during the teaching process on the learner and the language is a communication tool through which you can instill the sociocultural context of L2, taking into account the characteristics of the partners, the relationship between them and the purpose of the conversation. Therefore, the tasks associated with this method are situations presenting tasks that promote communication integrating L2 linguistic and extra-linguistic dimensions. In general, this approach focuses on the development and implementation of methodologies and programmes to promote and develop the L2 functional competence through student participation.

The negotiation processes of meaning are produced through interaction, rewarding efficiency in communication on grammatical accuracy. Therefore, the communicative approach is based on the functional use of language and the ability of learners to express their ideas, feelings, attitudes, desires and needs. To conclude, we will use the words of Alcon (2002: 27) summarizes the characteristics of the communicative approach as follows:

El método comunicativo, entendiendo éste como la continuación de los enfoques nocional-funcionales, retoma las nociones básicas de la lingüística textual. En este sentido, se tiene en cuenta la noción del lenguaje como vehículo de comunicación y los factores que intervienen en dicha comunicación. Igualmente, se enfatiza la importancia de prestar atención a las diversas actividades comunicativas cuya finalidad es favorecer la competencia comunicativa del aprendiz, enfatizando sus autorresponsabilidad y su capacidad cognitiva en el proceso de aprendizaje.

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Коммуникативный подход в обучении

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С середины семидесятых, коммуникативная компетенция является ключевым понятием в теории и исследований, разработанных в учебных лингвистики и языковой педагогике. Коммуникативный подход используется языковых программ в Европе и США для удовлетворения языковых потребностей растущей группы иммигрантов и временных работников.

Keywords: коммуникативная компетентность, второй иностранный язык, методики, носители языка.

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