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COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Setting the problem. Foreign language study is an increasingly prominent part of education everywhere. Students are required to study a foreign language to become qualified specialists and to expand contacts with foreign partners in the future. Teachers are called to teach language in job-related or career related settings. So they search new approaches and methods in studying foreign languages. The success of the training depends on the methods of teachers, their knowledge of various modern teaching technologies and the ability to choose the best option for solving certain educational tasks.

The aim of the article is to present the description of the communicative approach which is centered in helping the students to develop certain skills and abilities: oral interaction and expression, hearing and reading comprehension, and writing expression.

Analysis of publications. It is known that a British linguist D. A. Wilkins(6) proposed a functional or communicative definition of language that could serve as a basis for developing communicative syllabuses for language teaching. Wilkins's contribution was an analysis of the communicative meanings that a language learner needs to understand and express. The writings of Wilkins, Widdowson, Candlin, Christopher Brumfit, Keith Johnson, and other British linguists on the theoretical basis for a communicative approach to language teaching gave prominence to what came to be referred to as the Communicative Approach. The importance of communicative approach is being investigated in the publications of Stronyn M., Ushinskyi K, Melnyk I, Toporov A, Anykeyeva N. and other scientists.

Main material. In the world of foreign language teaching methodology there are constant debates on language teaching methods. Which is the best method? There are many methods of teaching languages. Some have fallen into relative obscurity and others are widely used; still others have a small following, but offer useful insights. Proponents of classical methods emphasize that the traditional way of

teaching language is more effective. After all, it involves four basic language skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. In addition, expanding vocabulary and improving of the pronunciation. Proponents of communicative techniques indicate deficiencies of classical techniques. Communicative method of teaching foreign languages is based on the communicative approach. An approach is a set of assumptions about the nature of language and language learning, but does not involve procedure or provide any details about how such assumptions should be implemented into the classroom setting.

The Communicative Approach is also known as communicative language teaching (CLT). It emphasizes interaction and problem solving as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning English - or any language. As such, it tends to emphasise activities such as role play, pair work and group work. It switched traditional language teaching's emphasis on grammar, and the teacher-centred classroom, to that of the active use of authentic language in learning and acquisition. Communicative language teaching is interested in giving students the skills to be able to communicate under various circumstances. As such, it places less emphasis on the learning of specific grammatical rules and more on obtaining native-speaker-like fluency and pronunciation. Students are assessed on their level of communicative competence rather than on their explicit knowledge.

It is more of an approach or philosophy than a highly structured methodology. David Nunan famously listed five key elements to the communicative approach:

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

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

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

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

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

Communicative language teaching has been the centre of language teaching discussions since the late 1960s. Over the years it had become clear to its proponents that mastering grammatical forms and structures did not prepare the learners well enough to use the language they are learning effectively when communicating with

others. As a result, situational language teaching and its theoretical conjectures were questioned by British linguists. Some of the linguists had the task of providing the Council of Europe with a standardized programme for foreign language teaching. D. A. Wilkins was one of them, and his work has had the greatest impact on current materials for language teaching. He analyzed the existing syllabus types (grammatical and situational) and the communicative meanings that a language learner needs to understand. In place of the existing syllabus Wilkins proposed a notional syllabus. This syllabus was not organized in terms of grammatical structures but rather specified what meanings the learners needed in order to communicate. What began as a development only in Britain has expanded since the mid 1970's. Now it is seen as an approach that pursues two main goals.

The first one is "to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching" and the second one, "to develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication" (3, c.155).

Another important name associated with communicative language teaching is A. P. R. Howatt. He differentiates between a "strong" and a "weak" version of communicative language teaching. Howatt states that "a strong version is the development of a language through communication" (2, c.279) doesn't mean reactivating existing knowledge of the language but rather prompting the development of the language system itself. However, the "weak" version focuses on providing the learner with sufficient opportunities to speak the language and to put that in the centre of language teaching (2, c.279).

As the name implies, the central concept in communicative language teaching is "communicative competence" (3,p.159). This covers both the spoken and written language and all four language skills. As Oxford states, the "development of communicative competence requires realistic interaction among learners using meaningful, contextualized language" (4,c.8).

Learning strategies, like allowing learners to become more self-directed and more independent in learning the new language help them to participate actively in communication. In her book "Interpreting Communicative Language Teaching: Contexts and Concerns in Teacher Education" Savignon includes a useful summary of the eight characteristics of communicative language teaching by the linguist M. Berns:

1) Language teaching is based on a view of language as communication. That is, language is seen as a social tool that speakers use to make meaning; speakers communicate about something to someone for some purpose, either orally or in writing.

2) Diversity is recognized and accepted as part of language development and use in second language learners and users, as it is with first language users.

3) A learner's competence is considered in relative, not in absolute, terms.

4) More than one variety of the language is recognized as a viable model for learning and teaching.

5) Culture is recognized as instrumental in shaping speaker's communicative competence, in both their first and subsequent languages.

6) No single methodology or fixed set of techniques is prescribed.

7) Language use is recognized as serving ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions and is related to the development of learner's competence in each.

8) It is essential that learners be engaged in doing things with language – that is, that they use language for a variety of purposes in all phases of learning One major feature of communicative language teaching is pair and group work. This type of work "is suggested to encourage students to use and practice functions and forms» (3, c.171). That helps the students to become more independent and to accept responsibility.

Communicative language teaching emphasizes "self-direction for the learners". (4,c.10) As the teacher won't be around to guide them the whole time, especially not when the learners speak the language outside the classroom they are expected to take on a greater degree of responsibility for their own learning. According to Oxford, "this is essential to the active development of the new language" (4, c.4). The learner should enter into situations where communication takes place as much as possible to increase his or her communicative proficiency. Teachers no longer rely on activities that require repetition, accuracy and the memorization of sentences and grammatical patterns; instead, they require the learners to negotiate meaning and to interact meaningfully in the new language. Learners have to participate in classroom activities based on a cooperative rather than individualistic approach to learning; they need to listen to their peers in order to carry out group work successfully. The teacher adopts different roles.

On the one hand she is a "facilitator, a guide and a helper" and on the other hand

a "coordinator, an idea-person and a co-communicator" (4, c.10). She talks less and listens more to the students' output. In addition to that, the teacher also identifies the students' learning strategies and helps the students to improve them if necessary and shows them how to work independently. Instructional tasks become less important and fade into the background. That doesn't mean that they aren't used at all, but with less significance. These changes give the teacher more scope for variety and creativity and she gives up her status as a person of authority in a teacher-learner hierarchy. It is the teacher's responsibility to be creative and prepare appropriate material at home. The teacher can also assume other roles, for example the needs analyst, the counselor or the group process manager (3, c.2001).

Materials play an important role in communicative language teaching. They provide the basis for communication among the learners. According to Richards & Rodgers, there are three basic types of material (3,c.168). These are text-based materials, task-based materials and realia.

Text-based material like textbooks will, if designed on CLT principles, offer the learners many kinds of prompts on which they can build up conversations. They will typically contain visual cues, pictures and sentence fragments which the learners can use as a starting point for conversation. Other books consist of different texts the teacher can use for pair work. Both learners get texts with different information and the task is to ask each other questions to get to know the content of the missing piece.

Task-based material consists of exercise handbooks, cue cards, activity cards, pair-communication practice materials and student-interaction practice booklets. Pair-communication practice material contains material contains two sets of material for a pair of students. It is similar to a task using text-based material. Both students have different kinds of information and through communication they need to put the parts together. Other pair-work tasks involve one student as an interviewer and the other one the interviewee. Topics can range from personal experience and telling the other person about one's own life and preferences to talking about a topic that was discussed in the news recently or is still up-to-date. Using realia in communicative language teaching means using authentic material, for example newspaper articles, photos, maps, symbols, and many more.

Material which can be touched and held makes speaking and learning more concrete and meaningful. Maps can be used to describe the way from one point to another and photos can be used for describing where things are placed, in front of, on

top of or underneath something, and so on. A classic example of a communicative classroom activity is the "jigsaw-activity": As Richards points out, "functional communication activities require students to use their language resources to overcome an information gap or solve a problem" (3, c.18). Usually the class is divided into several groups and each group has a different piece of information needed to complete an activity. The task of the class is to fit all the pieces together to complete the whole. They must use their language resources and communicative strategies to communicate with each other in order to get the information the groups do not have. An example of a "jigsaw-activity" would be the following: The teacher prepares a topic that's interesting for the students and fits into the curriculum. For example the students could learn about Britain when introducing the country. The teacher splits the class into four to five groups, depending on the number of students. He/she does this by counting from A- D/E and afterwards all the A's, B's, and so on sit together. Every group gets a text containing information on Britain, for example about politics, sights or differences to Germany. The learners take notes and help each other when questions arise. They are then rearranged into groups containing a person from group A, one from B, one from C, and so on. Now the learners discuss and exchange the information they worked on in the first groups so that everyone has all the information about Britain and is able to answer questions the teacher could ask. This activity forces the pupils to talk, even the ones who do not normally speak that much in class, because they are all dependent on the information another student has. One major disadvantage might be that it is difficult for the teacher alone to check the language use of every student, especially in a big class. The students are allowed to make mistakes but they need to be corrected – preferably not whilst in the middle of a conversation - by the teacher in order to improve and so as not to make the same mistake again and again.

Conclusion. The most obvious advantage in communicative language teaching is that of the increase of fluency in the target language. This enables the learners to be more confident when interacting with other people and they also enjoy talking more. The approach also leads to gains in the areas of grammatical/sociolinguistic/discourse/strategic competence through communication. It is important to understand that if learners are involved in real communication, their natural strategies for language acquisition will be used, and this will allow them to learn to use the language.

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МІЖОСОБИСТІСНЕ СПІЛКУВАННЯ ЯК ЧИННИК ТВОРЕННЯ СОЦІУМУ КУЛЬТУРИ

Постановка проблеми. У зальному контексті проблем, що стоять перед сучасною українською спільнотою, помітно зростає значущість міжособистісного спілкування як однієї з найважливіших сторін людського буття. Не викликає сумніву пріоритет загальнолюдських цінностей, гуманістичних цілей, які формуються переважно в міжособистісному спілкуванні. Загальновідомо, що в процесі міжособистісного спілкування специфічно проявляється сутність людини, розкриваються її потенційні можливості й сили, твориться особливий світ людського існування – культурна реальність. У зв'язку з цим людина перестає виступати лише носієм певної соціальної ролі, вона постає як неповторна особистість, що максимально реалізує свої сутнісні потенції.

Метою даної статті є аналіз особливостей і переваг міжособистісного спілкування з огляду на потребу творення особливого середовища, де людина