USING INFORMATION GAP ACTIVITIES

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Abstract: The type of classroom activities proposed in CLT also impliednew roles in the classroom for teachers and learners. Speaking is a fundamental language skill. It is the primary way in which we communicate information. Information gap activity is the way of encouraging speaking ability and speaking refers to the gap between linguistic expertise and teaching methods.

Key words: communicative,competence,communication,classroom activities,speaking,information gap activities.

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 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. 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)

The type of classroom activities proposed in CLT also implied new roles in the classroom for teachers and learners. Learners now had to participate in classroom activities that were based on a cooperative rather than individualistic approach to learning. Students had to become comfortable with listening to their peers in group work or pair work tasks, rather than relying on the teacher for a model. They were expected to take on a greater degree of responsibility for their own learning. Fluency is developed by creating classroom activities in which students must negotiate meaning, use communication strategies, correct misunderstandings, and work to avoid communication breakdowns.

Speaking is a fundamental language skill. It is the primary way in which we communicate information. When we ask how well we can function in a second language, we ask the question "how well do you speak…?", so it is the ability to speak well which best represents our proficiency in another language.

Creating authentic practice activities that as similar to real-life as possible can be a good way to promote language in classroom as creating different contexts in which students can practice

in order to broaden their vocabulary and experiential horizons. Generally it`s easier to talk about themselves than about someone else.[1]

The way teachers talk to students, the manner in which they interact is crucial to both successful learning and teaching. Perhaps the most important point that determines how successfully students will learn is the way instructions are formulated and sometimes it is this point which distinguishes good teachers from bad ones. It is important, therefore, that teachers directions relating to academic activity and behavior are clear, precise and effective.[2]Teachers were recommended to use a balance of fluency activities and accuracy and to use accuracy activities to support fluency activities. Accuracy work could either come before or after fluency work students' performance on a fluency task, the teacher could assign accuracy work to deal with grammatical or pronunciation problems the teacher observed while students were carrying out the task. An issue that arises with fluency work, however, is whether it develops fluency at the expense of accuracy. Some advocates of CLT proposed was the distinction between three different kinds of practice – mechanical, meaningful, and communicative. Mechanical practice refers to a controlled practice activity which students can successfully carry out without necessarily understanding the language they are using. Examples of this kind of activity would be repetition drills and substitution drills designed to practice use of particular grammatical or other items. Meaningful practice refers to an activity where language control is still provided but where students are required to make meaningful choices when carrying out practice. For example, in order to practice the use of prepositions to describe locations of places, students might be given a street map with various buildings identified in different locations. They are also given a list of prepositions such as across from, on the corner of, near, on, next to. They then have to answer questions such as "Where is the book shop? Where is the café?" etc. The practice is now meaningful because they have to respond according to the location of places on the map. Communicative practice refers to activities where practice in using language within a real communicative context is the focus, where real information is exchanged, and where the language used is not totally predictable. For example, students might have to draw a map of their neighborhood and answer questions about the location of different places, such as the nearest bus stop, the nearest café, etc. Communicative Language Teaching Today Exercise sequences in many CLT course books take students from mechanical, to meaningful, to communicative practice.

Current approaches to methodology draw on earlier traditions in communicative language teaching and continue to make reference to some extent to traditional approaches. At the same time, methodologists focused on the kinds of classroom activities that could be used to implement a communicative approach, such as group work, task work, and information-gap activities. Today CLT can be seen as describing a set of core principles about language learning and teaching, as summarized above, assumptions which can be applied in different ways and which address different aspects of the processes of teaching and learning. Some focus centrally on the input to the learning process. Thus content-based teaching stresses that the content or subject matter of teaching drives the whole language learning process. Some teaching proposals

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[1] Turayeva G.The role of a teacher in communicative techniques.Western European Journal of Linguistics and Education.Volume w2, Issue 6,June,2024.

[2] Avlayeva S.B.,Essential Teaching Instructions for Teachers in Language Classes.,American Journal of language,Literacy and Learning in STEM Education.Volume 01,Issue 09,2023 ISSN (9):2993-2769.

focus more directly on instructional processes. Task-based instruction for example, advocates the use of specially designed instructional tasks as the basis of learning. Others, such as competency-based instruction and text-based teaching, focus on the outcomes of learning and use outcomes or products as the starting point in planning teaching. An information gap task is a technique in language teaching where students are missing information necessary to complete a task or solve a problem, and must communicate with their classmates to fill in the gaps. 1. It is often used in communicative language teaching and task-based language learning. Information gap tasks are contrasted with opinion gap tasks, in which all information is shared at the start of the activity, and learners give their own opinions on the information given. One example of an information gap task is a spot-the-difference activity. Another is an activity where one student is given a picture, and must describe it to another student, who creates a drawing from the description. Further examples are students sharing information to complete a class timetable, and an activity where students must share information. "Speaking" is the delivery of language through mouth. To speak, we create sounds using many parts of our body, including the lungs, vocal tract, vocal chords, tongue, teeth and lips. This vocalized form of language usually requires at least one listener. When two or more people speak or talk to each other, the conversation is called a "dialogue". Speech can flow naturally from one person to another in the form of dialogue. It can also be planned and rehearsed, as in the delivery of a speech or presentation. Of course, some people talk to themselves!

Speaking is the productive skill in the oral mode. It, like the other skills, is more complicated than it seems at first and involves more than just pronouncing words. According to Chastain[3] , speaking is a productive skill that involves many components, such as grammar, strategy, sociolinguistics and discourse; for him speaking is more than simply making the right sounds, choosing the right words or getting the constructions correct.

Speaking is probably the language skill that most language learners wish to perfect as soon as possible. Speaking is more frequently used than writing. The main function of spoken language is to socialize individuals. On the contrary to writing, spoken language is produced and processed in real time, the speaker and hearer have limited time to plan and produce what they want to say and understand what they hear. Speech is generally used in face-to-face conversations; it is temporary, spontaneous and variable. Spoken language is supported by body language such as gestures or facial expressions (often called non-verbal communication). We teach speaking as learners consider this particular skill as one of the most important and also the most challenging skills. Speaking communication is the most common way of building interpersonal relations.

Although not a set curriculum is there in most educational institutions, speaking skills have been found to be a fundamental skill necessary for a learner‟s success in life. Learners often evaluate their success in language learning on the basis of how well they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency. Someone‟s fluency in speaking measures his/ her proficiency in that language.

Students having ability to translate their thoughts and ideas into words are found to be more successful in school. Without developing good speaking skills, students has to suffer lifelong

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[3] Chastain, K. (1998). Developing second language skills (2nd Ed.). Chicago: Harcourt Brace Publishers.

consequences because of their inability. Ability of speaking English also plays an important role in developing reading and writing skills. As Rivers [4]says, when we read and write, we use what we know of the language orally .

Speaking skill is required everywhere, from simple conversation to formal public speaking. He also argues, talking can be used to connect with others, explore and understand the world and reveal oneself. The successful teaching is when students are able to gain language competence, language comprehension, and language production. In other words, the students are able to use the language to fluently communicate. Speaking activity is important to do in order to make this comes true and this can facilitate students' interest to learn any language.The list of the characteristics of a successful speaking activity as follow:

1. Learners talk a lot. As much as possible of the period of time allotted to the activity is in fact occupied by learner talk.

2. Participation is even. Classroom discussion is not dominated by a

minority of talkative participants: all get a chance to speak, and

contributions are fairly evenly distributed.

3. Motivation is high. Learners are eager to speak: because they are

interested in the topic and have something new to say about it, or because they want to contribute to achieving a task objective.

According to the opionions of the author above mentioned we can say firmly that information gap activity is an activity where learners are missing the information they need to complete a task and need to talk to each other to find it.

This activity trains the learners to have interpersonal interaction in order to get the information they need to complete understanding on a task or to complete information that they do not have. Also this activity refers to to the fact that in real communication people normally communicate in order to get information they do not possess.

Information gap activity is the way of encouraging speaking ability and speaking refers to the gap between linguistic expertise and teaching methodology.

Linguistic expertise concerns with language structure and language content. Ideally, L2 acuisition and learning should put speaking activity into account. We can state that Communicative language teaching (CLT) refers to both processes and goals in classroom learning. Dealing with learning skill, the process of learning a skill by means of a course of instruction has been defined as three-stage process namely Verbalization, Automatization, and Autonomy.

Information gap technique encourages cooperative relationships among students. This further gives students the chance to work on negotiating meaning and feel more comfortable to speak. On the other hand, when students work in small groups, the communicative practice they receive will be maximized. In this way, students also learn to pay attention not only to communicating the intended meaning, but also to the social context of the communicative event.

There are some points deal with the results of the research such as the following:

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[4] Rivers, Wilga Marie. Teaching Foreign Language Skills. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1968.

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* Encouraging cooperative relationship
* Giving the chance to work on negotiating meaning
* Feeling more comfortable to speak
* The communicative pracice will be maximal
* Learning to pay attention to communicating intended meaning
* Learning to pay attention to the social context of the communicative event

All results above are becoming the advantages of doing information gap activities in the classroom.

Actually information gap activities involve a transfer of given information from one person to another— or from one form to another or from one place to another. The participants each have some knowledge or information not shared by any other one and can only solve the problem if they pool their information.

In conclusion we can say information gap activity encourages cooperative relationship, gives the chance to work on negotiating meaning, enables students to feel comfortable to speak, increses communicative practice maximally, enables students to communicate intended meaning, teaches students to pay attention to the social context of the communicative event.

Used Literature:

1.Turayeva G.The role of a teacher in communicative techniques.Western European Journal of Linguistics and Education.Volume w2, Issue 6,June,2024.

2. Avlayeva S.B.,Essential Teaching Instructions for Teachers in Language Classes.,American Journal of language,Literacy and Learning in STEM Education.Volume 01,Issue 09,2023 ISSN (9):2993-2769.

3. Chastain, K. (1998). Developing second language skills (2nd Ed.). Chicago: Harcourt Brace Publishers.

4. Rivers, Wilga Marie. Teaching Foreign Language Skills. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1968. ,p.20