COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN TEACHING SPEAKING

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Abstract: The existence of Communicative Competence in teaching speaking is importantly viewed as the basis as well as the goal that must be achieved. Understanding the aspects and characteristics of Communicative Competence can help the speaking teachers to guide their learners into speaking atmosphere that make them speak naturally. Negotiation of meaning and management of interaction in communicative competence reflect to the focus on the use of language, not on the usage. Oral communicative tasks given to students are the speaking teachers' consideration to create students' orally natural communication.

Key Words: communicative competence, teaching speaking

Introduction

Speaking is known as a productive skill used as communication tool through oral form. As the first manifestation of language, speaking places the first rank in communication compared with the other skills. It can be proven that most of communication interaction done by human through speaking. Moreover, the learning-purposes of language are firstly focused on the ability to communicate in speaking. Yet, what is expected in teaching the speaking is often far away of the target, because much of the language teaching speaking refers to grammatical or structure functions (usage) more than communicative way (use). This condition should be understood by the English teachers in order that they really understand what to do in teaching speaking. They would be able to make change and improvement of their teaching, so that their students really feel the advantage of their learning of language. The students will regard speaking as the most important skill they can acquire, and they assess their progress in terms of their accomplishments in spoken communication. Difficulties experienced by them in expressing their ideas in speaking motivate them to do more.

In the communicative model of language teaching, teachers should actually help their students develop this body of knowledge by providing authentic practice that prepares students for real-life communication situations. They help their students develop the ability to produce grammatically correct, logically connected sentences that

are appropriate to specific contexts, and to do so using acceptable (that is, comprehensible) pronunciation. According to NCLC (2004: 1) Language learners need to recognize that speaking involves three areas of knowledge:

- Mechanics (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary): Using the right words in the right order with the correct pronunciation
- Functions (transaction and interaction): Knowing when clarity of message is essential (transaction/information exchange) and when precise understanding is not required (interaction/relationship building)
- Social and cultural rules and norms (turn-taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers, relative roles of participants): Understanding how to take into account who is speaking to whom, in what circumstances, about what, and for what reason.

However, the success of teaching speaking is absolutely emphasized to the use, not the usage. It can be separated with CLT (communicative Language Teaching). As known that the target of CLT achieves communicative competence as the final result of learning language, especially in speaking which the students will speak naturally based on the context.

Based on the writer's observation and teaching experience, the failure of achieving the target experienced by the students in speaking is because most

of the speaking teachers focus on the usage more than the use as suggested in CLT. Understanding CLT method will emerge awareness of the speaking teacher to connect their teaching method, strategy and technique to communicative competence.

This paper tries to inform the readers the concept of communicative competence, the importance of developing communicative competence in teaching speaking, and the connection between CLT and communicative competence.

DISCUSSION

THE CONCEPTS OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Communicative competence is a term in linguistics, not only refers to a language user's grammatical knowledge but also social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately. The ability to use the language correctly and appropriately according to communicative competence is to accomplish communication goals. The desired outcome of the use of the language is the ability to communicate competently, *not* the ability to use it exactly as a native speaker does. It means that the communicators of the language would communicate naturally without the strict tie of native speaker's influence. This condition really mirrors the existence of communicative competence as the achieved

target of learning language. The teachers of language, of course, lead their students based on what is suggested by the communicative competence that involve some areas: linguistics competence, Sociolinguistics competence, Discourse competence, and Strategic competence.

According to Canale and Swain (1980: 47) Communicative competence is made up of four competence areas: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic.

- *Linguistic competence* is knowing how to use the grammar, syntax, and vocabulary of a language. Linguistic competence asks: What words do I use? How do I put them into phrases and sentences?
- *Sociolinguistic competence* is knowing how to use and respond to language appropriately, given the setting, the topic, and the relationships among the people communicating. Sociolinguistic competence asks: Which words and phrases fit this setting and this topic? How can I express a specific attitude (courtesy, authority, friendliness, respect) when I need to? How do I know what attitude another person is expressing?
- *Discourse competence* is knowing how to interpret the larger context and how to construct longer stretches of language so that the parts make up a coherent whole. Discourse competence asks: How are words, phrases and sentences put together to create conversations, speeches, email messages, newspaper articles?

- *Strategic competence* is knowing how to recognize and repair communication breakdowns, how to work around gaps in one's knowledge of the language, and how to learn more about the language and in the context. Strategic competence asks: How do I know when I've misunderstood or when someone has misunderstood me? What do I say then? How can I express my ideas if I don't know the name of something or the right verb form to use?

Meanwhile, Savignon (1983: 49) cites through the influence of communicative language teaching, it has become widely accepted that communicative competence should be the goal of language education central to good classroom practice. This is in contrast to previous views in which grammatical competence was commonly given top priority. The understanding of communicative competence has been influenced by the field of pragmatics and the philosophy of language concerning speech act. In addition, Savignon describes the importance of characteristics of communicative competence and states that communicative competence is dynamic, relative, context specific, and applies to both written and spoken language, as well as to many other symbolic systems. This idea is also supported by Zainil (2003: 35) that itemizes the characteristics of communicative competence as follows:

1. The dynamic, interpersonal nature of communicative competence and its dependence on the negotiation of

meaning between two or more persons who share to some degree the same symbolic system

2. Its application to both spoken and written language as well as to many other symbolic systems

3. The role of context in determining a specific communicative competence, the infinite variety of situations in which communication takes place, and the dependence of success in a particular role on one's understanding of the context and on prior experience of a similar kind

4. Communicative competence as a relative, not absolute, concept, one dependent on the cooperation of all participants, a situation which makes it reasonable to speak of degrees of communicative competence.

Mean while, Hymes (1972: 114) clarifies communicative competence is a concept introduced and discussed and redefined by many authors. Original idea is that speakers of a language have to have more than grammatical competence in order to be able to communicate effectively in a language; they also need to know how language is used by members of a speech community to accomplish their purposes. Furthermore, Hymes classifies communicative competence into two groups that each has four aspects:

Linguistic aspects

- Phonology and orthography
- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Discourse (textual)

Pragmatic aspects

- Functions
- Variations
- Interactional skills
- Cultural framework

Communicative competence is measured by determining if, and to what degree, the goals of interaction are achieved. Communicative competence is dependent on the context in which the interaction takes place. Communication is successful with one group in one situation that may not be perceived as competent with a different group in another situation. Brown, D (2000: 250) states the domain of communicative competence includes learning what are the available means (available strategies), how they have been employed in various situations in the past, and being able to determine which ones have the highest probability of success in a given situation.

Bachman (1990: 26) divides communicative competence into the broad headings of "organizational competence," which includes both grammatical and discourse (or textual) competence, and "pragmatic competence,"

which includes both sociolinguistic and "illocutionary" competence. Strategic Competence is associated with the interlocutors' ability in using communication strategies.

In conclusion, communicative competence is admitted as the ability to use the language system appropriately in any circumstances with regard the function and varieties of language as well as shared social cultural supposition.

DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN TEACHING SPEAKING

As a frequently suggested matter, the goal of teaching speaking should be related to the communicative competence. Developing communicative competence in teaching speaking is viewed very necessary because it will be highly valued in the process of communication. In developing the communicative competence, the primary point will be focused on the meaning and the understanding of information. Widdowson (1978: 67) strengthens, the ultimate aim in langue learning is to acquire communicative competence in talking and corresponding and psychological activity underlying the ability to say, listen

to, write and read. In this case, the students feel free to communicate their ideas naturally in their speaking without hardly burdened with the grammar aspect. Real life communication and social- culture interaction will highlight the existence of communicative competence in teaching speaking.

Zainil (2008: 37) claims that in natural communication, developing communicative competence must be practiced that the senders should develop their communicative competence by focusing on the use, not the usage.

High motivation and prepared communicative tasks to the students are importantly considered in developing communicative competence in teaching speaking. They will be brought into situations of speaking atmosphere that really enable them to speak naturally. Interactional dialogue or face to face interaction, spontaneous improvised drama, and other communicative applied strategy and techniques become important parts for them in developing communicative competence. Absolutely, all can improve their speaking ability through the implementation of communicative competence in teaching speaking on them. Hymes (in Brown 2000: 246) explains communicative competence as the aspect of our competence enables the students to convey meaning and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific context.

When the students' speaking of English is natural, their communicative competence for that their performance is already developed. Developing communicative competence in teaching speaking is faster and better if they are exposed to maximum natural communication. Consequently, the speaking teachers must speak, teach, and communicate English naturally and fluently. As informed at previous statement, during natural communication process, the meaning or understanding is primary. It means that the use is priority to develop the students' comprehension on messages or information communicated by their interlocutors. The use is natural verbal that must be understood by the teacher in guiding the students in teaching speaking. Absolutely, understanding this way will be helpful to develop the students' acquisition. The acquisition meant here is the students' mastery of the language.

More interesting, challenging materials, and prepared oral communicative tasks offer the success of developing communicative competence in teaching speaking. According to Savignon (in Murcia 2001: 24) communicative competence obviously does not prevent communicatively- based materials from being subjected to grammar- translation treatment, just there may be nothing to prevent a teacher with only an old grammar-translation book at his or her disposal from teaching communicatively. However, the development of

communicative ability supports the integration of the form- focused exercise with meaning- focused experience. It means the grammar relates to their communicative needs and experiences.

Meanwhile, Harmer, J (1983: 15) supports, in teaching speaking communicatively, conversation should constantly interpret what is being said as the conversation continues that interacting with the interlocutor will focus on the analysis of the context being conversed.

In this case, the students in speaking, of course, use the language in context, in real- life situation, and it is one of the jobs considered by the speaking teacher in applying materials and oral communicative task in developing communicative competence.

In conclusion, whatever is given by the speaking teacher to the students should be related to communicative ones as expected in developing communicative competence.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ORAL COMMUNICATIVE TASKS IN DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

The success of developing communicative competence in teaching speaking is inseparable with the materials or tasks given to the students. The speaking teachers should really pay attention to tasks given that are more focused on oral communicative ones. The tendency of relying on student- centered communicative task is strongly expected to achieve the target of communicative competence development. Absolutely, the oral communicative tasks will activate the students' interest to communicate their ideas in oral form naturally. They will enjoy their communication process created without much interference of teacher. Negotiation of meaning and management of interaction in their speaking activities will automatically occur well.

Brandl (2008:289) suggests that student-centered communicative task results are far more opportunities for negotiated meaning than teacher-centered activities.

○ improved grammatical accuracy.

◉ greater sociolinguistic awareness.

○ increased self-correction.

○ improved pronunciation.

As a teacher, you should find most challenging about communicative oral activities in accordance with the students' need. If the teacher is currently teaching, it is better to ask the students about what they find most challenging about these kinds of activities and share the results with classmates. Then the teacher has considered the defining features of real communication and has discussed the difficulties of keeping students on task, finally the teachers and students are ready to analyze what makes some communicative tasks succeed and others fail.

It is better to begin by thinking about the demands that a communicative task places on the student: cognitive, linguistic and communicative. It is important to strike a balance when designing a task (not too hard, not too easy). Next, the teacher will look at the features that most well-designed communicative tasks have in common.

The way a communicative task is structured (or not) has a great deal to do with its ultimate success in the classroom. When considering how to structure a task, Lee (2000: 35-36) suggests that designers ask themselves these four questions:

1. What information is supposed to be extracted from the interaction by the learners?
2. What are the relevant subcomponents of the topic?

3. What tasks can the learners carry out to explore the subcomponents? (e.g., create lists, fill in charts, etc.)
4. What linguistic support do the learners need?

In other side, Haycraff (1978: 82) supports that the effective way of stimulating the students' talking is to issue materials with natural situations that consist of the exchanges such as questions and answer, suggestions, and reactions, opinions and arguments, etc. furthermore, various changes and challenges in materials encourage the students to explore their ideas that whole class is involved each with everyone.

Selecting materials according to students' need will bear the natural oral communication effectively and efficiently. The students need opportunities to develop their skills by being exposed to situations where the emphasis is on using their available resources. Littlewood (1981: 62) cites the personal interpretation of the situations is encouraging general confidence and fluency in speaking, allowing the learners to explore and exploit their communicative repertoire in any ways they wish. Moreover, Littlewood also gives considerations of some kinds of activities, situations and roles that can help the speaking teacher in developing oral communicative tasks as follows:

1. The idea of capability covers not only the level of complexity of the language forms that learners can handle, but also the degree of independence with which they can handle them. Thus, as

learners increase their linguistics competence, there will be scope for both greater complexity and greater independence.

2. The teacher should remember the point made in connection with classroom interaction, that structures and functions are not bound no specific situations. Therefore, the situations that he selects do not have to be restricted to those in which the learners expect to perform outside the classroom. Communication skills can be developed in the context of, say, a classroom discussion or a stimulated detective enquiry, and later be transferred to other contexts of language use.

3. On the hand, teacher has to aim for maximum efficiency and economy in his students' learning. It therefore makes sense to engage them in a large proportion of situations which bears a direct a resemblance as possible to the situations where they will later need to use their communicative skills. In this way, he can be confident that most aspect of tha language practiced (function, structures, vocabulary, and interpersonal skills) are relevant to learners' needs. This is particular important with older learners, whose need are comparatively well- defined.

4. The situations must be capable of stimulating learners to a high degree of communicative involvement. In part, this is another aspect of the point just made: learners are more likely to feel involved in situation where they can see the relevance of what they are doing and learning. In part, however it is a separate point. Many

learners (notably younger learners) have no clear conception of their future needs with the foreign language. They may therefore find the greater stimulation in situation that are of immediate rather than future relevance. These may be situations which arise in the course of classroom interaction. If simulation is used, they may be role- playing activities based on their familiar realms of experience (e.g., family, friends or school), rather than those which project into a less familiar future. (e.g,.booking hotels).

5. Similar considerations apply to the roles that learners are asked to perform in these situations. They may often be asked to stimulate a role that they are never likely to adopt in real life, such as that of a detective or waiter. This does not mean that the language they practice in that role is of no value. Each learner should be allocated a fair proportion of roles which are more directly relevant in one or both of two senses. (a) he might reasonably expect to have to perform that role in foreign language situations outside the classroom; (b) he is already familiar with the role in their native language. It is these roles that learner are likely to identify most deeply. Through them, therefore, they have the greatest chance of relating to the foreign language with their whole personality, rather than merely manipulating it as an instrument which is external to them.

COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE AND CLT

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a method of second language teaching which is derived from the belief that language proficiency equals to communication ability. Thus, communicative competence becomes the main inspiration of CLT. The strong form of CLT attempts to avoid explicit grammar instruction in language teaching. Learners are expected to generalize rules from input-rich situation created by the teachers. Other than the strong form of CLT, many variations can be mentioned related to the application of CLT. This makes CLT is an ideal pedagogical teaching mechanism philosophically but not easy to be converted into real classroom situations. The further application of CLT around the world has been under investigation for years, yet CLT has not yielded the result that it is expected to have. I think, CLT needs more time to prove its effectiveness (not simply because it has failed). Savignon (in Murcia 2001: 13) explains that in Communicative Language Teaching, the identification of learners' communicative needs and goals is the first step in the development of a teaching program that involves learner as active participant in interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning.

Negotiation of meaning describes the ability viewed as variable and highly dependent upon context and purpose as well as on the roles and attitudes of all

involved. On the other hand, it will develop the learner's ability to actually **use** the language for communication. As known that negotiation of meaning as suggested in CLT in teaching speaking becomes a lofty goal supported with materials, providing learners with a range of communicative tasks that are comfortable for them. It is also suggested to EFL teacher to encourage more the students with the language instruction that stimulate the students to use their language naturally. According to Murcia (2001: 20) making an effort to get the gist and using strategies to interpret, express, and negotiate meaning are important to development of communicative competence.

The development of communicative competence involves whole learners. The most successful teaching programs are those who take account the affective as well as the cognitive learners psychologically as well as intellectually. Of course, the communicative practice is important for the learners. Furthermore, Murcia (2001: 22) cites learners should not only be given the opportunity to say what they want to say in English, they also should be encouraged to develop an English personality with which they are comfortable.

In this model of learning, the interaction will happen in which the language made by the learners is formed of stimuli resulting a feedback. This also treats the acquisition of language as the result of an interaction

between the learner's mental abilities and the linguistic environment. According to Ellis (1986 : 129) claims, the interaction is a manifest in the actual verbal interaction in which the learner and interlocutor participate that results language acquisition derived from the collaborative efforts.

With reference to the statement above, it is clear that natural communication is strongly stressed in CLT. As mentioned in previous statement that CLT of English is the teaching that is focused on developing the students' communicative competence, namely, developing their ability to communicate effectively in culturally significant setting. Furthermore, Zainil (2008: 42) supports that Communicative competence in CLT is dynamic, interpersonal, context specific, and relative that it depends on the negotiation of meaning between communicators.

CONCLUSION

The process of natural communication will develop the learners' communicative competence. The

teacher in teaching speaking should maximize the learners 'exposure to natural communication by providing them with appropriate materials to stimulate them to speak that focus on the use of language, not on the usage. The students' tasks and materials applied refer to problem solving oriented that develop more their language activities to be their language creativity. In CLT, communicative competence must be the basis of teaching activities in which teacher not only pays attention to verbal communication but also non- verbal communication that is practiced well. Finally, the speaking teachers should create other innovative and creative techniques for developing communicative competence in teaching speaking.

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