

COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT) AND CLASSROOM INTERACTION: IMPLICATION TO THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

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Abstract: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Classroom Interaction: Implication to the Foreign Language Learning and Teaching. Language learning aims to gain competence in the language studied both language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) and the components of language (sentence patterns, vocabulary and pronunciation). Some ways can be employed to achieve the goals such as independent learning and guided one. In language learning, several approaches are applicable, one of which is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Teachers apply this approach with the aim that students have enough time to negotiate and manipulate real situations into the classroom through dialogue, discussion, story-telling, game, roleplay, and debate. Through these activities the learners get a lot of input from the community of learning.

Keywords: CLT, classroom interaction, language learning and teaching

Abstrak: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) dan Interaksi Kelas: Implikasi untuk Pembelajaran dan Pengajaran Bahasa Asing. Pembelajaran bahasa bertujuan untuk mendapatkan kompetensi pada bahasa yang dipelajari baik yang berkaitan dengan keterampilan berbahasa (membaca, menulis, mendengarkan dan berbicara) maupun berkaitan dengan komponen-komponen bahasa (pola kalimat, kosa kata dan pengucapan). Ada beberapa cara yang dapat dilakukan untuk mencapai tujuan tersebut seperti belajar mandiri dan belajar di bawah bimbingan orang lain. Dalam pembelajaran bahasa, ada beberapa pendekatan yang dapat diterapkan. Salah satunya adalah Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Guru menerapkan pendekatan ini dengan tujuan agar siswa memiliki cukup banyak waktu untuk melakukan negosiasi dan manipulasi situasi nyata ke dalam kelas melalui penerapan teknik dialog, diskusi, bercerita, permainan, bermain peran, dan debat. Melalui aktivitas tersebut pembelajar mendapatkan banyak input dari komunitas belajarnya.

Kata Kunci: CLT, interaksi kelas, pembelajaran dan pengajaran bahasa

INTRODUCTION

Language learning and teaching is a trend of a global education and its goal is to master the target language being learnt. Many linguists have tried to do the research dealing with methodologies and approaches of language teaching which is used in the classroom. In the line with this, teachers as well have tried to implement various approaches that meet the learners need and problems. They are applied to help the instructors and learners have the same vision dealing with the target language to be mastered.

There are some approaches that can be applied, and one of which is communicative language teaching (CLT). It is indicated as external factor that can be conducted to develop language ability particularly learners' speaking skill. One of the goals of CLT is to develop fluency in language use. Fluency is natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintain comprehensible and ongoing communication (Richard, 2006:14). Fluency is developed by creating meaningful activities in which students negotiate meaning, use communication strategies, correct misunderstanding,

and work to avoid communication breakdown. In addition to get the accuracy, communicative language teaching is conducted through practicing dialogue with keeping great attention to the role of a teacher to monitor and facilitate.

Communicative language teaching basically seeks to bring students beyond grammatical competence to a point where they are able not only to decode a language but also they can begin to manipulate the language in a dialog. Interaction happens within the dialogue represent the effort to gain the goal that is communicative competence. It is not as easy as most people think. For learners, It needs intention to attend the classroom activities regularly while specifically following the rules applied. Effort to increase the communicative competence should focus on improving the opportunity to do dialogue, cooperating and discussion. The students must primarily concern with achieving success in the classroom, and they are more likely to do so in the school and classroom that are organized to support them.

In the field of foreign language learning, interaction has long been considered important in making the activities meaningful leading the learners to a successful situation. It requires, in the process of foreign language learning, the presence of two or more learners who collaborate in practicing dialogues, doing information gap activities, and achieving communication. Interaction is a way of learning in general and developing the language skills in particular. Classroom interaction then emphasizes on the effectiveness of the students to go to participate actively in the dialogue, understanding the subject matter and improving language competency.

The use of communicative language teaching (CLT) and classroom interaction collaboratively facilitate language competence. The application of CLT leads the learners to communicative competence while the involvement of classroom interaction naturally or deliberately leads the learners to language competence in general including language skills and language components.

In foreign language teaching and learning, the application of CLT by the instructors are basically needed as it helps learners master the target language. Instructors are required to find out the effective techniques to represent CLT in the classroom. The presence of CLT automatically create the classroom interaction which complement each other. The application of conventional teaching

method such as question and answer method, discussion and lecture method should be avoided as they are considered carrying more disadvantages than the benefits. They affect the learners' self-confidence which is at the later stage influencing the students' awareness of involving themselves in interacting both with their friends and with the teachers. Thus, CLT and classroom interaction are two prominent factors determining the achievement of foreign language learning and teaching. Teaching approach (CLT) applied is as the external factor, interaction between learner and teacher, and interaction among the students themselves as the representation of internal factor. Each factor plays important roles in increasing English language competence.

COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT)

The communicative approach in foreign language teaching starts from a theory of language as communication. Hymes (1972) in (Richard J.C and Rodger T.S 2001:159) states that the goal of language teaching is for communicative competence. It is the definition of what a speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a speech community. Hymes adds that a person who acquires communicative competence acquires both knowledge and ability for language use.

Hymes theory is affirmed by Halliday (1970: 145) in (Richard J.C and Rodger T.S, *ibid*). Halliday focuses on functional account of language use. "linguistics is concerned with the description of speech acts or texts, since only through the study of language in use are all the functions of language, and therefore all components of meaning, brought into focus".

In Reference to the language function mentioned, Halliday elaborates language functions which complement Hymes's view of communicative competence. He describes basic functions of language as (1)The instrumental function : using language to get things, (2) Regulatory function : using language to control the behavior of others, (3) The interactional function: using language to create interaction with others, (4) The personal function : using language to express personal feelings and meanings, (5) The heuristic function : using language to learn and discover.

Another theorist which pays great attention to communicative nature of language is Hendry Widowsen.

He presented a view of the relationship between linguistic system and communicative values in text and discourse. He focused on the communicative acts underlying the ability to use language for different purposes. Canale and Swain (1980) in (Richard J.C and Rodger T.S 2001:160) described the analysis of communicative competence. They identified four competencies which refer to grammatical competence, sociolinguistics competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence.

Richard J.C (2006:2) states that Communicative language teaching can be understood as a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom.

CLT Objectives

In stating the objectives of CLT, Piepo (1981) in Richard and Rodger (2001:162) describes some levels of objectives in a communicative approach: (1) An integrative and content level (language as a means of expression) (2) A linguistic and instrumental level (language as semiotic system and an object of learning, (3) An affective level of interpersonal relationship and conduct (language as a means of expressing values and judgments about oneself and others), (4) A level of individual learning needs (remedial learning according to an error analysis), (5) A general educational level of extra-linguistic goals (language learning within the school curriculum)

Richard (2006:3) adds that Communicative language teaching sets as its goal the teaching of communicative competence. 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. 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 which includes aspects of language knowledge such as (1) Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions, (2) 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), (3) Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interviews, conversations), and (4) Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g., through using different kinds of communication strategies).

Classroom Interaction

Interactions have been defined as “reciprocal events that require at least two objects and two actions and they occur when these objects and events mutually influence each other” (Wagner, 1994: 8 in D. Rossi, et al., 2013:24).

Interaction in a classroom does not only involve the teacher, it involves all participants. According to Tsui (1995:6) in Raga (2010:6) classroom interaction is a co-operative effort among participants in which each participant contributes in determining the direction and outcome of the interaction. Allwright and Bailey (1991:18-19 as quoted by Tsui, 1995:7) further points out, “ interaction, in class or anywhere, has to be managed, as it goes along, no matter how much has gone into it beforehand. It has to be managed by everyone taking part, not just by the teacher, because interaction is obviously not something you just do to people, but something people do together, collectively.

Although interaction is a co-operative effort of all participants in a classroom, there are some aspects controlled or managed by the teacher and one of these aspects is the input provided. It is affirmed by Wagner (1994:8) that Interactions do not occur only from one side, there must be mutual influence through giving and receiving messages in order to achieve communication. Wagner adds that “reciprocal events require at least two objects and two actions. Interaction occurs when these objects and events naturally influence one another“. It actually refers to the communicative process which involves interaction at least between two people who share a list of signs.

This can be achieved through various ways: by implementing different student and teacher roles, by exposing students to a varied classroom organization, by employing a variety of activities, by helping students to express themselves and by encouraging

their use of communication strategies. If the two implications are joined, we gain a pleasant classroom atmosphere in which students are trying to communicate in the foreign language.

It can be concluded that classroom interactions occur when all components have an awareness to participate in every kind of classroom activity. The participants are encouraged to manipulate all activities which address themselves to a goal that has been set up is that a good atmosphere of learning circumstances. It then requires teachers and learners who involve directly to the interaction to pay great attention to the implication is that the achievement of teaching and learning process.

Types of Classroom Interaction

Existing research on interaction tends to focus on three main types as significant in the realisation of learning outcomes in classroom interaction (Bernard et al., 2009; Miyazoe & Anderson, 2010; Rhode, 2009; Swan, 2003 in D. Rossi, et al., 2013: 24). These types of interaction are: Learner-content interaction, Learner-learner interaction, and Learner-teacher interaction. In this writing, we shall focus only on two main types.

1. Teacher-Learner Interaction

Scrivener (2005:85) states that during teacher-learner interaction, the students seek to demonstrate their speaking and listening skills in front of their teachers that is why latter should consider this way of interacting which is very crucial in learning and teaching. Harmer (2009) adds that teachers should focus on three things when they talk with their students. Firstly, they must pay attention to the kind of the language the students are able to understand, i.e. teachers should provide an output that is comprehensible for the level of all the students. Secondly, the teachers must think about what they will say to their students, hence the teacher speech is as a resource for learners. Finally, teachers also have to identify the ways in which they will speak such as the voice, tone and intonation.

2. Learner-Learner Interaction

Learner-learner interaction, within this writing, was identified as a social activity, one which involved two-way communication between two or more students within the learning context, with the purpose of completing an instructional task or contributing towards the development

of social relationships. This is affirmed by Scrivener (2005:86) that knowledge is actively constructed and skills improved through interactions between learners. If learner-learner interaction is well structured and managed, then it can be an important factor of cognitive development, educational achievement of students and emerging social competencies. It can also develop the learners capacities through collaborative works. So, learners will establish social relationship through this kind of interaction, where the sense of learning community is promoted and isolation is reduced in the classroom. The teachers, then must encourage such type of interaction between learners because it is the fastest and the best way, it makes learners active rather than passive participants.

THE IMPLICATION TO THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

As educational and political institutions in many countries become sensitive to the urgency of communicative purposes (not only for fulfilling certain requirements; passing the test), it's better to accomplish the goal of communicative language teaching. The tasks are in the teachers and learners hand to manage class activities. By having CLT competence, teachers are able to apply certain CLT techniques through the effectiveness of the concept of language learning as learning to communicate (Brown, 2000:43). Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. The roles of teachers are to facilitate and guide, and learners are encouraged to use language productively and receptively, in unrehearsed context outside the classroom. They are given opportunity to focus on their learning process through an understanding of their own learning styles and the development of their strategies for being autonomous learners. In this context, fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. Learners are provided the opportunity to manipulate learning situation, managing speaking task, and facilitating language competence.

Vonxay (2013:69) through his research in Lao higher educational institution stated that teachers have an interest in teaching using CLT because they felt that it could motivate their learners to use English in the class which could improve their communicative

competence. He noticed that teachers' English proficiency is an important aspect in determining the success of CLT implementation. So, adequate teaching skill should be possessed by the teachers as it is the basic factor of being able to integrate CLT into the classroom.

Social interaction is another key element for learning a new language. It can motivate learners to pay more attention to communicative classroom activities because they have a target to use it outside the classroom. On the other hand, learning English in the EFL settings, learners possess lack motivation to communicate as they have less chance to use it outside the classroom. CLT and classroom interactions play a crucial role in this context provided that the teachers have better knowledge and competencies in conducting and managing class activities. The teachers' knowledge and oral skill determine their success. By having such capability, teachers are able to present the teacher-learners interaction well and class activities are facilitating language competence as set up prior to the teaching and learning occurs. Learners are able to take part in active learner-learner interactions and learner-materials interactions which have effects upon language competency. Thus, teachers should gain the CLT training before being appointed for CLT teaching position, textbook and teaching approaches should be regularly evaluated to know the strengths and weaknesses, and to see the students' improvement of learning, CLT class size should be reduced to make the learning effective, and teachers should improve language oral skill.

As CLT occurs in the classroom, teachers pay great attention to the involvement of interactions within the learning process. By focusing on the successful techniques such as role-play, dialogue, discussion, game, debating and other communicative activities, teachers as well pay attention to learners' responses to the interaction created in the classroom. In the teacher-learners interaction, teachers play their main roles in making association, giving stimulus, and responding to the problems encountered by the learners. Teachers have to pay attention to language used by the learners and think of what they are going to say. They have to be able to be the model of speech that can be followed by the learners. Meanwhile, in learner-learner interaction, teachers are to guide and facilitate learner's activity while learners are asked to forward the awareness to take part actively in managing time and activity for establishing autonomous learning.

CONCLUSION

From the previous discussion, the following conclusion can be drawn: communicative language teaching is one of the approaches used to facilitate communicative competence. It is conducted through the applications of techniques of role-play, discussion, debate, game, story-telling and other communicative activities that help achieve learners' goals of language competence. In order to obtain communicative competence, a teacher who is appointed for CLT position should have enough skills and knowledge to be implemented in the classroom. Moreover, educational system needs transforming such as class size should be reduced, teacher training should be done regularly and the improvement of teacher's language skill should be evaluated.

Classroom interaction is a reciprocal activity that is created within class activities. It is taken part by all participants; teachers, learners and materials learnt. Consequently, they have to encourage themselves to an awareness growth that learning objectives are gained through a learning community established in the class. Communicative language teaching is applied in the classroom. It is a demand for teacher to pay great attention to interaction; teacher-learners interaction, learner-learner interaction and learner-materials occur during the teaching and learning process.

Language teaching and learning is an activity of managing the capability to have language competence. The competencies that could be obtained including the four language skills; speaking, listening, writing and reading and language components; vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. CLT and classroom interaction are implemented concurrently through suitable techniques which enable learners achieve learning objectives.

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