Communicative Language Teaching

Mohammad Alfehaid

Abstract— This paper about communicative approach in teaching in the 21st century and how it is effective in teaching and assessment for second Langauge learners and foreign language learners.

———————————— ◆ ————————————

1 INTRODUCTION

The demand to learn English has expanded around the world due reasons such as economy and travel. The grammar-translation methodology has been used widely to teach English as a second or foreign language. However, in the 21st century, the demands to use communicative language teaching has increased because of it is effectiveness in teaching and learning the language. In this paper I will divide these positive effects into two parts: communication while learning, and assessment results.

2 BENEFITS AND SECTIONS

SECTION 1

The first benefit of using communicative language teaching methodology is interaction and communication aspects. According to Littlewood (2000), a communicative approach views "language not only in terms of its structures (grammar and vocabulary), but also in terms of the communicative functions that it performs." Freeman (2011) believed that the communicative language teaching approach was one of the most successful ways of teaching and learning English language in this century. My believe is that teachers and students should try to build strong relationships in order to use language to communicate.

Increasing the interaction between learners helps them to have more opportunities to use the target language. In addition, the interaction between students would help them receive feedback for their mistakes. If the atmosphere is comfortable to the students, there are stronger relationships between the learners and the teachers. This comfort can give another psychological benefits since the learner will feel more confident to try to use the target language in the class as it

used in the real life context. Additionally, in this approach, making mistakes is acceptable because students are encouraged to communicate using the target language. Moreover, according to Shartri (2010), language can be learned according to the purpose of learning it. Many learners have goals of learning the language and by using this approach the learner can focus on their target acquisition parts of the language. For instance, a student who is intending to use English for their accounting job, can through this approach have more focus on the language used and materials related to the accounting filed. In addition, the syntax and semantics of a sentence can be grammatically correct but the use of it is not. One example is the use of idioms, grammar and direct methodology encourage students to translate while the communicative approach brings the language to its correct use. In this approach, students will have more chances to learn idioms from each other and share the correct use of them.

SECTION 2

The second benefit of communicative language teaching is the assessment. Bachman & Palmer (1996) noted, "in order for a particular language test to be useful for its intended purposes, test performance must correspond in demonstrable ways to language use in non-test situations" (P.9). Spence-Brown (2001) indicated, tests should "reflect the use of language in the real world" (p. 463). Authentic language is successfully used in the communicative language. Doye (1991) noted, an authentic test are supposed to be "one that reproduces a real-life situation in order to examine the student's ability to cope with it" (p. 3). Indeed, the language used in the assessment is used after assessment is done. In communicative language approach, students after the assessment can using the language outside the

classroom. For example, in this approach learners can be given a reading passage then will be asked to read it prior the class. After that, students will be in a group of three or four students and discuss the reading passage in a situation they might have in their real life and respond to it naturally. This kind of activity can increase authenticity and validity of the exam.

Validity in communicative language testing according to Weir (1990) was that "a test should always be designed on a principle basis, however limited the underlying theory, and, wherever possible after its administration, statistical validation procedures should be applied to the result to determine how successful the test has been in measuring what it intended to measure" (P.23). The test must be valid to test what it was aimed to test. If the goal of the test is to measure grammar, a communitive oral exam can be compatible to test only the grammar feature since the language will be used in the test is used outside the classroom. As a result, the validity of the test will increase. Likewise, Brown (2010) stated, "In classroom-based assessment, washback can have a number of positive manifestation, ranging from the benefit of preparing and reviewing for a test to the learning that accurate from feedback on one's performance" (P.38). Feedback can help the learner be aware of his or her weaknesses for a particular language feature. Feedback can be given either immediately or afterwards.

3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, communicative language teaching has become popular in the 21st century because of its success in helping learners master the intended language faster and more accurately. Learners, using this methodology feel more comfortable which increases their language productivity. Student' input increases which results in increasing the output.

REFRENCE

Bachman, L., & Palmar, A. S. (1996). Language testing in practice. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bailey, K. (1998). *Learning about language assessment: Dilemmas, decisions, and directions*. Pacific Grove Calif.: Heinle & Heinle.

Brown, H. (2010). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. New York, NY: Pearson/Longman.

Doye, P. (1991). Authenticity in foreign language testing. Retrieved October 16, 2007, from http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/12/ed/39.pdf.

Freeman, D. (2011). *Techniques and principles in language teaching.* New York, N.Y., USA: Oxford University Press.

Littlewood, W. (2000). *Communicative language teaching.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University

Shastri, P. (2010). *Communicative approach to the teaching of English as a second language*. Mumbai: Himalaya Pub. House.

Spence-Brown, R. (2001). The eye of the beholder: Authenticity in an embedded assessment task. *Language Testing,* 18 (4), 463-481.

Weir, C. (1990). *Communicative Language Testing*. Trowbridge, Wiltshire: Great British at Dotesios printers.