COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING PROBLEMS IN EFL

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Annotation

The article is devoted to the problems that occur in the process of implementing Communicative language teaching as a foreign language and provides possible solutions that can be utilized to strengthen communicative competence.

Keywords: Communicative Language teaching, communicative competence, sociocultural context, teacher-centeredness, learner-centeredness.

Communicative Language Teaching is an approach, which possesses great potency in forming communicative competence. Therefore, this approach is significant when dealing with accuracy. In fact, implementation of CLT in EFL is considered to be challenging and predominantly requires much effort.

The emergence of CLT occurred at the time when language teaching was looking for a change. Due to the unsatisfactory traditional syllabus that failed to facilitate learners' ability to use language for communication, linguists attempted to design a syllabus to achieve the communicative goals of language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).

Richards and Rodgers described CLT as an approach rather than a method, since it represents a philosophy of teaching that is based on communicative language use. Advocated by many applied linguists, CLT in their views emphasizes notional-functional concepts and communicative competence, rather than grammatical structures, as central to teaching.

Although CLT is an effective way of stimulating communicative prowess, we can witness complications in implementing it in foreign countries where the language is not official.

This article will emphasize issues faced by learners in EFL and indicate basic techniques to involve students and create communicative atmosphere in the classroom. All the aspects of implementation CLT will be elaborated in advance.

Problem Sources of CLT in implementation in EFL

Low intrinsic motivation to communicate in foreign language

In a setting where English is a foreign language, students usually learn with low intrinsic motivation; English may be deemed irrelevant with students" needs because the language is not part of their everyday life. On the other hand, in a setting where English is a second language, students have high intrinsic motivation because the language is a part of everyday life. By living in a second language environment, students have a higher chance to use the language whether to communicate with others or for professional needs, as in searching for a job.

CLT is not always compatible with EFL home culture and values

One of the implementation problems of CLT is that the approach is not always appropriate with the sociocultural context in which it is used. Culture is often considered as a barrier in creating a communicative form of English learning in EFL contexts. Rogers and Everett claim that an innovative method has a far better chance of being accepted if it can be seen to be compatible with existing values and practices. In adopting CLT in foreign language learning, teachers and policy makers are likely to accept implicitly and subconsciously certain assumptions concerning their pedagogical roles and goals as cultural guides (Talebinezhad &Aliakbari, 2001). The hidden but inescapable assumption is that meaningful language use is culture bound and culture specific.

In the EFL setting, the home culture and the EFL classroom/textbook cultures are very often at odds, and the values and teaching methods presented in class are alien and therefore often unappreciated.

Solution

The majority of EFL teachers are faced with the problems and contradictions when adopting CLT as it is a methodology mainly developed for western countries. According to above given facts, we can infer EFL countries should strive to establish their own research contingents and encourage method specialists and classroom teachers to develop language teaching methods that take into account the political, economic, social, and cultural factors' and most important of all, the EFL situations in their countries. It means that considering newer techniques, and own factors of a certain country teachers can accelerate motivation of students. Consequently, they will be involved in the lessons.

Teacher's and student's role in the classroom

According to the principles of CLT teacher does not play an important role in the classroom. She is deemed a moderator, facilitator, instructor or observer. On the other hand, students should be actively engaged in lessons; they are responsible managers of communication. Therefore, communicators (learners) should participate in classroom activities cooperatively rather than individualistically, be comfortable with listening to their peers of group work or pair work tasks, and take on a greater degree of responsibility for their own learning.

Unfortunately, interference of mother tongue in EFL distracts students and when thoughts are not produced and expressed in English language, precise aim of achieving communicative competence will be unsuccessful.

Benefits

In CLT, the linguistic system of the target language is learnt best while the learner is attempting to communicate. In this case, the major portion of the learning process is not upon the teacher

thus illustrating that CLT classes have moved from teacher-centeredness to learner-centeredness.

CLT gives the learners more responsibility and involvement in the process of learning.

In other words, learner-centeredness takes precedence over teacher-centeredness. Thus, the role of the teacher in a CLT class can be regarded as a facilitator that helps the students and learners in the process of learning to conduct effective communication. This notion is helpful as it is the learner who ought to learn how to communicate effectively and use the language comprehensibly.

Conclusion

Compared with other methods and approaches, CLT activities are more difficult to design, implement, and place greater burden on EFL teachers. Not only the implementation, but also the assessment of this method seems to be difficult for EFL teachers who are usually used to clear-cut assessment procedures. Considering the perceived difficulties in utilizing CLT demands and what the EFL situation in many countries allows, it can be concluded that such problems need to be resolved if CLT is to be successfully implemented in EFL contexts. Awareness of such problems can provide EFL teachers and learners with insightful ideas about how to manage and, if required, to change their teaching and learning activities for the successful implementation of this method.

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