

## TEACHING FOR COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

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Communicative competence is the ability to use language in meaningful communication. It includes:

- knowledge of the language and what a native speaker would say in a given situation
- skill in using this knowledge in actual communication.

Communicative competence comprises 4 components:

1. Sociolinguistic competence- the ability to recognize and produce the language and actions appropriate for a particular situation.
2. Discourse competence- the way in which phrases and sentences are put together into meaningful connected combinations.
3. Linguistic competence- the knowledge of grammatical rules, syntax, semantics, spelling and phonology.
4. Strategic competence- the knowledge of avoiding potential difficulties in communication or dealing with them, and of employing a variety of rhetorical and stylistic devices to effectively enhance communication.

It's impossible to teach for communication competence without using the communicative approach. Language is best acquired when it is not studied in a direct and explicit way. It is acquired most effectively when it is used as a vehicle for doing something else, when it is learned in real communication.

The communicative approach has the following aspects: meaningful, real communication; learner-centered; interesting material; accuracy of speech through fluency; unrehearsed situations; relaxed, comfortable environment; pair and group work; authentic materials; variety of activities.

The teacher's role is to facilitate and encourage both discussions and different kinds of students' activities. Communicative activities enable students to be involved in a lesson and give them both the desire to communicate and a purpose of communication. The teacher must play a role of a good referee in a game, where students have freedom, but at the same time they know the rules. Interesting topics in relaxed environments can find the balance between too many rules and too much freedom.

Authentic material can play an important role as a motivating factor whole keeping the attention of a student. It can be used either at the

beginning of the lesson, during the so-called warming-up activities, or during the lesson, as a factor which helps students imagine a real situation.

Corrections should have either no place or a very minor place in fluency work for it normally distracts from the message. Students should normally not be aware of intervention by the teacher, who acts as a facilitator during the performance of the activity. The teacher creates a stable environment; a secure place where students are not afraid to take risks. He structures activities that are task-based and provides constructive feedback. The role of the teacher is to respond to the developing language needs of the learner. Thus the classroom is a learner-centered one where students take some responsibilities for learning. It is necessary to evaluate students' knowledge. The results will be obvious. Out of four existing language skills preference is given to listening and speaking in language learning.

The following communicative teaching procedures, which can be organized into various activities, can be applied, ensuring the practise of the four language skills:

- problem solving (analysing problems, thinking of and explaining the solution);
- information gap (seeking and providing information);
- making inferences (inferring the meaning through attitude, opinion, behavior);
- pair and group work (co-operative learning);
- interviewing (talking and obtaining information);
- games (using language accomplishing another goal);
- songs and charts (mastering the rhythm);
- role plays (creating a real situation).

The guiding principle of communicative methodology is that learners need a purpose for listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Presenting an activity as "something we are going to do today" is not purposeful enough. The students must have a reason for participating, and all activities must be relevant to the students' lives. Using the communicative approach makes both teaching and learning fun.