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COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE THROUGH CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, a great deal of scientific and practical research has been conducted on the problems arisen at the crossroads of cultures in teaching foreign languages, namely English. This article describes as much as possible difficulties encountered in learning English, the factors of their occurrence and ways to overcome them, the particular situations and their differences in learning a foreign language, the place and role of communicative competence. The ideas put forward have been enriched with examples. This small study concludes that the appropriate use of communicative competence in teaching a foreign language is an important factor.

Keywords: Learning a second language, cultural connotations, effective communication, interpreting text, communicative competence.

INTRODUCTION

Language is not simply a formal system of sounds, words and syntactical structures, but also, language reaches into the domain of human interaction, which for its own part follows certain rules. Each native speaker presents individual social experiences referring to only their own cultural background. Between the societies of differing socioeconomic structures, however, intercultural effectiveness plays a significant role when members of the one culture learn the language of the other. In learning and teaching a foreign language there are a massive investigations that have been done since some kinds of dominant languages began to be learned globally. K.H.Osterloh expresses his opinion as in here: “I would go so far as to claim that language has changed its social function since the emergence of industrialized society. It is evident not only that new kinds of texts have come into existence but that the rules of dealing with a text have changed considerably”.

METHODOLOGY

One of the most challenging parts of learning and teaching a foreign language, for example, English as a second language, can be now considered correctly

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understanding the concept. It is widely known that every learner or reader may present different attitude towards the context. And, of course, form and content of a text can be solemn and incontestable which may accordingly cause that difficulty in language learning when it comes to analyzing text and testing its validity. Since the content and aim of the written context differs greatly according to the where and how the learner attempts. Here learners need a communicative competence. It has been defined and discussed in many different ways by language scholars of various fields. One of them is given as: "A communicative competence – an ability and knowledge of language user about how, what and where to speak appropriately from the view point of culture, traditions, shared rules and norms. Ability of understanding, social meaning and being understood within a social context". It can be determined as the ability of understanding and using language effectively to communicate in a wide variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes and includes the following four interconnected competences: linguistic (knowledge of lexical items, morphology, syntax, semantics and phonology); socio-linguistic (ability with language in social situations); strategic (ability to overcome breakdowns in communication due to linguistic deficiency, archive conversational fluency and modify text for audience); and discourse (knowledge of how ideas are connected through patterns of organization, cohesive and transitional devices). Each works separately and jointly according to the situation the language is learned.

Learning a second language differs according to the situation i.e. learning a second language in a foreign culture or learning a second language in a native culture. The former clearly involves deepest form of acculturation where they have to survive in a totally strange culture as well as learn the language which he or she is absolutely dependent to communicate. While the latter varies in the severity of acculturation experienced by the learner, depending on the country, socio-linguistic requirements, social status of the learning language and aspiration or motivations of the learner. A foreign language context type causes diverse levels of acculturation as learners attempt to learn a foreign language for variety of reasons. A person may attempt to learn a foreign language in order to enter into a communication with the native speakers of that language whilst other learners have instrumental objectives such as to implement a foreign language requirement in an educational system or obtaining a grammatical or lexical knowledge within a sphere of specialization or simply in order not to be seen as a backward student. And of course, there is also a group of learners of a foreign language just for interest ranging from passing curiosity to highly technical linguistic interest in the language. However, we can say that learning a

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foreign language situation is more culturally loaded than second language learning in the native culture, since the language is almost always learned in a context of understanding the people of another culture. Foreign language curricula therefore commonly attempt to deal with the cultural connotations of the foreign language.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There can also be another distinction in learners' motivation and aspiration or interest in the context of a foreign language according to significance of the text if it is determined owing to the status of the author or presenter or else hero of the text. The more famous is the author, the more interesting is the text presented. Such kind of attitude is still kept in some types of language learning. For example, if students read about a celebrity, they feel interest in the process of reading as they are eager to know. And in its turn this feeling of eagerness makes less difficult to read and understand the context, and the language units used there remains longer in the memory. However, there are other kinds of texts such as statistics, maps, timetables where the author and the reader stay anonymous. These texts are considered to contain information that is rationalized to the last detail. From graphic and linguistic point of view this may occur difficulty for the student as they are usually are not aware of how to approach such kind of materials. Therefore, when presenting such kind of information in the class the teacher is to instruct the students on how to proceed to deal with them in a real situation. A socio-linguistic component of the communicative competence requires having been awareness of social rules of language (for example, formality, politeness, directness); non-verbal behavior; cultural references (for example, idioms, expressions, background knowledge). Without this there may probably occur misunderstandings among learners of a foreign language. One example can illustrate this notion, about two years ago there was a "kiki challenge" where a driver or passenger used to take off a moving car and dance to a song beginning with the words "kiki, do you…". As the challenge caused some inconveniences for the traffic, at the sides of highways from one city to another there appeared signs as "Dear Kiki, stay safe in your car and…" and consists of considerably more than eight words asking to be careful in driving. However, it earns inconvenience to the drivers who wanted to read, and sometimes caused misunderstandings among who didn't aware of the challenge. So, in order to achieve that texts work suitably for their expected purposes readers are required to have owned background knowledge, first of all, and moreover, this kind of texts must be short and understandable in all cultures.

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There are such kinds of texts which cannot be understood without witnessing the situation. For instance, “A woman is talking to her daughter watering flowers”. There is a confusion in answering to the question “Who is watering the flowers?” To identify whether the woman or her daughter is watering the flowers the reader have to only watch the situation.

CONCLUSION

From the given examples above learners should know how communicative competence work whit its four components. In its turn teachers have to take into consideration intercultural difference of learners and how capable they are to determine the most suitable and correct approach in a particular situation, to the reality of the given context and guide them correctly. The goal from these approaches is not to use the language exactly as a native speaker does but to communicate competently in a foreign language.

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