COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

K.Z.Ziyayeva

ANNOTATION. This article analyses language teaching as communicative competence with pragmatic approaches of linguists. Term of communicative competence, which started in 1960s, causes to exist from Chomsky's distinction of competemce.

We know that English is the language of globalization, international communication, commerce and trade, the music, the media, therefore different motivations for learning it come into act. Communicative language teaching is effective and it emphasises the importance of all four language skills to achieve communicative competence As Richards (2001) stated, English is no longer viewed as the property of the English-speaking world but it is an international commodity sometimes referred to as English an International Language. Recent methods and approaches in teaching English as a second language focus on English as a practical tool and world commodity rather than a cultural enrichment. Due to such circumstances, the approach which survived in the new millennium is Communicative Language Teaching. Indeed, the principles of this approach are as follows:

• Language learning is communicative competence

• Learners learn a language through using it to communicate

• Fluency and accuracy are important keys of authentic and meaningful communication.

Linguists have used the term competence in several contexts to refer to different types of knowledge. The term competence however was originally set out by linguist Noam Chomsky. In his book 'Aspects of the Theory of Syntax', he defines competence as: "Linguistic theory is primarily concerned with an ideal speaker-listener. In completely homogeneous speech community who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance." (Chomsky 1965:3) Later, Chomsky put the distinction between

competence (the speaker's or hearer's knowledge of languages) and performance (the actual use of language in concrete situations). This study put forward the distinction between the knowledge on one hand and the use of this knowledge on the other.

Language learning came to be seen as a social and cognitive process. As Richards (2001) concludes, Second Language acquisition theory today remains influenced by Chomsky's view of linguistic competence and universal grammar, as well as Vygotsky's view scaffolding process which focuses on the gap between what the learner can do and the next stage in learning which occurs through negotiation.

Canale and Swain (1980) defined communicative competence as a consistence of four aspects: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. According to Canale (1983), grammatical competence refers to mastering the linguistic code of the language that is being learnt; sociolinguistic competence means knowing the sociocultural rules of the use of the second language; discourse competence refers to the ability to select and arrange lexical items and syntactic structures in order to achieve well-formed texts; strategic competence refers to the ability to command verbal and non-verbal devices in order to compensate insufficient mastery or to enhance communication.

Bachman (1990) mentioned that knowing language includes two types of knowledge that a second language learner must internalize:

a) Organizational knowledge, that is knowing how to control the formal structure of a second language so as to produce correct sentences and organize these in texts. It subsumes grammatical and textual knowledge.

b) Pragmatic knowledge, which involves knowing how words and utterances can be assigned specific meanings in context and function according to the user's intentions. This knowledge is also structured in lexical knowledge, functional knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge.

Some definitions of Pragmatics as a science According to Leech (1974), Charles Morris introduced the first modern definition of pragmatics, and since then

many other specialists have continued to conceptualize this branch of linguistics. Morris originally defined pragmatics as "…the discipline that studies the relations of signs to interpreters, while semantics studies the relations of signs to the objects to which the signs are applicable" (as cited in Leech, 1974, p. 172).

Kasper (1993) defined the term as "the study of people's comprehension and production of linguistic action in context" (p. 3). Here, there are included the words action and context, two crucial elements of speech acts in language. Kasper used the term linguistic action which defines the capacity of the learner to produce an utterance. He also put emphasis on comprehension as well as production, a distinction that is particularly relevant for second language learners' daily lives.

Crystal (1985: 240) defined pragmatics as:

… the study of language from the point of view of the users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on the other participants in an act of communication."

This definition analyzes pragmatics from the perspective of the users. It takes into account the different choices that speakers are able to make when using the target language, depending on the social interaction of their communication.

Crystal considered pragmatics as the study of the communicative action in its sociocultural context. Thus, it can be said that individuals have some sort of pragmatic competence which allows them to use language in different and concrete situations, in varying contexts. Therefore, pragmatic competence is mainly studied at the social level within the limits of speech acts and social acts, interactions or at the interactional levelPragmatic competence refers to the ability to comprehend, construct, and convey meanings that are both accurate and appropriate for the social and cultural circumstances in which communication occurs.

The study of pragmatics explores the ability of language users to match utterances with contexts in which they are appropriate; in Stalnaker's words, pragmatics is "the study of linguistic acts and the contexts in which they are performed" (1972, p. 383). The teaching of pragmatics aims to facilitate the learners' sense of being able to find socially appropriate language for the situations

that they encounter. Within second language studies and teaching, pragmatics encompasses speech acts, conversational structure, conversational implicature, conversational management, discourse organization, and sociolinguistic aspects of language use such as choice of address forms. As Bardovi-Harlig (1996) advocate, teaching pragmatics because quite simply, observation of language learners shows that there is a demonstrated need for it and that instruction in pragmatics can be successful.

Kasper & Schmidt (1996) explain further that learners show significant differences from native speakers in the area of language use, in the execution and comprehension of certain speech acts, in conversational functions such as greetings and leave takings, and in conversational management such as back channeling and short responses. The goal of instruction in pragmatics is not to insist on conformity to a particular target-language norm, but rather to help learners become familiar with the range of pragmatic devices and practices in the target language. The purpose of the application of different teaching and learning activities is to help students become more effective, fluent and successive communicators in the target language. As Harlow (1990:348) states, ". . . most importantly, both teachers and textbooks alike need to emphasise to the learner that language is composed of not just linguistic and lexical elements; rather, language reflects also the social context, taking into account situational and social factors in the act of communication."

Since pragmatic competence is a combination of these factors, the development of the pragmatic ability should be accepted as one of the primary teaching goals. Students will be able to act different communicative patterns, they will find themselves active and involved in concrete acts in the classroom. Pragmatic competence will secure them good levels of grammatical and functional competences as well. They will react fluently, coherently and accurately. What is more, pragmatic competence will urge their critical thinking.

References

Barron, Anne. 2003. Acquisition in Interlanguage Pragmatics. Learning how to do things with words in a study abroad context. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Brown, H. Douglas. 2007. Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy. New York: Pearson Education.

Canale, M. 1983. "From Communicative Competence to Communicative Language Pedagogy." In J. C. Richards and R. W.

Chomsky, N. 1965. Aspects of the Theory of Syntax. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press.

Crystal, D. 1985. A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics. 2nd edition. Oxford: Blackwell.

Kasper, Gabriele. 1993. Interlanguage Pragmatics. Cary, NC: Oxford University Press, Incorporated.

Kramsch, Claire. 1986. "From Language Proficiency to Interactional Competence" The Modern Language Journal Vol.70, Issue 4, 366-372.