

JURNAL DEDIKASI PENDIDIKAN



JURNAL DEDIKASI PENDIDIKAN	Vol. 7	No. 1	Halaman 1-346	Aceh Besar Januari, 2023	ISSN 2548-8848 (Online)
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Diterbitkan Oleh :
**Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat (LPPM)
UNIVERSITAS ABULYATAMA**
Jl. Blang Bintang Lama Km. 8,5 Lampoh Keude Aceh Besar

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JURNAL DEDIKASI PENDIDIKAN

ISSN 2548-8848 (Online)

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JURNAL

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RECONCEPTUALIZATION OF COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH IN LANGUAGE TEACHING: ITS IMPLICATION ON TEACHER'S COMPETENCE AND ENVIRONMENT SUPPORT SYSTEM

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Diterima Desember 2022; Disetujui Januari 2023; Dipublikasi 31 Januari 2023

Abstract: *This article provides a brief discussion of the four topics related to the Communicative Approach (CA) theme in English language teaching and its implication for teachers' competence and environmental support system. The communicative approach, communicative competence, CA's implication on language teaching and teacher's competence, and the learning environment support are connected in a brief overview. CA, or familiarized with communicative language teaching terminology, was proposed by Savignon & Berns in the late 1960s, and it developed in the mid of 1970s with the popular name of CA (communicative approach). The first coin of CA is how it closely engages in the process of English language teaching. The goal is to prepare English language learners to be highly competent in teaching and communicating skills to face the global era. Students are able to develop their four language teaching skills. A conducive and supportive learning environment is the support system in applying CA to support the four language skills. As a result, CA's implication in language teaching, particularly English, is to enhance language learners' communicative competencies.*

Keywords: *Communicative approach, Communicative language teaching, Communicative competence.*

Abstrak: Artikel ini memberikan pembahasan singkat tentang empat topik yang terkait dengan tema Pendekatan Komunikatif (CA) dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris dan implikasinya terhadap kompetensi guru dan sistem pendukung lingkungan. Pendekatan komunikatif, kompetensi komunikatif, implikasi CA pada pengajaran bahasa dan kompetensi guru, dan dukungan lingkungan belajar dihubungkan dalam ulasan singkat. CA atau lebih dikenal dengan terminologi pengajaran bahasa komunikatif dikemukakan oleh Savignon & Berns pada akhir tahun 1960-an dan berkembang pada pertengahan tahun 1970-an dengan nama populer CA (*communicative approach*). Hal mendasar dari CA adalah bagaimana CA terlibat erat dalam proses pengajaran bahasa Inggris. Tujuannya adalah untuk mempersiapkan pembelajar bahasa Inggris agar memiliki kompetensi yang tinggi dalam mengajar dan keterampilan berkomunikasi untuk menghadapi era global. Siswa mampu mengembangkan empat keterampilan mengajar bahasa mereka. Lingkungan belajar yang kondusif dan mendukung merupakan sistem pendukung dalam penerapan CA untuk mendukung empat keterampilan berbahasa. Akibatnya, implikasi CA dalam pengajaran bahasa, khususnya bahasa Inggris, adalah untuk meningkatkan kompetensi komunikatif pembelajar bahasa.

Kata kunci: Pendekatan komunikatif, pengajaran bahasa komunikatif, kemampuan komunikatif.

The communicative approach is widely used by the teacher during the final quarter of the twentieth

century. It anchors from an outgrowth of the work of anthropological linguists (e.g., Hymes, 1971) and

Fithian linguists (e.g., Hallidays 1973), who view language first and foremost as a system for communication (Murcia, 2001: p.8).

The Communicative Approach, then abbreviated to CA is also familiarized as communicative language teaching (CLT). The focus of English learning has been more emphasized on students- teacher interaction and English are used as the tool for a meaningful communication. The paradigm of language as a set of rules is tried to avoid in this kind of learning. Furthermore, teaching English has been switched from traditional language teaching emphasis to functional language where the focus is not on teaching form-patterned and teacher-centered classroom to teaching language by using authentic language. For assessment, the paradigm also highly stresses on the students' communicative language competence rather than exploring students' explicit knowledge.

In the late 1960s, the primary focus of English language teaching is on how to improve students' communicative competence by promoting communicative language teaching (Savignon & Berns, 1984, p.4). Providing standardized program for foreign language teaching is linguists task at that time. They analyzed the existing syllabus which focused on grammar and situational teaching rather than meaningful communication. Two main goals of CA, namely, it is to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and to develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.155).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learners' and Teachers' Role in Communicative Approach

The communicative approach assumes some of the learner's and teacher's roles in the process of learning promoting communicative competence. Each of them is supporting the other in achieving the goal of the communicative syllabus. It is emphasized on developing students' learning in "self-direction for the learners". It requires the learner to develop their communicative competence not focus on the language forms. Students' communicative proficiency enables them to be involved into situations where the communication skill required. Students are encouraged to participate in classroom activities in form of collaborative learning rather than individualistic approach.

The learner is encouraged to actively interact with their friends, not the teacher. The collaborative work is supposed to be a familiar activity in the class in formatting communicative activities. Less and infrequent text used, grammar rules presentation, or error correction during the activities. Thus, learners are primarily involved in a non-standard classroom arrangement. The teacher performs different roles in teaching learning process. Sometimes, teachers play role as facilitator, a guide, and a helper and in another sides, they play role as coordinator, an idea-person and a co-communicator.

Furthermore, Richards and Rodgers (1986: p.77) proposed another role of the teacher in a communicative class is as needs analyst, counsellor, and group process manager. As a needs analyst, the teacher determines the student needs and respond to

the needs of the learner. Meanwhile, as a needs analyst in-class assessment, teachers are encouraged to plan group and individual instruction that respond to the learners' needs. The counsellor role can be executed through confirmatory or interpreter of the learner's intention and effectively acts as a communicator in paraphrasing, confirming, and providing feedback for the learner. Minimizing a less teacher-centred classroom requires teachers' responsibility to design and organize the class as a setting for developing communicative competence and promoting communicative activities.

Learning Material Design in Communicative Approach

Many kinds of materials can be designed in promoting a communicative approach in the teaching-learning process. All materials support the quality and the language used in the teaching and learning process to encourage learners' involvement in communicative interaction. According to Richards & Rodgers, there are three basic types of material in CA (2001, p.168). These are text-based materials, task-based materials and realia.

Text-based materials offer the learners many kinds of prompts on which they can build up conversations. A lot of textbooks are designed in supporting communicative language teaching. Although some of the books are still influenced by structural syllabus, others, however, look very different from previous language teaching texts. For example, Morrow and Johnson (1979) did not use dialogue, drills, or sentence patterns and used visual cues, taped cues, pictures, and sentence fragments to the initial conversation. Watcyn- Jones's pair work (1981) state two different texts, each pair

promote activities needed to enact role plays and also another pair activity. As stated by Richards & Rodgers (1986, p. 79), there are some typical lesson materials designed in text-based namely: theme (e. g relaying information), a task analysis for thematic (e. g understanding the message, asking questions to obtain clarification, asking for more information, taking notes, ordering and presenting information), a practice situation description, a stimulus presentation, comprehension questions, and paraphrasing exercises.

Task-based material consists of exercise handbooks, cue cards, activity cards, pair-communication practice materials and student-interaction practice booklets. It is usually designed in a pair of work materials where each part containing different kinds of information. Jigsaw is also identified as a class activity in promoting different roles of students' interpretation in showing comprehension. Using realia in communicative language teaching means using authentic material, for example, newspaper articles, photos, maps, symbols, and many more. All kinds of these materials can stimulate learners' creativity and their critical thinking and it can be explored toward the use of real media found in their surroundings.

Communicative Competence

Murcia in his article (2007) stated that: "the term 'communicative competence' has been in circulation for about forty years and has been used extensively in justifications and explications of communicative language teaching". The 'communicative competence is a term coined by the anthropological linguist Dell Hymes (1967, 1972). The communicative approach to language teaching is developing on the reaction to grammar-translation

and audiolingual approaches to language pedagogy.

A few years later, Canale (1983) added **discourse competence** (the ability to produce and interpret language beyond the sentence level) to the model. In the mid-nineties, Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) proposed that **actional competence** (the ability to comprehend and produce all significant speech acts and speech act sets) should also be part of communicative competence.

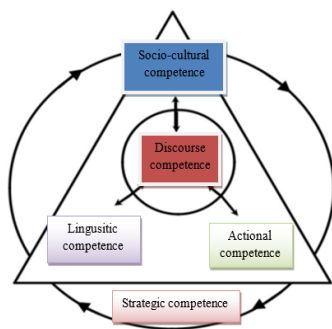


Figure 1. Schematic Representation of Communicative Competence in Celce-Murcia et al. (1995: 10)

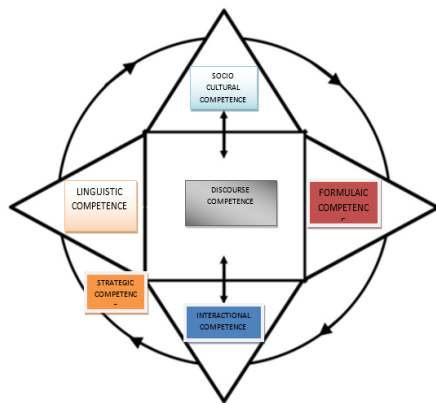


Figure 2. Revised Schematic Representation of 'Communicative Competence'

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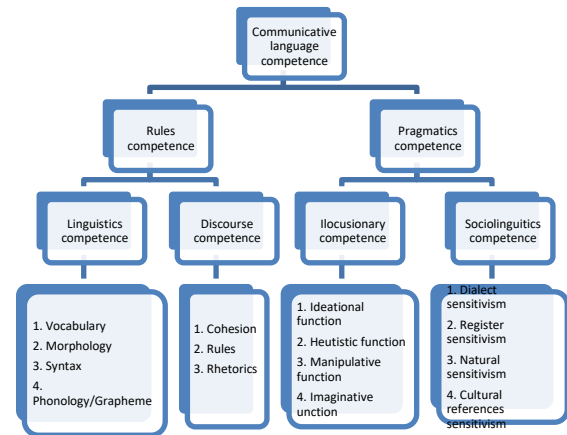


Figure 3: Language Communicative Competence (Bachman, 1990)

According to the chart above, all four functions of language is summarized based on the seven functions of language proposed by Halliday (1973) (Madya, 2013: p.51). Those functions are: instrumental functions, regulator functions, representational functions, interactional functions, personal functions, heuristic functions, and imaginative functions. All functions are not apart, they collaborate in forming the communicative competence of the language learner. Communicative constructivist learning is also increasingly developed by language experts based on the issues on how to develop and design language activities that promote communicative competence as the nature of language learning.

Through some of the revised models, it can be summarized that language experts are trying to find all learners' competencies in achieving the acquisition of language. How each of the competence plays a significant role to be realized by the teacher to develop all those competencies in an effective teaching-learning process. The last model

is developed in more comprehensive and overall communicative competencies (Madya, 2013: p.53).

The model can be seen in the following chart:

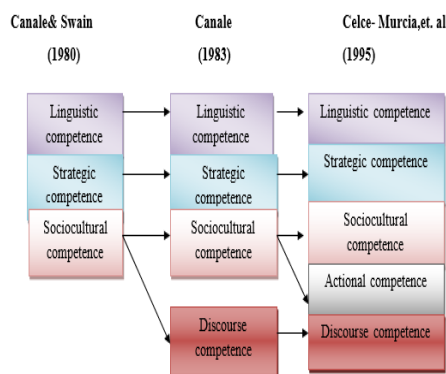


Figure 4: Chronological Evolution of ‘Communicative Competence’ (resource: Celce- Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrel, 1995:11)

Implication and Resolution

The communicative approach in its development has been discussed a long time ago in the time of post method which specifically emerged the goals of developing communicative competence. Some of the unclear views in its discussion is about whether people discussing CA in the sense of designing curriculum for achieving communicative goals or in the sense of methodology in which students are always engaged in communication. The movement from the notional syllabus to the functional syllabus in teaching English should be balanced by the whole comprehension toward the application of the approach itself. The sense of learning by maximizing communicative competence was supported empirically by Sandra Savignon’s study (1972, reported also in e g Savignon, 2005), which found that students who had engaged in communication tasks outperformed (inaccuracy as well as fluency) those who had the same amount of time carrying out pattern practice. Meaningful teaching and learning process is also proposed by Reconceptualization Of Communicative Approach... (Elyza & Susiani 2023)

Moskowitz (1978) and Stevick (1980, 1990) in Hinkel (2011, p.544-545). They emphasized the need to engage the “whole person” in meaningful communication.

One of the fundamental problems confronting the trainer of foreign language teachers is that of judging to what extent we should be trying to improve the students' performance in the target language, and to what extent we should be trying to improve their skills in teaching that foreign language to their pupils (Millar, 1989: p.152). Adopting a more communicative approach to language teaching involves certain changes of attitude to language, to the learner, and to the teacher and the way she is educated (Millar, 1989: p.153).

Attitude to Language

Regarding language as a tool for communication, a means of obtaining things, thanking people, asking the way, expressing feelings and so on. We are interested not only in grammatical correctness but also in communicative competence. Grammatical correctness is not enough; appropriateness is important too. Learning to understand such authentic language is an important part of the learning process. The learner may learn from making mistakes (Summarized at Millar, 1989). As it had been mentioned before that the error correction is infrequent paying more teacher attention. The sense of sending meaningful information is the core of students’ activity. Language is seen as a tool for delivering the message. The fluency of students will automatically have accompanied by their accuracy.

Richards& Rodgers (2001, p.172) in Hinkel (2011, p.548) listed the learning principles that characterized CLT. Its main principles include: (a)

Learners learn a language through using it to communicate; (b) Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities; (c) Fluency is an important dimension of communication; (d) Communication involves the integration of different language skills; (e) Learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error.

Attitude to Learners

As the fundamental goal of CA is to enable the learner to use the language interactively and meaningfully in their communication activities. It encourages the learner to be actively involved in a broad domain of communicative class activities through the experience of communication. The use of CA is not to oppose the previous situational approach and Audiolingual method, but that key concept of communicative competence, which includes linguistic competence but goes beyond it, revolutionized language teaching by redefining its goals to achieve them. It also reflects the reason many students failed in developing communicative competence under a structured-based approach (Hinkel, 2011; p.545). It is affected by some factors, such as learners' variety in speed and learning; the learner has become the centre of the teacher's attention; the emphasis has shifted from language teaching to language learning; not only the capability of the learner but it also the interests of the learner are now important, and material should be an interest of each different individual.

Attitude to Teacher

Teachers' role in the teaching-learning process has changed. Teachers no longer regard as the only source of knowledge, the students are now the focus

of attention. The teacher realizes that they are the mediators and facilitators in the classroom, they should be as good models as possible.

The Model Implies for Language Pedagogy

Consequently, by revising the model of Celce Murcia (1995), some principles are suggested in teaching target language by achieving both, linguistically and culturally competent in a second or foreign language. The principles are the importance of culture; the importance of discourse and context; the need to balance language as a system and language as a formula; the need to focus on dynamic aspects of interaction; and the need to focus on strategies from time to time.

Learning Environment Support to Develop Communicative Competence

Learning English as a lingua franca, as well as other foreign languages, still relies on educational settings. Some problems resulting from a big number of students in language classrooms, limited hours of teaching, determine the importance of developing mechanisms that are supportive of the educational process. The size of the class is one of the challenges in applying CA. Asian countries which adopted this approach faces this phenomenon in overcoming the number of learners which should be balanced with the number of teachers.

Resolution

The teacher should correspond to the students' needs and create optimal conditions, conducive to students, efficient performance in multicultural academic and professional contexts. Providing students with educational environments customised for developing their communicative competence with the focus on the requirement of effective

performance in the academic environment and future workplaces.

The model of developing students' communicative competence in a targeted educational environment can be explored through some activities which reflect some of the learners' competence. The learners' need toward language learning can be summarized as follow:

1. Students need foreign languages for specific, educational or vocational, purposes rather than for general purposes which dominate the curriculum of the secondary school.
2. Students need to be able to effectively use reading, reference materials, and research literature.
3. The most advanced study materials are in foreign languages, usually in English, so students have to be ready to use them.
4. They need to develop appropriate learning skills and strategies which will help them to be self-directed language learners in terms of their future occupation.
5. The teaching-learning model provided by Stern (1983) includes the four categories of variables: context (specified as social context), presage (specified as learner and teacher characteristics), process (specified as a learning process and learning conditions), and product (specified as learning outcomes).

CONCLUSION

In finding a more humanistic approach in language teaching, CA arises in promoting functional use of language. CA is considered as an approach, not as a method. It is adopted on the issues of teacher training, materials designing,

testing and also evaluation. The syllabus design moved to functional used of language and developing students' communicative competence.

Consequently, it depends also on the teacher how motivating or boring the lesson will be. The teacher needs to prepare the material at home and needs to make it as motivating and creative as possible so that the students find the tasks meaningful and motivating and are eager to communicate with each other.

The content of language course which supports communicative competence should be drawn from linguistics, cultural anthropology, sociolinguistics, and other relevant areas of the social sciences and humanities (Murcia, 2007). Contextualized the learning material to make it meaningful to the learners and, IT must be students-centred by maximizing group or pair work.

Here, some examples of tasks and activities designed to encourage interaction (to develop communicative competence) through eliciting information or opinion via a telephone call (a mock call if necessary) or an e-mail message in the target language; getting information by interviewing someone or surveying a group of people in the target language (using one's classmates and teacher, if necessary); summarizing the gist of a discourse segment with a partner; role-playing a speech act set (e.g. apologizing for losing a book your friend lent you), perhaps developing a script for acting out the situation in class; developing/writing an advertisement (as a group task) to sell a given product in the target language; this should be done after a sample of authentic target-language ads have been examined and discussed; writing and publishing a class newsletter on cultural differences

between the target language community and the first-language community; research are executed in form of presentation of oral and written drafts of reports/essays followed by feedback and revision prior to publication.

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▪ How to cite this paper :

Elyza, F. & Susiani, R. (2023). Reconceptualization Of Communicative Approach In Language Teaching: Its Implication On Teacher's Competence And Environment Support System. *Jurnal Dedikasi Pendidikan*, 7(1), 291–298.



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