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COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN A UKRAINIAN COOPERATIVE LEARNING CLASSROOM: PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS (секция 5)

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Communicative language teaching (CLT) is a popular ESL / EFL methodology around the globe. It is an approach to language teaching that emphasizes learning a language first and foremost for the purposes of communicating with others [1;15]. The goal of a communicative class is to make students speak in a target language, hence make them interact with each other and put them in the center of a learning process.

CLT emerged in 1970s as the response to the wave of immigration to the English-speaking countries which created a need to educate immigrants how to productively communicate in English (to teach enough English to apply for a job, to find housing, to buy groceries etc.) [2;18]. Jack C. Richards states that with CLT began a movement away from traditional lesson formats where the focus was on mastery of different items of grammar and practice through controlled activities such as memorization of dialogs and drills, and toward the use of pair work activities, role plays, group work activities and project work [3]. In Ukraine such traditional approach is very common in the majority of schools as most of the textbooks are based on this approach. As a result when students enter the university their level of English language knowledge varies a lot. The task of the university teacher becomes not only to teach a content but to teach a language. It is up to a teacher which approach to use while accomplishing this task. In our case we have selected CLT and cooperative learning. We would like to share the experience of implementing CLT in Ukrainian ESP business English class for 1st year undergraduate students. We have used cooperative learning as a supporting methodology for organizing/facilitating the process of language learning. By *cooperative learning* we understand an educational strategy based on group-work and, the main feature of it is a *structured collaboration* of all members of each small group with the purpose of mutual help in the process of learning and optimization of interaction [1]. The core assumptions of current communicative language teaching according to Jack C. Richards [3; 22] were being followed. We would like to highlight which of the assumptions were confirmed in this particular group and which were not and dwell on what challenges there are still to overcome.

Assumption 1: Second language learning is facilitated when learners are engaged in interaction and meaningful communication. *Personal Experience:* Every

class the students were involved in interaction with each other and the teacher. It was extremely difficult to make students stick to English while asking a teacher basic questions, and make them aware that they have to speak *only* English during the class.

Assumption 2: Effective classroom learning tasks and exercises provide opportunities for students to negotiate meaning, expand their language resources, notice how language is used, and take part in meaningful interpersonal exchange. *Personal Experience:* The challenge was to adjust the tasks to provide the opportunities for students to communicate, as most of the tasks are ‘read-translate-answer-the-questions-type’ and the worst was that the students were used to this kind of activities and they were unwilling to change to the new mode of work.

Assumption 3: Meaningful communication results from students processing content that is relevant, purposeful, interesting, and engaging. *Personal Experience:* It is definitely relevant in any class, and our classes were not an exception. Changing the reading tasks into communicative by means of Jigsaw reading made students much more excited, and the texts turned into meaningful stories they need to convey to their peers.

Assumption 4: Communication is a holistic process that often calls upon the use of several language skills or modalities. *Personal Experience:* Communication in English required a formation of several skills. At first students were taught English classroom phrases and classroom rules. They had to use the phrases while talking to the teacher and to each other in the class. Students had to practice listening, speaking, writing and reading in every class and engage a higher order skills instead of just reading and retelling.

Assumption 5: Language learning is facilitated both by activities that involve inductive or discovery learning of underlying rules of language use and organization, as well as by those involving language analysis and reflection. *Personal Experience:* Discovery learning took place only when student were mastering content, not the language. Language analysis took place while studying the grammar.

Assumption 6: Language learning is a gradual process that involves creative use of language, and trial and error. *Personal Experience:* From the psychological point of view students responded well to the written error correction as they are used to this from school. In terms of oral practice some students were unwilling to speak unless they were sure they would make a mistake. It took a lot of practice and encouragement to overcome this obstacle.

Assumption 7: Learners develop their own routes to language learning, progress at different rates, and have different needs and motivations for language learning. *Personal Experience:* Every student had a unique personality and every student responded differently to the process of language learning, it was especially evident while introducing students to the new format of language learning.

Assumption 8: Successful language learning involves the use of effective learning and communication strategies. *Personal Experience:* The process of language learning of target group of students is still taking place. Students still struggle with finding their most effective learning strategy and try to find

communicative patterns while working in the scaffolded cooperative language environment. Cooperative learning structures turned out to be quite effective. They responded well to various Kagan's structures, Slavin's Jigsaw reading. Sharan's Group Investigation was too complex for the students; they switched to Ukrainian all the time, though the final product (a poster) was well prepared.

Assumption 9 and 10: The role of the teacher in the language classroom is that of a facilitator and the classroom is a community where learners learn through collaboration and sharing. *Personal Experience:* The role of the teacher changes a lot as a cooperative class presupposes such shift. Teacher structures communication in a way that it occurs within the pairs and groups of students. The class is organized according to the principles of interdependence, face-to-face promotive interaction, social skills formation, individual and group results processing. Students reacted well to such class organization. Although there were cases of social loafing. The Ukrainian students are very comfortable with sharing with each other which, in general, is not a very bad quality, but in terms of a communicative learning situation where everyone has to contribute this interferes a process of learning.

To sum up, introduction of a communicative language teaching approach facilitated by cooperative learning in a particular Ukrainian ESL classroom had a dual effect. On the one hand, it was technically difficult to adjust the tasks and available resources to the needs of the students, also there were challenges in making students stick to English while in the class. On the other hand, the students became more confident in the target language, they became more engaged and willing to do extracurricular English tasks and improve their communicative skills. We believe that CLT has a lot of potential for teaching EFL in Ukraine.

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MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL CULTURE

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As far as you know language is the means of understanding the world picture, the acquisition of values created by other peoples. At the same time language is the key to discover the uniqueness and originality of their own people's identity and historical achievements of other cultures representatives. Nowadays the Ukrainian language education system has changed recently. And these changes are positive. Particularly, the socio-cultural context of learning foreign languages has substantially