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## COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

The attempts to approximate the process of language learning to the process of communication have been made long ago. These were extremely helpful as they have stimulated creative communicative initiative of both teachers and students. The communicative approach to language teaching has been worked out by a great number of scientists (linguists, methodologists, psychologists) in our country and abroad. Despite divergent methods and teaching techniques, all of them have made a valuable contribution to theory and practice of language teaching.

In fact, introduction of only the elements of communication could not achieve the desired results since neither the basic principles of the process of teaching nor teaching itself had been properly devised. Due to continuous scientific research and practical analysis of methodologists and teachers it became evident that it was communicative method and not mere tendency that had been introduced into the process of language teaching.

At present communicative method popularization is conditioned by urgent requirements of language teaching practice. On the one hand, only this method can be adapted to the goal and objective of teaching communication. On the other hand, it has been enriched by new researches which should be at the teachers' disposal.

There exist two opposing views on the development of speaking skills. According to the progressive development view, ability to speak the language derives from the systematic study of grammar, phonology and lexicon. This is the approach of grammar-translation texts, where it is assumed that accuracy in expressing oneself orally is dependent

on the prior study of language forms through reading and written exercises; of audio-lingual texts where oral imitation, memorization and drilling techniques precede attempts of spontaneous speech.

The immediate communication view presupposes that speaking skill is developed from the first contact with the language. Students should be encouraged to express themselves in simple ways under the guidance of their teacher. In a simulation of the total immersion experience of the foreigner in another culture, they may be expected to use anything they have acquired of the language from hearing it for the expression of their own messages.

We consider the middle position between these two approaches to be the most appropriate and to answer our purpose. The students should be encouraged to express themselves freely in the language from the very beginning of their study through activities which provide them with the basic corpus for spontaneous communication. They are supposed to use what they have been learning through a progression of study and practice.

The first problem to be faced in teaching students to speak a foreign language is how to plunge them into using the language they know little about. Proponents of the grammar-translation approach have affirmed that students should not attempt to converse in the language until they know the essentials of the syntactic and morphological systems, and have acquired an extensive vocabulary through reading and memorization. At this level they are supposed to learn to express themselves quite rapidly. But with the modern emphasis on the importance of oral communication this approach can be discouraging for many students.

When selecting learning activities, a teacher must remember that his goal is for the students to be able to use a language freely. The essential processes involved in learning to communicate show that there exists the gap between skill-getting and skill-using. To fill this gap and make the students communicate freely we can indicate the ways in which pseudo-communication activities can become bridging activities, facilitating and stimulating autonomous interaction (Rogova G., 1983).

In the process of foreign language learning we can teach students to construct the appropriate framework for the expression of meaning. They cannot be taught to express their own message to others. A teacher should provide opportunities that stimulate motivation for their personal activity and help the student to properly carry the message intended. For better results he can design classroom activities where the students construct various types of frameworks and try these out to see if they carry effectively the meaning they intend (Павлов Е., 1991).

Providing practice in pseudo-communication is the only way in which we help the student to try out frameworks of various degree of complexity. This is the type of communication in which the content is structured by the learning situation, rather than springing spontaneously from the mind and emotions of the student. We bridge the gap to real communication by encouraging the student to use these structured patterns for autonomous purposes from the early stages. In this way, even the average students can acquire confidence in their ability to communicate freely.

The question bound to arise is «How to develop the necessary confidence in our students?» They have to learn early how to express their personal intentions through all kinds of familiar and unfamiliar combinations of language elements at their disposal. The more active they are in linguistic activity, the more rapid the progress is. The teachers' task is to create and develop opportunities for their students to use foreign language for the natural purposes in relations with other people, where they can exchange messages of real interest to them.

Real communication is impossible without motivation to communicate which must be aroused by the teacher (Livingstone C., 1988). Various natural communicative contexts can be proposed to encourage students to develop their speaking skills.

### **1. Establishing and maintaining social relations.**

Here the following situations can be proposed: greetings between persons, polite inquiries, making arrangements, giving directions, apologies, refusals; conventional expressions of agreement or polite disagreement; expressing surprise, impatience, making promises.

## **2. Expressing one's reactions.**

Students can be put in real or designed situations where they have to react verbally at an exhibition of pictures or photographs, during friendly sharing of slides, etc.

## **3. Seeking and giving information.**

Students may be sent to find out specific information from a monolingual English speaker in the school or outside the course or the school. Students may give information about themselves, their family background, career aspirations, vacation preferences, etc.

## **4. Talking one's way out of a trouble.**

Simulated or real situations of increasing difficulty should be set up, where students must use their wits to extract themselves from a dilemma.

## **5. Learning or teaching how to do or make something.**

Here we associate the language with the action. It is one of the possibilities to increase interest and motivation of students who work with real-life materials and activities (sports, hobbies, crafts, dances, physical exercises).

## **6. Conversing over the telephone.**

Students should learn to make actual calls enquiring about goods, services, or timetables for transport.

## **7. Problem solving.**

The problem should require verbal activity for its solution.

## **8. Playing with the language.**

Students work with newspapers and magazines where all kinds of word games (crossword puzzles, vocabulary expansion quizzes) are published.

## **9. Acting out social roles.**

Dramatic improvisation is an excellent technique for autonomous interaction. Students are given a short time to plan how to enact the scene, improvising the dialogue as they proceed.

### **10. Discussing ideas.**

Students may discuss details of things read, seen, or heard. They decide on controversial subjects they wish to discuss, prepare their points for discussion but make their remarks without a written script.

### **11. Sharing leisure activities.**

Students should have the opportunity to learn much about English-speaking people leisure activities, their national holidays and festivals. Much communication takes place in English-language students' club or at excursions and picnics.

### **12. Entertaining.**

Teachers should give their students the opportunity to use their talents for singing, acting, making music, etc.

These types of communicative activity lend themselves to different patterns of individualization. The concept of "individualization of instruction" has to be carefully analyzed in relation to the development of communication skills. It means small-group practice and interaction but not independent study. In this case students also learn a great deal from listening to other people (Rivers W. M., Temperley S. A., 1966). All of the suggested activities are obviously not possible for all students from the earliest stages of learning. The teacher has to select and graduate activities from these categories to propose to his students. An impossible or rather complicated task discourages students too early in their language learning.

Much of any foreign language learned at school is acquired from books. Dialogues and conversations which appear in classrooms often do not represent authentic speech. The oral language is brought into the classroom due to various tapes and records. But these are often only oral recitations of written form of the language. If we want our students to learn and to use authentic speech, they should be aware of the features which differentiate the spoken language from its written form.

In the process of foreign language learning special attention should be paid to different styles of language, which we use in diverse situations (Павлов Е., 1991). Students should be able to distinguish formal and

informal speech, learn to recognize and use English in different styles, depending on the communicative situation. Knowledge of these distinctions also helps them to better understand the author's intention in conversational material in written English.

Listening is considered an essential process for communication. Apart from communicative interaction, much of the enjoyment in foreign language use comes from listening activities — watching films and plays, listening to radio broadcasts, songs or talks by native speakers. In class students learn a great deal from listening to their teacher, to different tapes and records, and to each other. Students with special skill in listening comprehension should be given opportunities in this area which is especially suitable for individual work. In preparing materials and activities for listening comprehension we should give enough consideration to the differences between edited, artificially constructed messages, and authentic speech in natural communication.

### *Literature*

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### **Резюме**

У статті представлено стислий огляд проблем стосовно формування комунікативних умінь та навичок усного мовлення у прагматичному контексті, висвітлено необхідність та ефективність застосування комунікативних вправ для їх відповідного розвитку та вдосконалення, спираючись на праці вітчизняних і зарубіжних методистів. Пропонуються рекомендації щодо підвищення мотивації навчання з боку студента та його зацікавленості навчальним процесом.