

## THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN MASTERING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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**Abstract.** The paper aims at showing the importance of communication skills in mastering a foreign language and offers some strategies to be used while developing communication skills in the language classroom. In the article some attitudes towards developing communication skills in language classrooms by experts are discussed. Moreover, the problems associated with teaching communication skills are discussed and the reasons pose those problems are pointed out. As language develops as a means of communication, communication is also an important part of language learning, they are indispensable from each other which should be equally emphasized in teaching languages. In the article some techniques are suggested to be involved in language classrooms to achieve language proficiency and improve the student knowledge regarding the target language.

**Key words:** communication, competence, speech activity, authentic materials, mnemonic devices, target language, idioms, proverbs.

**Annotatsiya.** Maqolada xorijiy tilni o'zlashtirish jarayonida muloqot ko'nikmalarining ahamiyati ko'rsatib o'tilgan va til sinfinda muloqot ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirish uchun qo'llanilishi mumkin bo'lgan ba'zi strategiyalar taklif qilingan. Maqolada mutaxassislar tomonidan xorijiy til darslarida muloqot ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirishga bo'lgan munosabatlar yoritib berilgan. Bundan tashqari, muloqot ko'nikmalarini o'qitish bilan bog'liq muammolar muhokama qilinadi va ularni kelib chiqaradigan sabablar ko'rsatiladi. Til muloqot vositasi sifatida rivojlanayotganidek, muloqot ham til o'rganishning muhim qismi hisoblanadi, ular bir-biridan ajralmasdir, bu tili o'qitishda teng darajada ta'kidlanishi kerak. Maqolada tilni bilish darajasiga erishish va maqsadli til bo'yicha talabalar bilimini oshirish o'qitish usullari jalb qilish taklif etiladi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** muloqot, kompetentsiya, nutqiy faoliyat, autentik materiallar, mnemonik qurilmalar, maqsadli til, idiomlar, maqollar.

**Аннотация.** Статья направлена на то, чтобы показать важность коммуникативных навыков в изучении иностранного языка и предлагает некоторые стратегии, которые можно использовать при развитии коммуникативных навыков на языковом занятии. В статье обсуждаются некоторые взгляды экспертов на развитие коммуникативных навыков на уроках иностранных языков. Кроме того, обсуждаются проблемы, связанные с обучением коммуникации, и указываются причины, порождающие эти проблемы. Поскольку язык развивается как средство общения, коммуникация также является важной частью изучения языка, они неразделимы друг от друга, что в равной степени следует подчеркивать при обучении языкам. В статье предлагаются некоторые методы, которые можно использовать на языковых занятиях для достижения языкового мастерства и улучшения знаний учащихся о целевом языке.

**Ключевые слова:** коммуникация, компетенция, речевая деятельность, аутентичные материалы, мнемонические приемы, целевой язык, идиомы, пословицы.

**Introduction.** It is said that communication is considered to be a social process that deals with the language use and the interaction takes place in the social context. The participants have to learn more than one language in order to meet the communicative needs in their academic and professional career. The individuals are required not only to practice the linguistic forms in the process of learning a second or foreign language but also be familiar with the communication patterns of target language so as to be able to interpret intercultural communication. So



developing the students' proficiency in communicative competence of target language is necessary to provide the learners with practical context and awareness in teaching English as a Second or Foreign language (Sheeraz Ali et.al. 2015).

**Literature review.** Currently, what is obvious for the people who are involved in language teaching is that there is an important connection between communication and language proficiency. It is highly emphasized that without developing communication skills, teaching language would be inaccurate and incomplete. Being a master in a new language is more than acquiring its syntax and vocabulary. Learning any foreign language involves being familiar with the communicative strategies, norms and patterns as well as the way of interaction of the people whose language is being studied (Mahmanazarova F.I. 2018).

Bada (2000), states that "the need for communicative competence arises mainly from the fact that most language learners, not having the right communicative skills, face great difficulties in communicating with native speakers". Moreover, currently, communication is reflected as an interdisciplinary core in many textbooks.

The process of learning a second or foreign language not only requires an individual to practice linguistic forms but also necessitates to become familiar with the communicative patterns of target language in order to interpret intercultural communication. Therefore, in the learning of English as a Second or Foreign language (ESL/EFL), it is necessary to provide learners' communicative context and awareness so as to obtain proficiency in intercultural communication of target language.

It is undeniable that language and communication are interconnected and they fulfill each other. Language is a tool which reflects the communicative patterns, values and norms of the nation whose language is being studied. Language is formed under the influence of communication. For example some communicative patterns exist in one culture and there are certain expressions to describe those patterns which may not exist in other language such as in Uzbek language "ko'rik" is a traditional ceremony and the word describing the concept only exists in Uzbek but not in other languages. So Sun (2013) uses an analogy to describe the connection between language and communication who says it without communication language will be like water without source or a tree without roots. As the water without source will definitely dry and the tree die it goes the same with language. What it means is that separating the language from communication will causes the language to fade up over time because communication is a source for language to enrich and develop it. So the relationship between language and communication must be taken into consideration in teaching foreign languages the reason is that, the main target of learning a foreign language is to provide effective communication with the members of the target culture whereas without the knowledge of communicative patterns it is impossible to become competent in communication.

**Research methodology.** Here arises a question what communication means in the English as a Foreign Language classroom and why it is necessary in that classroom. Being proficient in any foreign language and able to communicate smoothly in the target language involves being competent on different levels such as reading speaking, writing, listening all of which can be formed with grammar, phonology, lexis and communication. Those who are learning foreign languages know the importance of all which constitutes the language but the aspect of communication is not always understood and underestimated in learning and teaching languages. But it is a fundamental factor when it is about communicating in international setting which is common situation in the globalizing world.

Communication can be defined from various perspectives as it is considered to be a complex concept. There are five different views by which communication can be accessed such as:

- the interactive view
- the structural view
- the functional view



- the contextual view
- the competence view (Brdaric, Helena. 2016).

In the era based on communication, the five are frequently combined. Why those views are seen to provide access to communication is that through interaction the communicative patterns of the interlocutors is easily reflected and they express themselves based on their communicative competence. However, the first three views focus little attention on the communicative context which emphasizes more successful language learning. The latter two views see language and communication as being one unity, without one it is difficult to fully understand of the other. The views emphasize the idea that language is affected and shaped by communication. The interactive view is formed from the communicative approach which allows the students to use the language in a particular context. Communication according to this point is used to improve discussion skills. The next view namely, structural view aims at increasing the intellectual value of the language. Third, the functional view refers to a common concern which is closely connected to practical application of a language.

The contextual view is a critical view of language according to which language has many social meanings and it is influenced by its context. Explaining the metaphors and their underlined meaning is the best example of language analysis. Actually, there is mismatch when certain fixed expressions are translated from English into other languages. And it goes the same with other languages too, there are different phrases, idioms and expressions in other languages which can not be translated exactly and loose their meaning if they are translated into English by an English speaker. The contextual view suggests the existence that language students may be manipulated by the communicative construction of a text and the text's implicit message; language learning, therefore, should entail a good understanding of such meanings. Finally, the competence view contends that the knowledge of a language's communication patterns is thought essential to a thorough understanding of a language's implicit meanings. Knowledge of communication in this view presupposes a competence that is essential to the understanding of language's true meaning. As Holme noted, whereas the first three views treat communicative content as marginal or even irrelevant to successful language learning, the last two views treat language and communication as being learned in dynamic interaction, with one being essential to the full understanding of the other.

The competence view claims that knowledge of communication whose language is being studied is essential to fully understand the subtle meaning of the language being learnt. The learner is considered to be competent enough only if they have sufficient knowledge of language and its communication patterns. As language is indispensable part of communication only learning the language itself will not be enough for the learners to use it in real life. So, materials that are designed for teaching a certain language should include the elements of communication. And also, it is in the responsibility of teachers to equip the students with adequate knowledge of communication to enable the students to communicate in international setting without misunderstanding.

**Analysis and results.** Communication constitutes every person's identity but the most expressive part of communication is language. It is highly acknowledged that language and communication are interconnected. So, language and communication have to be paired with one another in the curriculum designed to teach foreign languages. There are some strategies that could be employed to integrate communication in language classrooms.

1. Including authentic materials in teaching languages.

Authentic materials give the students a sight into how language is used on a daily basis conversations by native speakers. It shows the language use out of the classroom or the language lab in a natural setting. The students will have a chance to hear authentic pacing and not modified version of language in educational textbooks, audiobooks and podcasts.



Authentic materials constantly demonstrate to your students that there is a whole communication system, a whole group of people a context in which the target language is employed on a daily basis. It opens the doors to be familiar with the language accompanied with communication in natural setting. How authentic language is exposed to the students in language classroom is the main concern to deal with the issue. It can be achieved by using articles published in newspapers and magazines for reading sessions or making the students read literary works. Those materials should not be adapted or modified or else they will lose their originality. It is suggested using radio posts, real daily conversations and podcast in listening classes which serve to develop the students' linguistic ability and improve their knowledge of communication patterns.

#### 2. Teaching communicative patterns comparing with their own patterns.

It will be easier for your students to learn target communicative patterns comparing with their own. By comparing they can observe the differences and similarities between two communicative systems and the appropriate expressions of language in both contexts. For example, while greeting each nation have different manners and expression which should be taught to avoid from misunderstanding when encountered with foreigners.

You can, for example, highlight that while Americans shake hands when meeting strangers or acquaintances, bowing is the norm in Japan. Meanwhile, the French, in addition to handshakes, can sneak in a kiss (or four!) on the cheek.

#### 3. Teach Memory-friendly Songs and use movies

When someone is asked which letter comes after Q in the alphabet some people starts singing the alphabet song so as to find the right answer.

It is known that songs are good mnemonic devices. That's why we're able to easily memorize hundreds of songs without consciously doing so. We don't memorize the lyrics; we just sing them. The tune, cadence, melody and harmony all help our brain remember. Moreover, by songs the students will not felt bothered as they learn long list of vocabulary or phrases.

In addition, songs are a good way to teach communication patterns. You can feel the flavor of peculiar features of nation between the lines. The nation's thoughts, ideas, dreams and emotions are sung within the lines by which the students will be able to notice their way of thinking. Movies are also helpful tool to teach the communication patterns of the nation whose language is being studied. In the movies everything such as the daily activities, hobbies, beliefs and values are reflected and their language is a tool to deliver them. Movies stimulate the students to learn the language as they are both informative and entertaining.

#### 4. Including collocations, idioms and proverbs.

Another helpful issue is the effective introduction and practice of such communication specific elements as collocations, idioms, or proverbs (Gabriella KOVACS. 2017). A collocation, as defined by the English Oxford Living Dictionaries in linguistics, means "the habitual juxtaposition of a particular word with another word or words with a frequency greater than chance". Students may consider the collocations difficult to deal with and remember as they may try to translate their meaning from their native language instead of using the appropriate collocation from the target language. But it is impossible to translate them word by word because they are natural combination of words. The translation of collocations and proverbs is based on the equivalents of those in their mother tongue. However, the communication specific elements make the students speech more natural and they can express their ideas smoothly. Therefore, these structures must be explained and practiced in the classroom. For example, English collocations such as a storm in a cup, a pain in the neck cannot be translated literally into Uzbek therefore Uzbek students must practice and memorize these expressions.

It is a must that future language teachers should be trained to develop actual objectives in terms of communicative content of the curriculum and create specific communicative activities



according to their objectives. Nevertheless, it is not expected from the teachers to design all their materials for teaching. They must approach critically to the available and recommended textbooks which may be used in the language classroom and redesign the best materials do develop the four traditional skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking) but also the "fifth" skill, communication.

While selecting the content for English language in terms of communication one has to consider that English is an international language. The use of the language in the international context must be reflected in the textbooks the communicative competence which is mentioned as the "fifth skill" should be developed based on the intercultural approach. According to Cortazzi and Jin (1999) and McKay (2000) there are three categories for analysing the communicative content of English textbooks: the source culture (the learner's native culture), the target culture (for example, British, American, or Australian culture whose language is being studied), and the international target culture (varieties of the target culture from all over the world, characteristic of the countries where English is spoken). It is important to design the textbooks which deal with those three categories in a balanced way.

In conclusion, it would be better to put more emphasis on the practical aspects of the language while dealing with communicative content in the classroom. Such activities may include the selection and use of authentic materials (for example, television shows, news broadcasts, films, the use of different websites or printed materials such as travel brochures, photographs, newspapers, magazines, restaurant menus); the design and selection of activities and exercises for teaching communication-specific elements as collocations, idioms, proverbs, or realia; organizing and facilitating role-plays or simulations related to culturally acceptable and appropriate language use and behavior. Language and communication are interconnected and cannot be distinguished from each other because language itself is a communication tool. Language teaching automatically entails teaching communication. Teaching communication gives the learners an opportunity to increase their knowledge of the target language with regard of people's way of life, attitudes, beliefs and values. From the evidences it is obvious that can succeed more in the process of learning languages if communication is integrated into a language classroom by the teacher by which learners will be involved into the entire communication system of the target language.

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