

FORMING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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Annotation. It has been noticed that the goal of the most of the methods is to make the students able to communicate in the target language. It had been observed that students were able to write and read the sentences in target language correctly. But when it came to communicate in the target language, they failed to do so. It made clear to the observer that to make the students able to communicate in the target language, it required more than mastering only the linguistic structures. It had been accepted by the educators that to be able to communicate in the target language, communicative competence is required with linguistic competence.

Key words: Forming intercultural competence (FIC) language teaching, communicative competence, teaching, approach.

FIC is an approach to teach foreign or second language, which emphasizes on communicative competence. It also emphasizes on interaction as a means to teach language. Forming intercultural competence language teaching replaced the Situation Language Teaching, which had been used to teach English as a second or foreign language. The focus of FIC approach was on to teach the basic structures of language.

Characteristics of FIC are the following:

- It aims to make learners to attain intercultural competence so the learners can use language accurately and appropriately.
- The major focus while using FIC approach is on the learners. The teacher is just the facilitator.
- The teacher is a person who manages the environment and helps the learners to become autonomous.
- The syllabus emphasizes the functional use of language. The syllabus is relying on the authentic materials.
- The tasks, which are assigned to the learners, have purposes and meanings.

- Intercultural competence enable the learners to attain communicative objectives of the curriculum, engage learners in intercultural competence, and require the use of such communicative processes as information sharing, negotiation of meaning, and interaction.

In FIC approach, meaning is given prime importance. The focus of the approach is to make the learners able to understand the intention and expression of the writers and speakers.

In this approach, it is believed that intercultural competence functions are more important rather than linguistic structures. Little would states that “ One of the most characteristics features of intercultural competence language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combine these into a more fully communicative view” .

Each language has limited number of sentence patterns. Mastering only those sentence patterns does not help the learners to communicate in the target language. The learner needs to learn the intercultural competence function of those structures.

While using FIC approach in teaching language, the target language is used in the classroom. The target language is a vehicle for classroom communication, not just the object of study. Because if the learners continue to use their native languages, they are not able to communicate in the target language. It is believed that native language should be used judiciously. Appropriate use of language is emphasized rather than accuracy. Accuracy comes at the later stage. It is believed that when the learners learn to use the language appropriately accuracy comes automatically. Language should be taught by integrating all language skills and not by only one skill. It means communication approach is not limited to only speaking skill; reading and writing skills should be developed. Language cannot be learnt through rote memorization. It cannot be learnt in isolation. It should be learnt through social interaction. To FIC in the target language, there is a need to struggle with language.

While using this approach, the major focus is to make the learner able to communicate in the target language. The teacher tolerates errors because what is more important is to make them able to speak in the target language. Teacher should not correct them during the activities in which they are using target language. The teacher can note the errors of the learners and make it correct after the activities are over.

FIC approach provides the opportunities to communicate in the target language to the learners. It encourages teacher-student and student – student interaction. It helps to encourage the cooperative relationship among students. The teacher should give work in group or in pair which give opportunities to share the information among them. FIC approach provides the opportunities to the learners not only about what to say and but also about how to say.

The teacher should create situations which help to promote communication. The teacher should teach them how language should be used in a social context. Teacher should give activities such as role-play, which help the learners to learn the language in social context. Language teaching techniques should be designed in such way that it encourages the learners to use the target language. Functional aspects of language should be given importance. Dramas, role plays, games should be used in the class room to promote the real communication. Students should be given opportunities to listen to language as it is used in authentic communication. They may be coached on strategies for how to improve their comprehension.

The teachers are just the facilitators who facilitate the learning process. It is the responsibility of teachers to create such situations in forming intercultural competence (FIC) language teaching can take place among the students. They monitor the learning process. While using CLT approach in the class room, the teachers do not interrupt during the learning process to correct the errors of the learners. They just note the errors and correct it at a later point. The teachers give such types of activities which help to accelerate the communication process. The teachers are also active participants of the communicative process.

The major focus in FIC approach is on communication process rather than mastering linguistics structures. This leads to different roles for the learners. Forming intercultural competence (FIC) language teaching is a learner- centered approach in which the learners are given importance. The learners are expected to participate in the communication process actively. The cooperative approach to learning stressed in FIC may likewise be unfamiliar to learners. FIC methodologists consequently recommend that learners learn to see that failed communication is a joint responsibility and not the fault of speaker or listener.

In our point of view, communicative language teaching is an approach, which provides opportunity to the learners to intercultural competence in the target language. The use of functional aspect of language makes them able to communicate in the target language in their day-to-day life. The activities, which are used in FIC, approach such as dramas, role-plays and games make learning enjoyable.

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