THE ADVANTAGES OF USING COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE GAMES IN DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS

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This article is about communicative activities in the form of games. The advantages of using communicative language games in English language teaching are motivate students' learning with fun, supply chances to use language in authentic contexts, provide, create an agreeable and supportive learning environment and promote interpersonal relations. Communicative activities in the form of games play a crucial role in Communicative Approach to language teaching and learning.

Unlike form-based approaches which place stress on drilling particular language patterns, the «communicative activity», the major feature of CLT, intends to immerse learners in meaning making for a communicative purpose. That is, communicative language activities involving information gaps and opinion gaps are designed for learners to exchange information or express opinions through using the target language in order to complete tasks. More specifically, communicative activities in the form of games create a context where learners are engaged in the use of the target language to negotiate meanings, share information and interact with others within meaningful contexts. Within CLT, it is expected that through operating communicative tasks learners can go beyond the mastery of structures to communicate meanings in real situations. The advantages of using communicative language games in English language teaching are stated as follows.

1. Motivate students' learning with fun, enjoyment and excitement Language games are highly motivating. Enjoyment, excitement and passion are naturally generated from playing games. As Adam indicates, games are self-motivating to stimulate learners' interest and curiosity, which benefits learners best to play with the language in their first stages of language learning. With a low affective filter, game-like activities are meaningful and playful, thus they motivate children to learn, arouse their interest, and develop positive attitudes towards language learning. Such classroom activities are particularly suitable for primary school pupils who like to play games. When pupils are enjoying playing games, at the same time, they are learning language unconsciously.

2. Supply chances to use language in authentic contexts Communicative task itself is central to CLT. Learners experience language use through performing activities in the form of games. That is, in game situations, learners are exposing themselves to the target language environment. They use whatever language resources available to them in order to achieve task goals, for instance, solving a problem, sharing or comparing opinion and culture. Therefore, games provide learners with chances and authentic contexts where they feel the need to use real-life language to communicate with others meaningfully and purposefully.

3. Provide practice on language use and language usage Wright, Betteridge, and Buckby state that many games are designed to offer learners a density of communicative language practice as conventional drill exercises, but in a rather meaningful way by working language as living communication to convey information and opinion. By doing so, learners are immersed in using the target language in all four skills, which assists them to better internalize a new language. Games, therefore, can be viewed as integral parts of communicative lessons and can be used, at any time whenever necessary and appropriate, to warm

up a lesson, to present new items, to provide practice for previously introduced language points, to serve as a substitute for unsatisfactory materials, to end a lesson as follow-up activities.

4. Create an agreeable and supportive learning environment. Different from conventional teaching methods through which many students have frustrating experiences of language learning, games present language learners with communicative or problem-solving situations that are enjoyable and relatively stress free. In game situations, the teacher encourages all attempts at communication in the target language rather than continuous error correction. In such a way, without fear of failure or public correction, students will feel emotionally secure and will be more confident to explore and take risks with new language, which further enhances students' active involvement as well as intrinsic motivation, and above all, leads to better learning.

5. Promote interpersonal relations. Activities involving communicative interaction provide many opportunities for cooperative relationships to come out, both among students and between the teacher and students because in game situations the class is often divided into pairs or groups, which make students naturally, interact with others. Such partnership and cooperation among students generating while carrying out game activities encourages social and emotional development, which humanizes the classroom and eases the process of learning and teaching.

In sum, communicative activities in the form of games play a crucial role in Communicative Approach (CA) to language teaching and learning. Communicative games can increase learners' interest in learning, expose them to meaningful contexts, involve them in the use of the target language, and eventually develop their communicative competence, the main goal of Communicative Language Teaching.

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