COMPETENCY BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING:
THEORY AND GUIDANCE FOR CLASSROOM PRACTICES
By: *Sojuangon Rambe, S.S., M.Pd*

Abstract

CBLT is application of CBA in field of language teaching. This approach has been widely used in many parts of the world as framework for teaching language for adults, vocational schools and private corporations. In spite of being widely used and supported by many linguists and practitioners, this approach also faces many critiques mainly in the aspects of material development and activities to develop them.

Generally this approach is to develop language performances which are useful in the real world either for daily use or work settings. This method does not specify any learning theory to attain the competency, views language as life skills, develops the four language skills depend on the requirement of the competencies, employs communication activities in the real world as learning materials, and conducts evaluation in the form of continual assessment of performance by facing the students performance to its ideal features to be successfully conducted in the real world.

Key Words: competency, performance, life skill, standard, language

INTRODUCTION

Competency Based Language Teaching (CBLT) is application of Competency Based Approach (CBA) in Language Teaching. Richards (2006) states that Competency Based Instruction is an approach to the planning and delivery of courses that has been widespread use since 1970s.[1] This approach influenced the teaching of all courses in the schools which was then called Competency Based Instruction. Thus, educational system build on this base is called Competency Based Education (CBE). All courses adjusted this approach for teaching their lessons, included language teaching.

A rising issue of Education in 1970s in USA was about what the schools should teach. The traditional teaching approach was considered unsuitable since the lessons were not clearly related to certain function in the real world—trivial

---

[1]Richards, Jack, *Communicative Language Teaching Today*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2006, p. 42

curriculum (Ornstein and Hunkins: 1983)[2]. They demanded definite real performances on part of the students that can be observed, measured and addressed as outcome of instructions at the end of the study rather than the subject matters that they learned (Richards and Rodgers, 2001)[3]. Then, the search for authentic applications of lessons in every course began to take essential position. It is the 'competency': life-skills which consist in every lesson taught in the schools.

Adopting the principles in the teaching of language, Richards and Rodgers (2001) point out that CBA is called Competency Based Language Teaching[4]. It equips the teaching of language with lessons which function for communication in daily life and job related settings. It replaces the traditional approach which taught language as knowledge without definite real-world function with approach that teaches language as useful life skill for communication in real life situations.

CBA in general and CBLT in particular as one of its application were very quickly well-accepted in education worldwide. Spread of CBLT around the world begun more widely at the end of 1970s. At that period CBLT was adopted as basis for design of work related and survival oriented language teaching programs for adult in America[5]. In 1980, CBLT applied in objectives movement proposed as a framework for organizing foreign language teaching in Britain[6]. In 1986, CBLT was used as approach in teaching refugees in the USA who whished to receive federal assistance for achieving language useful in daily life and work related settings[7]. In 1990s, The CBLT had come to be accepted as "the state-of-the-art approach to adult ESL by national policymakers and leaders in curriculum development as well[8]. Besides, Nunan (2002) points out that in Europe, CBLT is the basis for the 'Common European Framework of Reference for Languages:

---

[2] Ornstein, A.C & Francis, PH, Curriculum *Foundations, Principles and Issues,* Prentice Hall: New Jersey: 1983, p. 251

[3] Richard, Jack. and Theodore Rodgers, *Approaches And Methods In Language Teaching,* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2001., p. 141

[4] Ibid., 142

[5] Ibid., p. 141

[6] Ibid., p. 143

[7] Loc cit

[8] Loc cit

Learning, teaching, assessment.' Additionally, in North America, it has had a tremendous impact in all areas of both school and adult education as the ideological underpinning of the standards movement[9]. Therefore, competency-based programs have had a major impact on curriculum development in workplace training, particularly in Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand (Brindley 1994, in Nunan 2002)[10].

In addition, Nunan (2002) indicates that a number of professional associations in different parts of the world have drawn heavily on the performance paradigm for their work.[11] For example, Dan Clapper (2004)[12] from World Learning established an industry partnership program with Exxon Mobil for teaching this company's staffs language needs to accomplish communication in their business contexts in countries around the world.

Besides in these countries for the needed purposes and professional associations mentioned above, recently CBA is adopted as national language curriculum in some countries in Asia such as Indonesia, Thailand and Philippine[13]. Indonesia in particular, has been applying CBA as national curriculum approach for all disciplines' programs in KBK (Competency Based Curriculum, 2004) and in KTSP (School Based Curriculum, 2006).

Even though the use of this method has been so widely, CBLT also faces critics. Richards (2006) lists a few critics on this approach: (1) analyzing situations into tasks and underlying competencies is not always feasible or possible, and that often little more than intuition is involved. (2) CBLT is also suggested to be a reductionist approach, in which language learning is reduced to a set of list and such things as thinking skills are ignored[14]. In addition Tollefson (1986, in Richards and Rodgers, 2001) suggests that there is in fact no valid

---

[9] Nunan, David., *Performance-Based Approaches to the Design of ESL Instruction.*, p. 1., Plenary Presentation, Spain TESOL, Madrid, March 2002

[10] Ibid., p. 4

[11] Ibid., p. 1

[12] Clapper, Dan, *Industry Partnership Exxon Mobil-World Learning*. Retrieved from www .nlconference.org September 20, 2008 at 04.51 AM

[13] Op cit., p. 42

[14] Op cit, p. 44

procedure available to develop competency lists for many programs[15]. Besides, Shavelson and Stern (1981) add that while this prescriptive model of planning may be one of the most consistently taught features of teacher education programs, the model is consistently not used in teachers' planning in schools. Obviously, there is a mismatch between the demands of the classroom and the prescriptive planning model[16]. In summary, CBLT is indicated to face problems in task analysis, thinking skill development, learning procedure and matching competency statements with classroom learning activities.

In spite of the problems suggested by the critiques, in the writer's point of view CBLT has some advantages: (1) CBA in general and CBLT in particular reject trivial curriculum. It avoids students from learning meaningless lessons, (2) CBLT allows students to learn lessons that are specific to their needs in the society and employment field relevant with their majors/fields of study, and (3) CBLT fosters teachers' creativity to generate learning activities on the shake of the nature of the targeted competencies, student's ability and students' needs of language learning. Besides, Nunan (2008) states that (1) the use of objectives, when conveyed to learners in ways that made sense to them, played an important part in sensitizing learners to what it is to be a language learner. In particular, learners came to have a more realistic idea of what could be achieved in a given course. Learning came to be seen as the gradual accretion of achievable goals. (2) Learners developed greater sensitivity to their role as language learners and their vague notions of what it is to be a learner became much sharper. (3) Self-evaluation became more feasible. (4) Classroom activities could be seen to relate to real-life needs. (5) Development of skills was seen as a gradual rather than all-or-nothing process.[17]

In short, CBLT is a reaction to the traditional teaching approach which teaches lessons without definite real-world applications with approach which provides real life skills as language lessons. This approach today is used in many

---

[15] Op cit, p. 141

[16] Shavelson, R. and P. Stern.. *Research on Teachers' Pedagogical Thoughts, Judgments and Behavior*. Review of Educational Research No. 51, 1981, p. 477

[17] Op cit, p. 3

countries around the world for teaching language in general and teaching language for adults in English speaking countries which accept migrants from other countries. CBLT faces problems in task analysis, thinking skill development and learning procedure, however it is strong in nature of the lessons, language needs', meaningfulness of objectives and learning activities, and sequence of competency attainment, specification of lessons and teacher's creativity. Above all, this paper provides theoretical description of CBLT as practical guidance in language teaching classrooms.

DISCUSSION

Directing our understanding about competency, let's previously discuss the answer to the following questions: (1) After learning a lesson, can the students perform actions/ make something that clearly defined as outcomes of the instruction? and (2) Do the performances which [if] we can address as outcomes of the instruction reflect the satisfaction of certain needs to live in the society?

Traditional approach in teaching employs knowledge/content mastery as the target of instruction. The content consists of knowledge and experience of the past people, which are external to the students, distilled and arranged by the curriculum makers to be internalized through the instruction (Ellerbusch et.al, 2005).[18] If they can recall the knowledge that they learn, it is considered that they are successful in learning, no matter whether they can or cannot do anything by using the knowledge. Such lessons are not acceptable in CBA because they are not performance.

Another approach employs conducting performances as process of instruction even though they do not reflect satisfaction of needs in daily life or certain job settings. For instance, some parts of TBLT, especially pedagogical tasks which allows performance lessons which are not related to fulfillment of certain communications in the real world; for example: telling about daily activities, retelling stories, analyze the meanings in some poems and so on. If the students can perform the activities, they are considered to be successful language

---

[18] Ellerbusch, et.al., *Designing Competency Based Instruction.* P. 7., Retrieved from www.ihd-umkc.edu on September 20, 2008 at 04.20 PM

learners, although there is no use of the performances in daily life or fieldworks. Such performances are not acceptable in CBA and or CBLT because they are not competency. And so, what is competency?

Starting from the work of van Ek (1977) who tries to specify foreign language ability as a skill rather than knowledge and the nature of verbal communication as a form of behaviour, the objectives defined by means of behavioural objectives.[19] Schneck (1978) states that competencies describe the students' ability to apply basic and other skills in situations that are commonly encountered in everyday life.[20] Additionally, Nunan (2008) points out that competency bear a strong family resemblance to performance objectives and reside squarely within the behavioral tradition[21]. Necessarily be distinguished that behavioral objectives (competency) in CBA or CBLT refer to application, behaviors or performances, not to educational philosophy developed on the basis of behaviorist psychology (content-based). In short, competency is instructional objectives in term of behaviors or performances fruitful in the real world. It is what to produce rather than what to learn, what to do rather than what to know, output rather than input.

Actually, competency is not an original term employed in language teaching. To generate a further definition, it is necessary to consider a few explanations from the following experts. Nunn (2007) states that the global concept of competency is the total available range of (multi-cultural) abilities, skills, knowledge and experience that can be drawn upon for any particular performance by an individual or group of individuals to address a real-world task or set of tasks[22]. Similarly, Leung and Teasdale (1998) define competence as the application of a combination of knowledge, understanding, experience and

---

[19] Van Ek, *The Threshold Level for Modern Language Learning in Schools*. Longman, London: 1977, p. 5

[20] Schneck, E.A., *A Guide to Identifying High School Graduation Competencies*. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland Oregon, 1978, p. vi

[21] Op cit, p. 5

[22] Nunn, Roger. 2007. *Redefining Communicative Competence for International And Local Communities.* p. 7., Retrieved from www.asianefl.com in October 26, 2008 at 03:54

executive ability to task performance in specific contexts[23]. In conclusion, a competency must cover criteria of accomplishment of a real-world task.

From the above explanations it is clearly seen that every competency requires a range of criteria for successful conduct. The best way for determining the valid criteria, according to Maclelland (1973, in Savignon, 1983) is by going to the field to record and to analyze the actual performance, and every criterion should be made explicit to measure the resulting performance[24]. Likewise, Schneck (in Richards and Rodgers, 2001) states CBE is based on a set of outcomes that are derived from analysis of tasks typically required by the students in life role situations[25]. In brief, valid competency criteria must be taken through exploration in the field.

Adopted in the field of language teaching, Savignon (1983) states that competency is identification of behaviors of those considered successful at what they do, specifically, the identification of the characteristics of good communicators.[26] However, since competency in areas of profession or works is not merely refers to language, it needs to analyze the types of communication and language use required in fulfilling each conducts either in daily life or work-related situations as basis for language teaching. In conclusion, competency in the view of CBLT refers to language performance required in accomplishing real-life or work-related communication activities. The following discussion reveals the methodological aspects of CBLT.

1. Language Theory

    CBLT views language as tool for communication. Richards and Rodgers (2001) state that CBLT based on functional and interactional perspective in the nature of language, in which language occurs as medium of interaction and communication between people for the achievement of

---

[23] Leung, C. and A. Teasdale., *ESL Teacher Competence: Professionalism in a Social Market. Prospect*, 1998 No. 13, p. 17

[24] Savignon, Sandra J., *Communicative Competence: Theory and Practice.* Addison-Wesley Publishing Company: Massachusetts, 1983., p. 3

[25] Op cit., p. 141

[26] Op cit., p. 4

specific goals and purposes.[27] Similarly, Bottomley et.al (1994, in Nunan 2006)[28] suggests focusing on language as tool for communication rather than language as knowledge. Additionally, van Ek (1977) suggests foreign language ability as skill rather than knowledge. [29] In short, CBLT is built based on the view on language as medium of interaction and communication, and as skill.

Language use is contextual. It is to say that language occurs in situations when people communicate for reaching certain goals and purposes in the real world. Richards and Rodgers (2001) point out that CBLT seeks to teach language in relation to the social context in which it is used.[30] People use specific languages for accomplishing specific purposes in specific contexts that they encounter in the real life. Again, Richards and Rodgers (2001) state that certain life encounters call for certain kinds of language.[31] Furthermore, Wong (2008) points out that course designers should accurately predict the vocabulary and structures that are possibly to be encountered in that particular situation and they can be organized into teaching and learning units.[32] It is resulted in effort to identify languages and contexts in which they are used for communication, then all the language features and communication contexts are taken to the classroom as lessons.

In the next turn, the context involves daily life and job-related setting. Daily life context is situation in daily life in which people communicate for survival needs and establishing relationship. Job-related setting refers to workplace situation in which people communicate for work performance and compliance requirements. Accordingly, language in the view of CBLT is tool for communication for fulfilling needs in daily life and job related settings.

2. Learning Theory

---

[27] Op cit., p. 143

[28] Op cit., p. 5

[29] Op cit., p. 5

[30] Op cit, p. 143

[31] Loc cit

[32] Wong, Ruth Ming Har, *Competency-based English Teaching and Learning: Investigating Pre-service teachers of Chinese's Learning Experience*, PORTA LINGUARUM 9, Enero 2008. p. 181

CBLT does not have any specific learning theory as the basis of instruction, because the attention is on the competency attainment not on the process. It allows theories applied in other approaches or methods as far as the instruction can bring about the competency attainment in part of students. Whether a theory is strong or weak depends on its instructional ability to develop the targeted competency.

CBLT focuses on what students have to be able to perform at the end of the study, rather than what to learn and how to learn it. Richards and Rodgers (2001) indicate that CBE addresses what addresses what the students expected to do with the language, however they learned to do it.[33] Similarly, Richards (2006) states that with this approach (CBLT) it doesn't matter what methodology is employed as long as it delivers the learning outcomes.[34] In short, in CBLT no matter the learning activities employed as far as it enable students to perform the competency at the end of the study.

Accordingly, variety learning activities created, adopted and or adapted from the range of methods, techniques, tricks, approaches and so on are applicable in CBLT on the shake of appropriateness to obtain the specific competencies. Richards and Rodgers (2001) state that CBLT takes 'mosaic' approach to language learning in that whole (communicative competence) is constructed from smaller components correctly assembled.[35] Additionally, Bisirri (2013) indicates that learning exercises used in CBLT activities can be considered to be systematically designed to achieve a specific competence…centred on the development of competencies; learning is favoured in complex and meaningful situations.[36] In brief, learning activities in CBLT is variety due to the variety competencies. They can be taken from any sources, theories and origins designed systematically and appropriately to attain the competencies.

---

[33] Op cit, p. 141
[34] Op cit, p. 43
[35] Op cit, p. 143
[36] Bisirri, Adriana., *The Competency Based Language Teaching*, p. 1 Retrieved from file:///D:/ Metodologie Di Insegnamento Delle Lingue Straniere.htm, on July 12, 2013

3. Goals and Objectives

As presented in above discussion, CBLT in general is to develop learners' communication ability for functions in daily life and job related area. Richards and Rodgers (2001) indicate that CBLT seeks to develop functional communication skills in learners.[37] In the implementation, Richards (2006) point out CBLT often used in programs that focus on learners with very specific language needs. In such cases rather than seeking to teach general English, the specific language skills need to function in specific context is the focus. This is similar to ESP and some versions of TBLT.[38] Therefore, specifying the students' need conducted is through needs' analysis.

Lessons in CBLT are organized in term of 'list of performances' which van Ek (1977) suggests as 'behavioral syllabus'. He offers two components in the behaviors: the performance of language functions and expression of conceptual notions.[39] Thus, articulation of precise statements of what the learner is to be able to do (the performance) is the essential step in designing curriculum, because it greatly facilitates a number of other steps (Nunan, 2004).[40] In conclusion, after the performance has been specified, language features and other related indicators generated from knowledge of the field, learning experience, norms and scales of score of expectation can be organized appropriately.

Objective in CBLT is called behavioral objective which is student's observable conducts. It possesses at least two characteristics: (1) it describes what the learner rather than teacher is to do, and (2) it must specify observable learner behavior (Nunan, 2004).[41] Progressively, Mager (1984) lists words that are unacceptable or 'dangerous' in stating behavioral objectives because they do not describe observable behavior and are open to many interpretations: 'to know', 'to understand', 'the really understand', 'to appreciate', 'to fully

---

[37] Op cit, p. 143
[38] Op cit, p. 43
[39] Op cit, p. 5
[40] Op cit, p. 2
[41] Ibid

appreciate', 'to grasp the significance of', 'to enjoy', 'to believe', 'to have faith in', 'to internalize'.[42] In short, behavioral objective must be statement of observable actions in part of students, and rejects statements of abstract conducts and which are open to variety interpretation.

A competency as an objective must be specified in clear statements of performance which represent full actions required to succeed the specified conduct. Valette and Disick (1972, in Nunan, 2004) suggest they should stress output rather than input and that such output should be specified in terms of performance[43]. More progressively, Nunan (2004) entails the elements of the competency as: 1) a 'performance' or 'task' statement which specifies what the learners are to do, 2) a 'conditions' statement which specifies the circumstances and conditions under which learners are to perform the task , and 3) a 'standards' or 'criterion' statement which specifies how well the task is to be performed.[44]. In short, a competency must be clearly explained in term of statements which covers task or performance, condition and standard of conduct.

Again, Nunan (2004) illustrates an example of employment of the three elements as follows:

> In a classroom role play (condition), learners will exchange personal information (task). Four pieces of information will be exchanged (standard), and utterances will be comprehensible to someone unused to dealing with a second language speaker (standard). In an authentic interaction (condition), the student will request prices of shopping items (task). Utterances will be comprehensible to a sympathetic native speaker (standard)[45].

Taking the example above to real instruction will require practitioners to reveal possibly useful expressions (language) to employ and their functions in concerning communication context.

4. Characteristics

---

[42] Mager, R. *Preparing Instructional Objectives*. Belmont CA: Pitman Learning Inc. 1984, p. 20

[43] Op cit, p. 2

[44] Ibid

[45] Ibid

CBLT is primarily to develop performances to satisfy variety requirements to live in the society. Instructions are conducted by having the students carry out the performances as they ideally occur in the real world. The practice of the performance is assessed continuously as means of measuring students' attainment. More progressively, Aeurbach (1986, in Richards 2006) lists the principles as follows:

1) A focus on successful functioning in society. The goal is to enable students to become autonomous individuals capable of coping with the demands of the world.
2) A focus on life skills. Rather than teaching language in isolation, CBLT teaches language as a function of communication about concrete tasks. Students are taught just those language forms/skills required by the situations in which they will function. These forms are normally determined by needs analysis.
3) Task or performance-oriented instruction. What counts is what students can do as a result of instruction. The emphasis is on overt behaviors rather than on knowledge or the ability to talk about language and skills.
4) Modularized instruction. Language learning is broken down into meaningful chunks. Objectives are broken into focused sub-objectives so that both teachers and students can get a clear sense of progress.
5) Outcomes are made explicit. Outcomes are public knowledge, known and agreed upon by both learner and teacher. They are specified in terms of behavioral objectives so that students know what behaviors are expected of them.
6) Continuous and ongoing assessment. Students are pre-tested to determine what skills they lack and post-tested after instruction on that skill. If they do not achieve the desired level of mastery, they continue to work on the objective and are retested.
7) Demonstrated mastery of performance objectives. Rather than the traditional paper-and-pencil tests, assessment is based on the ability to demonstrate pre-specified behaviors.
8) Individualized, student-centered instruction. In content, level, and pace, objectives are defined in terms of individual needs; prior learning and achievement are taken into account in developing curricula. Instruction is not time-based; students progress at their own rates and concentrate on just those areas in which they lack competence.[46]

In short, CBLT demands instruction which is developed in specific contexts (activities and field work). Besides, it also prerequisites the learning

---

[46] Op cit, p. 42

by doing or using the language. The contexts are derived from the needs of the students which can also be found in the real life situation. Students are hoped to acquire not only the language, but also specific skills relevant with the activities or the field works.

5. Focus on Language Skills

CBLT develops the four language skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing; however it doesn't necessitate every instruction to integrate these skills. What skill is to develop depends on the shake of competency attainment. What performance is to carry out? Nature of the targeted competency will determine the treatment on language skills. Every competency can be different in involving language skills and in prioritizing one or few of them. A competency may teach only one skill, but others can involve two or more language skills at once. In conclusion, development of language skills can be separated or integrated in a single instruction.

6. Learning Experience

As presented in learning theory above, CBLT doesn't specify certain procedural sequence or strategies in performing classes. They merely depend on the need of the targeted competency attainment. The point is to teach life skills by using language other than language materials (content). The general difference of instructional process between CBA and traditional content based teaching is shown in the following table.

Chart 1. Comparison between design of traditional approach and competency-based approach

	Traditional Approach	**Competency Based Approach**
Pre-Instructional Period	Experience and knowledge is external to learner ⬇ Curriculum designer distills and arranges this experience and knowledge ⬇	Learners acquire experience and knowledge in their lives ⬇ Curriculum designer provides an experience that will tap learners' values and ideas ⬇
Instructional Period	Instructor presents experience and knowledge to learner ⬇ Learners hear and see presentation ⬇	Learners experience new situations; match new experience with previous learning ⬇ Learners distill new values and new knowledge ⬇ Learners try out new behaviors and acquire new experiences and knowledge in both simulated and 'real world' environments ⬇
Post-Instructional Period	Learners try out new behaviors in 'real world' the experience comes after instruction	Learners continue to process experience and knowledge as basis of original knowledge and experience ⬇ Learners apply new behaviors in 'real world' environment

(Adopted from Ellerbusch et.al, 2005[47])

Difference between traditional approaches from competency based approach can be seen from the three periods of instruction described above; pre-instructional period, instructional period, and post instructional period. The outline can be explained as follows:

1) *Pre-instructional period.* In traditional approach, the material consists of external experience and knowledge selected and arranged in such a away to be taken to the classes, in contrast CBA takes materials that are related to students' knowledge and experience in the real world and provide activities for carrying out the experience and knowledge in context of their use to be performed in the classroom.

---

[47] Op cit, p. 7

2) *Instructional period.* In traditional approach, teacher presents the material to the class to be memorized and comprehended, while CBA makes happen the use of the knowledge and experience in the classroom conducted by the students in simulated and real world environment.

3) *Post-instructional period.* In traditional approach students try new behavior in real world after instruction, while in CBA the behavior is just the follow up of their previous experience and performance carried out in the classroom.

More progressively, CEPH (2006)[48] figures out pyramidal stages of competency development process in Competency Based Education (CBE): foundation (competency criteria selection)→ development of skills, knowledge and abilities→ competency attainment→ demonstration of the competency, as presented in the following chart.

Chart 2. Hierarchical relationship of post-secondary outcomes of CBE
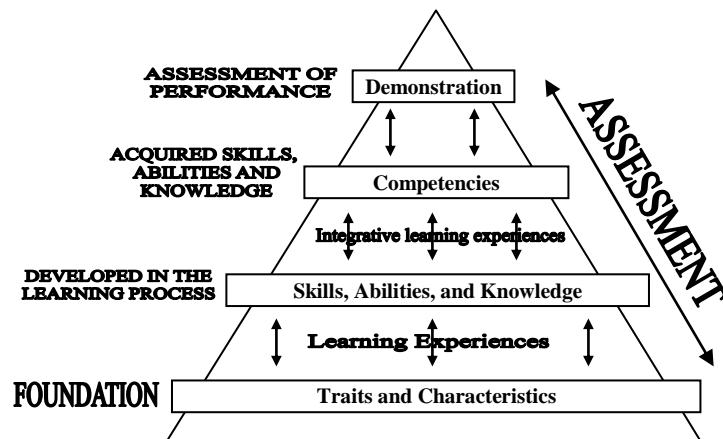
(Adopted from CEPH, 2006: 2)

The stages are explained as follows:

1) *Traits and characteristics*. The foundation of CBA instruction begins from identifying traits and characteristics. It refers to the whole complete criteria of success in conducting the targeted competency. These criteria are ideally gathered through field observation in the real world.

---

[48] Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). *Competencies and Learning Objectives.* 2006. p. 2. Retrieved from www.ceph.org in October 12, 2008 at 09:36 AM

2) *Skills, abilities and knowledge*. The criteria is taught in the classroom to have the students get clear ideas about what skills, abilities and knowledge are expected to attain in the end of instruction.

3) *Competency*. Teacher has the students perform an activity by which skills, abilities and knowledge are applied in the real context of use.

4) *Demonstration*. Students demonstrate use of the knowledge, skills and abilities either in simulated or real world.

7. Material Development

Learning materials employed in CBLT are language performance taken from the society and workplace in which the students are or will be living and working. For example, Richards and Rodgers (2001)[49] : 144) list area of competencies developed in vocationally oriented ESL curriculum for immigrants and refugees as follows:

- Task Performance

- Safety

- General World-Related

- Work Schedules, Time Sheets, Paychecks

- Social Language

- Job Application

- Job Interview

For the area of 'Retaining Job', again Richards and Rodgers (2001)[50] describe the competencies involved as follows:

- Follow instructions to carry out a simple task

- Respond appropriately to supervisor's comments about quality of work on the job, including mistakes, working too slowly, and incomplete work

- Request supervisor to check work

- Report completion of task to supervisor

- Request supplies

- Ask where object is located: follow oral directions to locate an object

---

[49] Op cit, p. 144
[50] Ibid, p.144-145

- Follow oral directions to locate a place

- Read charts, labels, forms or written instruction to perform a task

- State problem and ask for help if necessary

- Respond to inquiry as to nature or progress of current task; state amount and type of work already compeleted

- Respond appropriately to work interruption or modification

All the sample of competencies listed above are organized in best way and language features needed to accomplish them are specified accurately. Teaching is then made appropriately with each competency based on the teachers' creativity. However, some steps which are useful for developing materials in CBLT are as follows:

1) Specify the life skill task to complete

2) Identify physical and psychological criteria required for completing the task (includes characteristics of a successful performance and mistakes that may occur)

3) Identify language features involved in conducting the task

4) Provide materials (teaching aids, things to manipulate, simulation scenario and guidance, or other relevant media)

5) Arrange techniques and procedure by which the class will be performed

6) Specify the domains of evaluation, test type and marking techniques

8. Evaluation

Evaluation is conducted through assessment along the classroom process of instruction by facing the students' performance to the criteria of the successful performance. CEPH (2006)[51] shows the process of assessment all along the pyramidal stages of competency development (see chart 2). Besides, Ellerbusch et.al. (2005) state that competency is measured by how well the participant meets the conditions, performance, and criteria as stated in the learning objectives[52]. Similarly, Bottomley et.al. (1994, in Richards and Rodgers 2006) state that learners are able to obtain useful diagnostic feedback

---

[51] Op cit, p. 2
[52] Op cit, p. 27

on their progress and achievement since explicit criteria are provided against which they can compare their performances[53]

CONCLUSION

Competency Based Language Teaching (CBLT) is application of Competency Based Approach (CBA) in Language Teaching emerged in the USA in 1970s. CBA in general and CBLT in particular as one of its application were very quickly well-accepted in education worldwide ever since. In the latter periods this approach supported and criticized by many linguists and practitioners.

CBLT is a reaction to the traditional teaching approach which teaches lessons without definite real-world applications with approach which provides real life skills as language lessons. It views language as tool for communication and its use is contextual. CBLT in general is to develop learners' communication ability for functions in daily life and job related area. The lessons are organized in term of 'list of performances' which van Ek (1977) suggests as 'behavioral syllabus'. Therefore, objective in CBLT is called behavioral objective which is student's observable conducts.

A competency as an objective must be specified in clear statements of performance which represent full actions required to succeed the specified conduct. CBLT develops the four language skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing; however it doesn't necessitate every instruction to integrate these skills. CBLT doesn't have any specific learning theory, accordingly it doesn't specify certain procedural sequence or strategies in performing classes. Lessons employed in CBLT are language performances taken from the society and workplace in which the students are or will be living and working. The evaluation is conducted through assessment along the classroom process of instruction by facing the students' performance to the criteria of the successful performance.

---

[53] Op cit, p. 142

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bisirri, Adriana., *The Competency Based Language Teaching*, Retrieved from file:///D:/ Metodologie Di Insegnamento Delle Lingue Straniere.htm, on July 12, 2013

Clapper, Dan, *Industry Partnership Exxon Mobil-World Learning*. Retrieved from www .nlconference.org September 20, 2008 at 04.51 AM

Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). *Competencies and Learning Objectives.* 2006, Retrieved from www.ceph.org in October 12, 2008 at 09:36 AM

Ellerbusch, et.al., *Designing Competency Based Instruction*, Retrieved from www.ihd-umkc.edu on September 20, 2008 at 04.20 PM

Leung, C. and A. Teasdale., *ESL Teacher Competence: Professionalism in a Social Market. Prospect*, 1998 No. 13

Mager, R. *Preparing Instructional Objectives*. Belmont CA: Pitman Learning Inc. 1984

Nunn, Roger. 2007. *Redefining Communicative Competence for International And Local Communities,* Retrieved from www.asianefl.com in October 26, 2008 at 03:54

Nunan, David., *Performance-Based Approaches to the Design of ESL Instruction*, Plenary Presentation, Spain TESOL, Madrid, March 2002

Ornstein, A.C & Francis, PH, Curriculum *Foundations, Principles and Issues,* Prentice Hall: New Jersey: 1983

Richards, Jack, *Communicative Language Teaching Today*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2006

Richard, Jack. and Theodore Rodgers, *Approaches And Methods In Language Teaching,* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2001

Savignon, Sandra J., *Communicative Competence: Theory and Practice.* Addison-Wesley Publishing Company: Massachusetts, 1983

Schneck, E.A., *A Guide to Identifying High School Graduation Competencies*. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland Oregon, 1978

Shavelson, R. and P. Stern.. *Research on Teachers' Pedagogical Thoughts, Judgments and Behavior*. Review of Educational Research No. 51, 1981

Van Ek, *The Threshold Level for Modern Language Learning in Schools*. Longman, London: 1977

Wong, Ruth Ming Har, *Competency-based English Teaching and Learning: Investigating Pre-service teachers of Chinese's Learning Experience*, PORTA LINGUARUM 9, Enero 2008