

THE COMMUNICATIVE CLASSROOM

COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH TO LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Teaching Second Language
Continuing Education

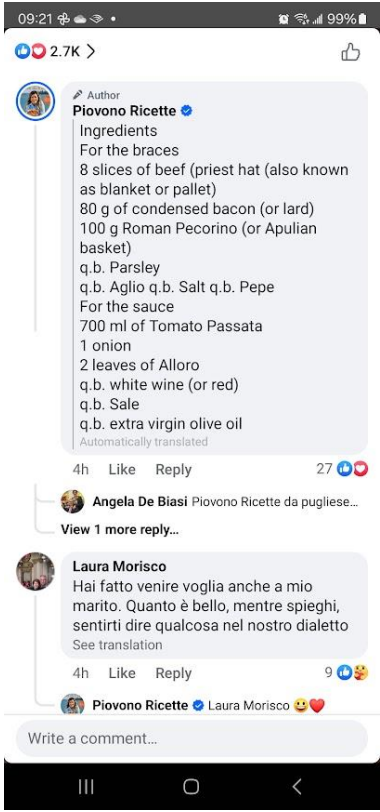
May 10, 2025

AGENDA:

- The Communicative Classroom
- Teaching Second Languages Program at University of Calgary
- Testimonials

What is the purpose of language?

- Ideas?
- To communicate
- Social Construct
- Interactive/collaborative act
- Purposeful
- Meaningful



Goal of language teaching and learning

- Design a classroom where students interact to create meaningful communication
- Real world application – functional in nature
- Engaging
- Buy-in



Tips for engaging students

- Realia: what they know and what they may want to learn about
 - See what they know
 - Authentic material
 - Count/non count words in English with the theme of food
 - Count: apple, lemons, tomatoes,
 - Non count: pasta, sugar, salt, rice, asparagus,
- Active learning: use our bodies and movement → body memory
- Hold up a card to answer a question
- Music

Authentic Materials

- Sports bag
- A menu
- A first aid kit
- The contents of a backpack or purse
- Pictures of your family
- Video on a national holiday
- Flyer or community newsletter
- A recipe, post card, a travel brochure, bus or movie schedule, travel itinerary, job application form, report card, prescription, food labels, receipt, clothing tag, etc...

Factors for creating a communicative classroom

- Mimic real-life context



Motivation

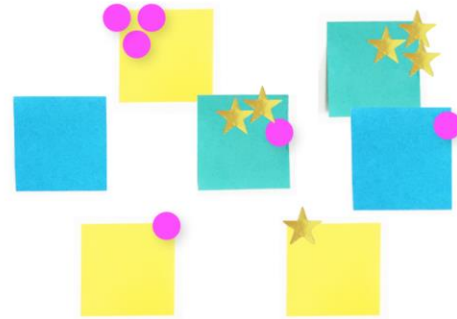
- Personalize
- Needs assessment
- Purpose of the course



Students First!

- Student centred approach
 - Get to know your students: all about gathering intel
 - Pick what they want to learn: dotmography

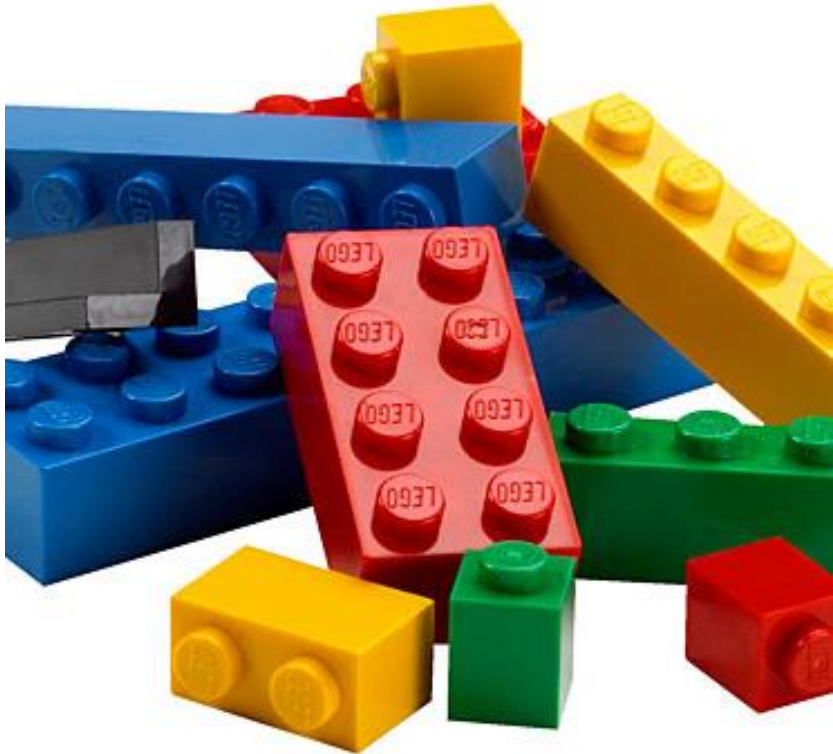
- Personalization



Goal of a Communicative Lesson

- Task completion by means of interacting with others using activities that are communicative in nature
- Emphasis on communicating or fluency or meaning rather than the form or accuracy
- Teacher's role: a facilitator and monitor
- Error correction is offered after the task – unless it recurs often
- Present → Practice → Perform

Communicative Activities



- Not to aim on an arbitrary focus on form with little communicative value.
- Adverb of frequency: dice role
- Prepositions: use lego
- Simple present tense:
 - I get up; He getsu p



Paragraph pass for transition markers

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6aevZfoNFp4&ab_channel=AmericanEnglish
- First, ...
- Second,...
- Then, ...
- Next, ...
- Last, ...
- Interactive (working in groups and collaborating), meaningful (they get to contribute to the story), purposeful (they practice the grammatical structure and writing a narrative for 5 stories)

Real World Weather Forecast Task





UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

- The highest temperature for Tuesday is: _____
- How likely is it to rain on Sunday?
Not likely very likely I don't know
- Which days will be sunny this week?
Tuesday(19th) Wednesday(20th) Thursday(21st) Friday(22nd) Saturday(23rd) Sunday(24th) Monday (25th)
- Which days will be cloudy this week?
Tuesday(19th) Wednesday(20th) Thursday(21st) Friday(22nd) Saturday(23rd) Sunday(24th) Monday (25th)
- Which day has the lowest temperature?
Tuesday(19th) Wednesday(20th) Thursday(21st) Friday(22nd) Saturday(23rd) Sunday(24th) Monday (25th)
- Which days will have the most hours of sunlight?
Tuesday(19th) Wednesday(20th) Thursday(21st) Friday(22nd) Saturday(23rd) Sunday(24th) Monday (25th)
- Which days will have the least hours of sunlight?
Tuesday(19th) Wednesday(20th) Thursday(21st) Friday(22nd) Saturday(23rd) Sunday(24th) Monday (25th)

Real World Task

- After listening to the weather forecast, do the following:
- Plan 2 outdoor activities with your family: one activity on May 19th and the second on May 21nd.
- Describe what you will do on each day, why you chose the activities that you chose and what you need to take with you in order to have a successful outings.
- Be prepared to talk to a small group of your classmates about your plans based on the weather conditions for both days.

Recipe for a Successful Classroom

- Real-world context with authentic materials: e.g. realia
- Interactive classroom
 - Interactive teacher
 - Roles and Styles
 - Interactive students
 - Techniques and strategies
- Classroom Management: Safe and Positive Learning Space
 - Attributes to ensure an affective or emotionally positive classroom
 - Physical construct
 - Challenges



“The essential claim is that people of all ages learn language best, inside or outside the classroom, not by treating the languages as the object of study, but by experiencing them as a medium of communication... “language is organized in terms of the purpose for which people are learning language and the kinds of language performance that are necessary to meet those purposes” (Wilkins, 1976, p. 13).

Wilkins, D. (1976). *Notional Syllabuses*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.



Teaching Second Language Certificate - Level 1



- <https://conted.ucalgary.ca/public/category/courseCategoryCertificateProfile.do?method=load&certificateId=3081675>

Core Courses

Minimum Required 130 Hour(s)

Maximum Allowed 130 Hour(s)

- TSL 108 Linguistic Structures Hours 30.0
- TSL 120 TSL Fundamentals Hours 40.0
- TSL 131 Teaching Reading, Writing and Grammar - ESL Hours 30.0
- TSL 132 Teaching Speaking and Listening - ESL Hours 30.0
- Optional Course: Teaching Practicum for EAL 20 hours

TSL Fundamentals

This course is an introduction to the field of learning and teaching a second language. Become familiar with the terminology used in the realm of second language teaching and in the Teaching Second Language certificate programs. Focus on the principles of classroom management and lesson planning, including concepts such as student interaction in the classroom, effective teacher language and logical staging of various lesson types.

Reading, Writing and Grammar

- Explore both theoretical and practical aspects of specific skills in learning a second language. Review what is known about the reading and writing process including communicating well to be heard and understood, and reading and writing for specific purposes. Next review what is known about teaching grammar in a second language while concentrating on pedagogical techniques. Cover critical and innovative approaches to grammar and learn specific strategies for teaching grammar in a second language. Finally, cover systematic and principled procedures for teaching vocabulary.

Speaking and Listening

Become aware of current classroom techniques that promote listening and speaking. Be introduced to the communicative method of second language learning through group discussion, modelling, games and activities. Then, discover how sounds are produced in a variety of languages and what practical teaching techniques you can use to correct common problems with pronunciation in a second language. Gain familiarity with the International Phonetic Alphabet.

Linguistic Structures

- Even in a communicative context, second language teachers need a basic awareness about the structure of language and possible differences between the first and second language they are teaching. The three basic language structures of phonology (sound structure), morphology (word structure), and syntax (sentence structure) will be illustrated on a number of levels.

- Courses in this program are delivered **online** and **in class**.
- Courses are scheduled at convenient times, allowing you to complete the program at a pace that fits your life.
- You should plan on studying and working approximately **6 hours per week per course**.
- Online learning fits into busy schedules by taking the learning experience out of the traditional classroom.
- Students have online access to instructors, fellow learners, and learning materials.
- Before taking your first online course, we recommended taking our free course: Digital Skills for Learning Online
- Cost: \$2,400 requirement: **IELTS Academic 6; CAEL 60; CLB 7; grade 12 English 30-11 and 30-2... 65%**

Communicative Approach – Teaching Grammar Communicatively

- <https://ontesol.com/blog/how-to-teach-english/teaching-grammar/teaching-grammar-communicatively-video/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNaG1uN40gI>

