

CONTENT-BASED SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING

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1. INTRODUCTION. CONTEXT AND THE NATURE OF INSTRUCTION

When teachers and researchers reflect on the variables that most strongly influence the successful teaching and learning of a target language (TL), they find that those related to the context and the nature of language instruction are decisive. The effect and value of the language used for classroom instruction is of paramount importance. Abundant research and theory have been produced in connection with this issue, and several directions, techniques and strategies have been recommended in order to create the best conditions for language teaching and learning. Some key issues are:

- Instructed foreign language learning (FLL) techniques versus naturalistic second language acquisition (SLA) strategies.
- Crosslingual versus intralingual techniques
- Analytic versus integral methods
- Code versus content-based programmes
- Etc.

These dichotomies argue about two polemic opposed views of L2/TL teaching and learning: a) the degree to which a TL is best learnt through natural development and exposure to it in meaningful contexts or b) in a structured, formalistic environment in a classroom setting.

Close to the value of second language instruction is the nature of instruction offered in different learning contexts. Here two very well know options emerge: the FLL context, where the TL is treated as a school subject taught in a graded way, with emphasis on forms, rules and structures and little support and use in the surrounding environment versus the SLA context, where the TL is used as a means of instruction and communication in class, and often in the community.

It must be noticed that even though SLA and FLL or SLL are different concepts, in practice most writers and specialists use them interchangeably, especially in the USA: "... we use the words *learning* and *acquisition* interchangeably, although they are sometimes used in the L2 literature to distinguish between conscious and subconscious language development" (Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982:11).

"... no distinction is made between acquisition and learning, the two terms being used interchangeably" (Ellis, 1994).

The same applies to the distinction between "foreign language" (FL) and "second language" (SL/L2). An FL is a language which is not a native language in a country. It is taught as a school subject, but it is not used as a means of instruction nor as a language of communication in the community. A SL/L2 is a language which is not a native language in a country but which is widely used as a means of communication. It is the term used to describe a native language in a country or community as learnt by people living there who have another first language. English in the USA is the second of millions of immigrants. Despite this distinction, both terms are also interchangeable: "In North America, applied linguists' usage of *foreign language* and *second language* are often used to mean the same" (Richards, Platt and Webber, 1985:108).

In bilingual or plurilingual communities, we can often talk about first second language (an L2) or second second language (an L3). In this chapter we have used the term "target language" (TL) most times, which means any additional non-native language.

2. INSTRUCTED FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING (FLL) AND NATURALISTIC SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (SLA)

The type of context provided for second language instruction is crucial to understand the difference between what is called FLL (or SLL) and SLA. The most well-known position concerning the influence of formal and informal linguistic environments on TL development is that of Krashen (1988). FLL takes place in settings where the language learnt plays no major role in the community and is learnt in the classroom, in a conscious way, through the study of rules and exercises. According to Krashen and his collaborators, this distinction is made as follows:

Learning:

"Learning is a conscious process that results in knowing about language" (Krashen, 1984:1)

"... adults have two independent systems for developing ability in second languages, subconscious language acquisition and conscious language learning" (Krashen, 1988:1).

"Conscious language learning ... is thought to be helpful a great deal by error correction and the presentation of explicit rules". (Krashen and Seliger, 1975)

"Conscious learning is available to the performer only as a monitor" (Krashen, 1988:2)

Acquisition:

In second language acquisition contexts the language is used as a means of communication in the community. In these situations, SLA takes place in a natural and subconscious way, when learners engage in communicative activities. So, it is often the subconscious process of "picking up" a language through exposure. The SLA process is

similar to the process children use in acquiring the L1. Some of its main characteristics are the following (Krashen, 1998):

"It requires meaningful interaction in the target language -natural communication- in which speakers are concerned not with the form of the utterances but with the messages they are conveying". (p.1)

"Acquirers need not have a conscious awareness of the "rules" they possess, and may self-correct only on the basis of a "feel" for grammaticality" (p. 2)

"... the classroom may serve as an "intake" informal environment as well as formal linguistic environment" (p. 47)

"The classroom can be valuable, and in fact generally is of value, in language acquisition as well as in language learning" (p. 48)

"The child relies primarily on acquisition" (p. 49), "but formal study, or its essential characteristics, is significantly more efficient than informal exposure in increasing second language proficiency in adults" (p. 41)

As Ellis points out, it is difficult to know whether the knowledge learners possess has been acquired, learnt or both. SLA appears to be a complex, multifaceted process which means different things to different people. For Ellis, (1994: 15), "the goal of SLA is the description and explanation of the learners linguistic or communicative competence". Ellis also talks about naturalistic SLA and instructed FLL. The former takes place in naturally occurring social situations and the latter occurs through study , with the help of guidance from reference books or classroom instructions (1994:12).

Other authors have made similar distinctions. For example, Klein (1986) writes about "spontaneous" and "guided" acquisition. It is spontaneous when the person learns incidentally in natural situations, whereas it is guided when the focus is put on some aspects of the language system. But, as Ellis indicates, it would be wrong to assume that spontaneous and naturalistic learning is always subconscious and instructed learning conscious. As we will see later, both contexts may develop conscious and subconscious learning.

As we will see in the following pages, the results obtained in formal and informal linguistic environments are contradictory. Several studies suggest that learners increase their L2 proficiency in informal and naturalistic environments. Other studies present evidence that exposure has little or no effect on L2 proficiency. For example, Long (1983) concludes that instructional contexts appeared to contribute more positively to acquisition of the L2 than naturalistic exposure. This hypothesis is supported by Krashen with adults: "Formal study, or its essential characteristics, is significantly more efficient than informal exposure in increasing second language proficiency in adults" (Krashen, 1988:49)

But other studies favour the naturalistic environment, especially for children: "The child relies on acquisition. Thus "intake" informal environments are sufficient. The class can provide only additional intake and it appears to be the case that when children have access to rich intake environments, extra classes in second language are not necessary (Fathman, 1975; Hale and Budar, 1970).

separate way from each other, through exclusive intralingual techniques. The development of a compound bilingualism is typical of learning the FL as a school subject, whereas co-ordinate bilingualism was far more ambitious: " ... relying as little as possible on translation and immersing ... in the living culture of another community, (the learner) comes to speak a second tongue well" (Ervin and Osgood, 1954, in Stern, 1992: 281).

But more recently, the place of crosslingual techniques, especially translation, in ELT, has been recommended: "The use of translation as a teaching technique has long been viewed with suspicious by language teachers ... I want to argue that translation can be a very useful pedagogic device and indeed in some circumstances ... translation of a kind may provide the most effective learning" (Widdowson, 1979:101).

The following principles -among others- support the crosslingual dimension in language teaching and learning (LT/L):

- The L1-L2 connection is inevitable: when we learn an L2 we set out from an L1 that we already know. So, we tend to use our L1 as a reference system for the L2.
- A new language and culture demand an adjustment of the rules and values we have interiorised. These preconceived ideas may be modified and in fact involve the learner cognitively, socially and affectively.
- Learners develop their interlingua (Selinker, 1972) on the basis of their L1, with an inevitable existence of transfer and interference (restructuring hypothesis): "... we use techniques which involve comparing the two phonological, lexical, and grammatical systems and help learners to build up the new L2 reference system by making a gradual and deliberate transition from L1 to L2". (Stern, 1992:284).

Research findings seem to be inconclusive as regards to the efficiency of both approaches in LT/L. As Stern points out (1992:288), "research results on this dimension are not substantial enough to provide much guidance".

3.2. Intralingual strategies

The first big battle against the traditional crosslingual approach was given by the XIXth century reformers who defended the monolingual-intralingual approach in LT/L. Since then, most specialists seem to support this view, especially the proponents of the communicative approach (Widdowson, 1978; Brumfit and Johnson, 1979; Richard and Schmidt, 1983; Littlewood, 1981, Finocchiao and Brumfit, 1983, Sánchez Pérez, 1993; etc.). The intralingual approach uses LT/L techniques which remain within the TL most of the time. That is, the TL is used as the framework of reference for classroom instruction.

As we will see, intralingual techniques are applicable at all stages of LT/L, though for beginners and intermediate learners they are more restricted. These techniques may also have an analytical or experiential orientation (see following sections) and may be applied to the teaching of linguistic features (grammar, vocabulary, phonology) or content-based teaching. Their main characteristic is that they do not use the L1 as a point of reference, but the L2 or TL as the exclusive reference.

Intralingual techniques aim to establish a new independent language system created with its internal links, without the support of the L1 system. Stern describes it as follows (1992:284): "Intralingual techniques ... help the learner establish verbal connections in the L2, enabling the learner to move about within the system without reference to L1 ... verbal expression become associated directly with objects and situations without the help of L1".

This is the creative construction hypothesis of SLA, opposed to the restructuring view described previously. This process allows the formation of concepts and encourages thinking in the L2. It promotes what Ervin and Osgood (1954) called "co-ordinate bilingualism" by keeping the two language systems completely separate. The systematic use of these techniques in the L2 class demand the constant creation or simulation of an L2 environment.

As Stern has pointed out, there are certain risks or, at least, considerable doubts associated with this approach which remain unresolved (1992:291-292):

- To what extent an exclusive reliance on intralingual techniques is feasible and, in fact, practicable, in most teaching and learning situations?
- Does this approach always help learners to achieve the kind of competence they are striving for?
- There is little research which proves the effectiveness of certain techniques and procedures used systematically in class.
- How can teachers guarantee that the input provided in class is comprehensible enough to be turned into *intake*? Even though teachers use objects, concrete referents, pictures, gestures and other examples of paralanguage to create the necessary verbal links and associations, misunderstandings and confusions often occur.
- There is some research evidence that the intralingual strategy can alienate students when they cannot understand the points taught in class, they "disconnect" and waste the time.

For all these reasons, Stern (1992) thinks that an eclectic approach would be more fruitful: "... neither the crosslingual nor the intralingual strategy is theoretically superior. Since each responds to different characteristics or phases of the learning process, they have complementary merits" (p. 285). Later, he recommends an integration of both approaches. "we would like to suggest that an intralingual strategy would be more clearly recognised as a strategy in its own right complementing an intralingual strategy" (p. 293).

We still do not have research conclusions that evidence what mixture or combination of crosslingual and intralingual strategies -if any- would be more desirable. It seems that in the early stages of ELT/L a crosslingual or a combined approach may be more appropriate, moving gradually towards the use of intralingual techniques in secondary education and at university level.

4. THE ANALYTIC AND GLOBAL TREATMENT OF LANGUAGE

For centuries, LT/L has been approached in a gradual way, focusing on some of the most relevant linguistic components of the TL: grammar, vocabulary and phonetics. But many theorists have opposed to the partial and incomplete view that language courses have offered, arguing that it is unnatural to study any language by focusing only on its discrete elements. In contrast, they propose a global approach such as that which takes place in natural environments without formal tuition.

As we have highlighted in Madrid (1995), Oller (1979) has argued that the nature of second language proficiency is unitary and depends on the learner's *pragmatic expectancy grammar*. Communicative interaction is a process in which the speaker (or reader) and listener anticipate part of the information and then they compare the message received with the information expected and react according to the feedback received: "Whenever we say anything at all we leave a great deal more unsaid. We depend largely for the effect of our communication not only on what we say but also on the creative ability of our listener to fill in what we have left unsaid,... a normal listener... is always anticipating what the speaker will say next. Similarly, the speaker is always anticipating what the listener will infer and is correcting his output on the basis of feedback received from the listener" (Oller 1979:20).

So *expectancy* is the key concept for Oller's unitary proficiency theory. In order to develop the learner's capacity to interpret, understand and produce messages, Oller proposes the use of *pragmatic or integrative procedures*, which focus on the learner's pragmatic competence. The most common procedures are: oral and written texts, oral interviews, composition or essay writing, narrations and even translation.

The main characteristics associated with the two opposed movements we are describing in this section are summarised in the following table (Stern, 1992:302):

Analytic techniques	Global and experiential techniques
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objective - Focus on code and the L2 system (Grammar) - Medium centred - Language practice with emphasis on usage (rules and their application) - Focus on Language forms - Formal teaching - Often decontextualized - Skill-getting (receptive skills and procedures) - Controlled activities and restricted language forms - Deliberate, systematic, graded and structured - Emphasis on graded linguistic exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subjective: connected with the learners' experience, life and interests - Focus on communicative situations (pragmatics) - Language use with emphasis on discourse - Focus on topic and content - Informal teaching - Always contextualized - Skill-using (productive skills and procedures) - Unrestricted and natural language forms - Emphasis on fluency - Realistic, authentic, genuine - Emphasis on tasks and project work

4.1. The analytic approach

This approach is based on techniques of study and practice that characterise the SLL process described in the previous pages. It is also associated with the crosslingual dimension which we have just outlined. It is objective, since the learner looks at the language from outside and pays attention to formal or functional features "abstracted" from the living context. It is often non-communicative in the sense that it seldom introduces genuine communicative situations: the teacher and the students are aware that they are practising the language studied. Both, the grammar translation method and the audiolingual method used to encourage the use of analytic techniques. Even the communicative approach often presented notions, functions and discourse features in an analytic way.

Most exercises in coursebooks and materials are based on analytic strategies. They have been designed to teach particular features of the language usually in a graded and progressive way. These activities often focus on code and give the learner the opportunity to learn the language gradually, in stages. Most exercises focus on formal linguistic features.

Another common characteristic of the analytic techniques is their decontextualisation, which can sometimes be a positive feature as Stern points out (1992:310): "another positive characteristic of analytic strategy is that it abstracts, decontextualises, and isolates language phenomena ... While it is important to emphasise context and background for language use, it is equally important to abstract from context and to recognise formal feature in different contexts".

Nevertheless, if one focuses on the study of language in isolation or the excessive time spent on its discrete elements one runs the risk of creating some kind of fragmentation. It has also been suggested that languages are too complex to be learnt through the study of the rule system and analytic procedures, even though they are not only presented but practised with analytic techniques. This approach has also been criticised severely for its lack of transfer. It has been argued that what is learnt in class through practice and repetition, in a formal way, is not easily transferred to real-life settings.

Despite all its limitations, the contribution this approach has made is important if combined with experiential techniques. Again an eclectic position is recommended by Stern (1992:313): "we recognise the limitations and possible shortcomings of the analytic strategy, there seems to be no reason why this strategy cannot be improved and employed more effectively, especially it is complemented by experiential procedures".

4.2. The experiential approach

The experiential approach is non-analytic and global. It gives the learner opportunities to use the language for a purpose, and to focus on the message and content rather than on the code and its formal features. Stern summarises it as follows (1992:302): "the student becomes involved in language use, in getting meaning across. Through the

experiential strategy, students are prompted to become language users and participants in social interaction or practical transactions".

As we can see, it shares the essential features of the SLA concept, the naturalistic view of ELT, the intralingual dimension of LT and communicative approach. The learners is subjectively and actively involved in the authentic contexts where the teaching and meaningful learning takes place providing communicative and genuine situations.

Several specialists have criticised the limitations of analytic approaches and propose more informal and experiential techniques for SLL in naturalistic TL environments. Whereas the analytic approach lacks genuine motives and reasons to communicate, the experiential one provides a more natural and meaningful environment. This approach has been strengthened by Krashen's SLA theory and his criticism of the relative value of code-focused classroom instruction. As we will see later, experiential techniques have proved to be extremely effective in immersion programmes. The Canadian and Californian tradition of bilingual programs are good examples of content-based teaching and learning where the TL is used as a means of instruction in fully experiential learning environments.

These contexts, where the TL is not continuously examined and analysed as an object of study but it is rather used for communicative purposes in meaningful and realistic situations, focus primarily on the message or the content and share some features (Stern, 1992: 314-321):

Focus on topic

The focus of the classroom activities is the topic or theme, the content itself provided by the language used. Those topics often arise from the students personal needs and interests or derive from basic curricular areas which develop the students' basic education.

Task based approach

Experiential techniques normally engage the students in purposeful tasks related to projects or problem solving tasks connected with real life and reproducing situations similar to the ones that the students experience in other curricular areas. These tasks often require a) a careful planning and preparation and b) some kind of collaborative work involving other classmates to solve the tasks in stages, and c) completing the task and evaluating the results.

Use of the TL

The whole process takes place in the L2 or TL and the students continuously react to message. There is a clear priority of meaning and content over accuracy.

Information gap

The question - and - answer exchanges do not intend to practise the use of language but to solve problems and tasks related to the topic or content discussed in class. An important dose of unpredictability o information gap is prevalent.

Focus on meaning, not on form

Classes normally focus on content or the message rather than on the code or the grammar forms which appear in the texts used.

Use of the students' ideas

What the students suggest about the topic under discussion, their opinions and beliefs are often rephrased and incorporated into the comments and repertoire of ideas presented in class.

Students initiatives

The topics under discussion, the ideas analysed and the initiatives in class are not always taken by the teacher. A great effort is made for the students to take risks and contribute to the topic discussion with personal comments and criticism. Quite often, this is encouraged through team and pair work.

Authentic language

Linguistic forms are not introduced gradually. If the aim of the experiential approach is to favour real communication, the exposure to natural language takes place without any control or restriction.

Flexibility and tolerance of errors

As priority is given to meaning and fluency over error control and accuracy, errors are accepted as a natural part of the learning process. The important thing is to encourage learners to understand the oral and written input and to develop enough competence to express their ideas orally and in writing.

Concepts, procedures and attitudes

Students are expected to learn facts, principles and concepts and relate them to the knowledge and experience which they bring to the classroom. In addition to that, they must develop basic abilities, skills and strategies that allow them to use the principles they have learnt in a variety of situations. Finally, it is also expected that they develop their affective domain and form positive attitudes towards science, education and society. It is important to establish a positive social climate which enables the students to integrate in society and allows them to live in a multicultural and multilingual environment.

Keeping a balance

Again, a combination of analytic and experiential strategies is recommended by most specialists. As Stern (1992) points out " some kind of combination of these two approaches appears to be the best policy to adopt" (p.3 21). It seems that we still do not have enough research data to provide us with information about the specific contribution of each.

Traditional approaches adopt a more analytic view. For many years, the analytic teaching techniques have been dominant. Teachers recognise the value of experiential strategies but they seem to have doubts about the efficiency of an entirely experiential programme and have not been trained to implement it. They tend to consider it as a complementary option which can be offered, occasionally, as extra curricular work. For example: through student exchanges, interviewing foreigners in the street, watching films, etc. It seems that the more energetic theorist who supports the experiential approach has been Krashen: "studies show that students who are exposed to natural language where the focus is on communication, perform better than those in a formal environment" (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982:42).

But other positions (e.g. Higgs and Clifford, 1982) maintain that we should start with analytic techniques and at an advance stage we can move towards a more experiential teaching approach.

Stern concludes this point by recommending an eclectic position (1992):

"... in the language classroom there must be some kind of mix between experiential and analytic techniques" (p. 305).

"The issue of the relative effectiveness of experiential and analytic approaches is still unresolved ... the question is more one of how to balance the two than of selecting one over the other" (p. 306).

"... both options have merit but also certain limitations which can only be overcome by combining the two, thus creating a mix of analytic and experiential procedures" (p. 306).

5. EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT TEACHING

Another crucial aspect in LT/L, which is somewhat connected with the previous dichotomies, is the extend to which we must teach the TL components (grammar, phonetics, vocabulary, spelling, ...) in a systematic explicit way or as a whole, with a global and implicit methodology which encourages intuitive and subconscious learning. According to Stern, the basic differences between the implicit/explicit dimension are the following (1992:327):

Explicit techniques	Implicit techniques
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rational, formal and intellectual. - Conscious learning through studial capabilities and rule learning. - Analytic. - Cognitive theory. - Develop metacognitive and metalinguistic strategies. - Rationalist approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intuitive, subconscious. - Exposure to language use and subconscious acquisition through spontaneous capabilities. - More unreflective, informal and incidental. - Global understanding (whole language theory). - More behaviouristic. - Develop communicative, social and affective strategies. - Empiricist approach.

This approach is related to the underlying concept of proficiency adopted at school. As Harley, Cummins, Swain and Allen (1990) point out, the conceptualisation of the nature of language proficiency has a strong emphasis on the techniques we employ in class for its learning. For those who are in favour of a multidimensional nature, explicit techniques are more suitable, but those who think that language cannot be divided into discrete elements, given its unitary nature, recommend the use of implicit and integral techniques for its learning and evaluation (e.g. Oller, 1979).

Language teaching has traditionally relied on analytic and explicit techniques of grammar and vocabulary, following the grammar translation method. It seems that Palmer (1922) was one of the first linguist who distinguished between explicit, studial and conscious techniques and those which were implicit, spontaneous and more global. Both, jointly contributed to successful language learning.

Later on, with the behaviouristic theory of learning (Skinner, 1957) and the audiolingual method (Lado, 1957; Rivers, 1964; Brooks, 1966), it was maintained that language learning proceeded by means of analogy through habit-formation involving discrimination and generalisation rather than analysis and the deductive learning of rules. In this sense, language learning was a process of habit formation, which took place through the sequence stimulus → response → reinforcement, in a very mechanical way. Consequently, a great emphasis was laid on habit formation and automatic control, with little attention to cognitive strategies, deliberation and processual thinking. Brooks wrote (1964:62): " the acquisition of no-thoughtful responses is the very core successful language learning".

This implicit view of language learning soon lost ground due to the impact of Chomsky's ideas (1959, 1965) which propose a more cognitive, reflective and explicit approach. Other authors also recommend a shift of emphasis from this mechanical and non-thinking view towards a more explicit orientation. But there were always research studies which supported both orientations. For example, the official Swedish language teaching methodology favoured the implicit approach and since the 1970s it has gained more and more ground with the arrival of the communicative approach and the development of immersion programmes. In these situations, learners are exposed to the language in use and absorb it in conditions of spontaneous communication.

Bialystok's model (1978) integrates the explicit and implicit dimension. In her model, there is a place for the knowledge we acquire either in a explicit or implicit way and, as we will see, both procedures should be developed. In the following pages we will present their main characteristics.

5.1. Explicit techniques

These techniques assume that second language learning is a cognitive process which implies the continuous use of conscious procedures. These conscious procedures refer to the components of the TL: grammar, vocabulary, phonetics, orthography, ... It is assumed that learners wish to know the rules that operate on certain construction, what words mean, how they are pronounced and written, etc. and that they plan and organise

their learning, set up goals and choose the most adequate means to achieve them through systematic study and effort. As we could see in section 1, Krashen argues that this approach is often demanded by adult learners (1988:41).

This dimension also encourages the students to face their learning process in an intellectual and academic way, which can be carried out with effort and dedication. There are some basic techniques and strategies which are essential in this approach (Stern, 1992: 335-338):

Careful planning, organisation and presentation of the syllabus.

The language presented must be carefully planned and ordered, clear and transparent, graded and systematic.

Importance of metacognitive and cognitive strategies.

Teachers often advice students about effective methods of language learning and help them to reflect about the language they are learning: how to learn rules, how to learn vocabulary, spelling and grammar rules. These metacognitive strategies include: planning their learning, selected and directive attention to certain aspects f the exercises, self-management and monitoring to complete the tasks successfully, etc. Some common cognitive strategies include: imitating and repeating the language to learn it more easily, ordering and classifying what the student learns, deciding and inferring meaning when necessary, etc.

5.2. The implicit approach

This approach favours a global and intuitive TL learning, neglecting the conscious and systematic reflection and analysis of the language studied. The underlying hypothesis could be formulated as follows (Stern, 1992: 339):

- Languages are too complex to be described. There are rules which cannot be formulated and must be interiorised intuitively.
- It is impossible to store all the rules in mind and rely on a consciously formulated system. Languages must be learnt by using more intuitive procedures.
- If we accept Krashen's theory on SLA, more subconscious, unreflective and natural techniques should be emphasised.
- Some learners, especially children, demand a more natural and intuitive approach which avoids a systematic reflection on the language studied.
- In general, it often happens that some learners have a preference for implicit ways of learning while others prefer more explicit approaches.

Despite the potential advantages we may see in implicit techniques, Stern expresses some doubts which must be considered and fully justified on the light of sound research (1992: 342):

- When can teachers introduce an implicit approach with focus on content so that all the learners are able to benefit from it?

- Does the input provided need some kind of adaptation and grading so that it is comprehensible for all or should it be authentic and genuine? To what extent can Krashen's hypothesis about comprehensible input be ignored?
- How often and to what degree is it legitimate in a content-based course, with experiential and implicit orientations, to focus on the formal features and move to explicit techniques?
- Is it realistic to believe that an ordinary language class can adopt exclusively the implicit approach and reproduce the atmosphere of an immersion-type programme, especially in monolingual settings?

In the following pages and in the chapter written by M. J. Amaya, some alternatives of content-based programmes offered in schools settled in monolingual environments, are provided. At present, most schools opt for a combination of both approaches.

5.3. The explicit and implicit dimension combined

We have seen that the audiolingual tradition favoured implicit techniques as a reaction to previous practices based on more explicit teaching and learning. But soon cognitive theories proposed a more conscious, reflective and controlled learning. More recently, other authors have criticised the emphasis on implicit learning to propose a more explicit orientation (e.g. Faerch et al., 1984 and Sharwood Smith (1981).

In Stern's opinion, the two strategies should be combined and interwoven (1992: 334): "we conclude that both explicit and implicit knowledge sources exist, that they complement one another, and that both contribute to proficiency development".

An important point when deciding what techniques must be used in class is also to consider the student's learning style. Normally, some learners will feel happy with explicit techniques whereas others may prefer a more intuitive and implicit approach. In general, young learners seem to prefer a global and intuitive exploitation of texts, and adults demand a more cognitive approach.

6. CONTENT-BASED PROGRAMMES IN L2 INSTRUCTION

In the previous sections we have seen that some approaches have traditionally put a great deal of emphasis on the context of instruction. Contextualisation is essential in experiential techniques. Part of the debate in LT/L has centred around the value of *content* and *context*. The proponents of the notional-functional syllabus (Wilkins, 1976) and the communicative approach (Widdowson, 1978; Brumfit and Johnson, 1979; Richard and Schmidt, 1983; Littlewood, 1981; Sánchez Pérez, 1993) put a great deal of emphasis on contextualisation. Teaching and learning activities must be based on meaningful contexts, since meaning merges from context (Widdowson, 1979: 66-67): "... pragmatic equivalence can only be established by considering what utterances count as in context ... the context, whether linguistic within the discourse or extra-linguistic within the situation, will provide the conditions whereby an utterance can be interpreted as representing a particular message or communicative act".

Krashen has paid a great attention to this issue and has concluded that the language environment is of paramount importance to success in learning a language. Some of his conclusions about the role of environmental factors are the following (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982):

"Natural communication (in which people care about the ideas being discussed rather than whether they are being expressed correctly) ... seem critical to developing fluency". (p. 14)

"... natural exposure to the new language triggers the subconscious acquisition of communication skills in that language". (p. 15)

"It has been demonstrated that children (in immersion programmes) acquire impressive amounts of the second language, perform satisfactorily in subject matter taught in the second language and do not have significant problems in first language skills" (p. 17)

"Studies show that students who are exposed to natural language, where the focus is on communication, perform better than those in a formal environment, where focus is on the conscious acquisition of linguistic rules or the manipulation of linguistic forms " (p. 42)

Once the importance of context is accepted, there are many other collateral issues that have been studied: importance of meaningful context to favour meaningful learning (Ausubel, 1968), relevance of background knowledge (Goodman, 1972 and Smith, 1971), the connection between comprehensible input and content (Krashen, 1985), the role of learning strategies (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990), etc. According to Brinton, Snow and Wesche (1989), contextualising language around structures or functions is not enough. It is necessary to introduce authentic texts which satisfy the student's needs and interests to be taught in the L2 or TL through the combination of formal and experiential techniques, so that the text content and its formal linguistic features are integrated. That is what they call *content-based instruction* (see also Krueger and Ryan, 1993; Snow and Brinton, 1997).

6.1. Definition and main characteristics of content-based instruction

Brinton, Snow and Wesche (1989) define content-based instruction "as the integration of content with language-teaching aims" (p. 2). It involves the teaching of academic subject matter and second language skills. The students, thus, receive curricular information and do their academic tasks in the TL and, at the same time, acquire the L2/TL in a very natural way; that is, we "kill two birds with the same shot", eliminating the separation between curricular development and the study of the L2 or TL.

With the content-based approach (CBA), also called content and language integrated learning (CLIL), learners are encouraged to think and learn through the use of the TL by integrating the four traditional language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). They practise authentic reading, listen to the teacher's comments and speak about the content. Finally, they write certain tasks to consolidate what they have

previously listened to, read and spoken. In addition to that, the students interpret and evaluate the information provided, study and learn facts, and develop a variety of receptive and productive procedures which prepare them for the range of academic demands they will have to face with.

Several hypothesis and rationales are involved in the CBA:

1. It is assumed that the use of the TL for classroom instruction -if made comprehensible- is the most efficient way to improve the student's proficiency level.
2. In addition to its intralingual dimension, this approach puts its emphasis on content, topics and themes that develop the different curricular areas and tries to take into account the interests and needs of the learners.
3. The intralingual and content-based dimension are integrated so that the students develop their linguistic competence and general education at the same time.
4. The approach is consequent with cognitive theories and constructivism: it aims to provide meaningful learning by connecting the new information with the student's previous learning experiences.
5. It primarily relies on *intralingual*, *experiential* and *implicit* teaching and learning techniques and consider them more efficient to develop the student's education.

Antecedents and connections to the content-based instruction movement

The principles and techniques proposed by the CBA are not new. They have been defined and used for centuries. Some antecedents can be found along the history of language teaching if we analyse the work and principles of the following authors and movements. All of them emphasise either the use of the TL in language teaching and/or the importance of meaning and context:

- Natural methods along the history of LT.
- The communicative approach (Widdowson, 1978; Brumfit and Johnson, 1979; Richard and Schmidt, 1983; Littlewood, 1981, Finocchiaro and Brumfit, 1983, Sánchez Pérez, 1993).
- Cognitive theories (Ausubel, 1968; Anderson, 1983; Chamot and O'Malley, 1994).
- Natural approach (Krashen and Terrell, 1983).
- ESP movement (Stevens, 1977; Mackey and Mountford, 1978; Hutchinson and Walters, 1987).
- Bilingual programs (Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Mackey and Andersson, 1977; Genese, 1987; Hoffman, 1991; Swain and Cummins, 1982; Swain and Lapkin, 1982).

6.2.1. Immersion LT in the Middle Ages

In the Middle Ages, the teaching of Latin -and to some extent Greek- were implemented by using the language taught as a means of instruction. St. Augustine instructed and trained young boys to become priests and preachers in the Latin language. Following the Roman tradition, young boys were instructed for the priesthood through scholasticism, which combined teaching and secretarial duties. As early as 389 AD, St. Augustine stressed the need for a focus on meaning content in language learning: "... we cannot hope to learn words we do not know unless we have grasped their meaning. This is not achieved by listening to the words, but by getting to know the things signified" (Kelly, 1969:36).

At that time some children enjoyed a private tuition and the communication between the master and his pupil also took place entirely in Latin, by using a natural method and a total immersion in the TL taught, Latin, in most cases.

The teaching of modern vernacular languages began at the end of the Middle Ages, but the use of Latin as the language of education extended up to the eighteenth century. For many years, Latin was the language of the educated man or woman and, in fact, the language of science and culture. But Latin was not only used in books, it was widely spoken and used in the academic world up to the XVIIth century. As Howatt points out, the main concern of schools was the teaching of Latin and, to some extent, Greek: "young children arrived at the grammar school at about the age of 8 having, in theory at least, acquired basic literacy skills in the mother tongue, and were immediately force-fed with a diet of unrelenting Latin grammar rules and definitions. Their grammar book was for the most part in Latin and there was no alternative but to rote-learning the text, dimly understood if at all, or risk a beating" (1984: 32).

6.2.2. The natural methods tradition

Some of the techniques and strategies used by the content-based movement and other present communicative language methods have been practised and used for many years. The philosophy underlying such techniques have been shared by several approaches which have been labelled with different names. Among them are the following: the Natural Method, the Direct Method, the Oral Approach, the Communicative Approach and more recently, the CBA. In Howatt's words, the general principle could be formulated as follows (1984: 192): "Learning how to speak a new language, it is held, is not a rational process which can be organised in a step-by-step manner following graded syllabuses of new points to learn, exercises and explanations. It is an intuitive process for which human beings have a natural capacity that can be awakened provided only that the proper conditions exist. Put simply, there are three such conditions: someone to talk to, something to talk about, and a desire to understand and make yourself understood".

The *direct method* in LT is one of the exponents which fully exploits the intralingual techniques described in the previous sections, since classroom instruction is conducted exclusively in the TL. It merged in the nineteenth century, when the increased opportunities for communication among Europeans created a demand for oral proficiency. The initiative was developed thanks to the efforts made by C. Marcel (1793-

1896) and F. Gouin (1831-1896). It was considered that L1 learning could be a good model to be reproduced with the TL learning. They emphasise the importance of meaning in learning and try to present the language in a context that makes their meaning clear.

The direct method techniques found some precursors in M. Montaigne (1533-1592), J. Weebbe (1560-1633), J. A. Comenius (1592-1670), L. Sauveur (1826-1907), Berlitz (1852-1921) and other proponents of naturalistic techniques in language teaching and learning.

The proponents of natural methods assume that interaction is the essential condition of natural learning acquisition and one of the most well know examples in the history of LT is Montaigne (1533-1592). He describes his immersion situation in Latin in an autobiographical way, in his *Essay on the Education of Children* (1580): " While I was at nurse and before the first looking of my tongue (my father) put me in charge of a German, totally ignorant of our language and very well versed in Latin ... (This man) carried me around constantly; and with him he had two others less learned to look after me and relieve him. None of them spoke to me in any language but Latin. .. it was an inviolable rule that neither my father nor my mother, nor any manservant nor maid, should utter in my presence anything but such Latin words as each of them had learnt in order to chat with me" (Howatt, 1989: 193).

Weebbe (1560-1633) proposed some form of "direct method" of LT without the use of reference grammars, which heavily depended on spoken interaction and aimed to develop the learner's competence through communicative activities.

Comenius (1592-1670) also proposed the teaching of foreign languages for practical purposes and believed that foreign vernacular languages should be taught communicatively, with the people of the neighbouring countries. For him, content and not form was the important aspect of language and the starting point of the lesson was the topic or theme. Comenius' extensive work presents such a variety of ideas that they justify a great variety of teaching and learning techniques. Those who believe in a natural approach to LT can sustain such approach in Comenius' stress on nature and experience and their connection with the school curriculum and the inner development of learners.

As we have seen, traditionally, private tutors have practised natural language teaching for centuries, in Greek and Roman times, in the Middle Ages, and in later historical periods, when masses of immigrants settled in other countries. These naturalistic techniques were also highlighted in Locke's essay *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693). For him, the natural approach is fundamental: "Men learn languages for the ordinary intercourse of Society and Communication thoughts in common life without any further design in their use of them. And for this purpose, the Original way of Learning a Language by Conversation ...is to be preferred as the most Expedite, Proper and Natural" (Howatt, 1989:193). These natural techniques, according to J. Locke can be used from the very beginning with young children, in constant conversation and not by grammatical rules. He put it in this way: "The Latin tongue would easily be taught the

same way if his Tutor, Being constantly with him, would talk nothing else to him, and make him answer still in the same language" (Howatt, 1989: 194).

This methodology was used in private tuition, but the application of natural methods with larger groups was also strongly recommended. For example, Blackie, a nineteenth-century professor of Latin and Greek, proceeded as follows: "I commenced immediately talking nothing but Latin, and by constant practice, succeeded to such a degree, that within a few months they all understood whatever I said, and the smallest boys babbled Latin fluently ... For I did not vex their tender brains prematurely with things too hard for them, but whatever they knew I taught them in sport, so that my school became a ludus " (Howatt, 1984: 194). As we can see in the following quotation, Blackie was rather optimistic about the human capabilities to learn languages, when said that "all persons being normal and healthy specimens of the genus *homo*, can speak; and by the same natural capability that they do speak one language, they could speak two, three, four and half-a-dozen, if only external circumstances were favourable for such result" (Howatt: 1984: 195).

Other relevant proponent of natural method techniques was Lamber Sauvcur (1826-1907). His students did not start the book until they had spent a month or so on intensive oral work. He seems to be a genuine representative of "magical teaching", as he was able to talk to his students in such a way that they could follow his explanations with ease, even if they did not understand every word. This was one crucial point of his natural method. Another important point was "learning from the context", what he called *coherence*.

A very important milestone in the history of natural methods is the work and materials published by Maximilan Berlitz (1852-1921) who founded the Berlitz schools and made the direct method extensive in all his institutions. If the direct method was born thanks to the contribution of Marcel, Gouin and Saveur, it can be said that thousand of people benefited from it thanks to Belitz' teaching system and his 200 schools spread out over Europe and America. Berlitz is considered a great systematiser of the direct method principles and, as such, recommended no translation under nay circumstances, a strong emphasis on oral work, avoidance of grammar explanations in the first stages and the maximum use of questions-and answer techniques to encourage interaction.

More recently, Terrell (1977) and Krashen and Terrell (1983) have developed a *natural approach*, where the entire class period is devoted to communicative activities. This approach aims to develop basic personal oral and written communication skills. Its basic premises are (Madrid and McLaren, 1995):

- The general goal is communication skills.
- Comprehension precedes production.
- Production emerges without forcing it, after a silent period.
- Learning activities must promote subconscious acquisition rather than conscious learning.

6.2.3. Content-based roots in the communicative approach

The communicative approach (CA) proposes to work with motivated activities, topics and themes which involve the learner in authentic communication. In general, the techniques used by the CA are predominantly holistic and global, experiential and non-analytic. Communicative syllabuses tend to focus more on the message of the content than on the single formal aspects of the language used. In this sense it is message-orientated as is the CBA. This approach aims to prepare the learners to develop the techniques that are needed in the natural language environment and such techniques require regular exposure to real life language situations. To achieve this, the following orientations are recommended and many of them are also present in the CBA:

- Opportunities for *authentic language* use are sought. While audiolingual classes pay a great deal of attention to the language code, the natural setting proposed by this approach focuses primarily on the message and content, on getting meaning across and making use of what the learner hears and reads.
- Personal involvement and the *learner's personal life*. The students must develop strategies of communication and are offered situations that encourage informal language learning in more natural settings. Very often the student's life-style, daily activities, interests and thoughts are the object of conversation. There is connection with the student's previous concepts and experiences.
- *Learning the TL through the TL*. The language class is considered an ideal setting to develop communication through the TL, so classroom instructions and management are conducted in the TL.
- *Relevant topics*. The CA often seeks substantive topics which satisfy the student's interests and needs and that have some educational relevance.
- *Information gap and problem solving*. Tasks often have an element of unpredictability, demanding choice and decision-making among the people who interact. This unpredictable solution can sometimes be found with another partner's contribution. Activities sometimes involve curiosities or problems which must be solved with the help of reference books or other partners.
- *Semantic emphasis*. The emphasis that the CBA puts on the semantic aspects is also rooted in the CA that emphasises the expression of meaning, concepts and ideas above all. Its main concern is meaning and how to convey it through verbal interaction, how to express different intentions and purposes through speech acts, how the message can be expressed and how the listener/reader can interpret it.

6.2.4. Influence of the language teaching through cross-curricular contents

Brinton, Snow and Wesche (1989) consider that the language across the curriculum movement has influenced L2 instructional theory and practice, particularly the development of content-based instructional programs. This movement, strongly developed in British and American schools, puts a great emphasis on the teaching of the

L1 across the curricular subjects; that is, the teaching and learning of the curricular areas (Maths, Science, Geography, History, etc.) and the L1 are inextricably woven together and that is what content-based programs do with the L2 and the other curricular disciplines (DES, 1975).

This movement received a great impetus in the seventies with the report of a committee appointed by the British government, where it was recommended that all aspects of teaching the use of English, including reading, writing and speech, should be reinforced through the other curricular subjects.

6.2.5. Connection with the Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) movement

The CBA also connects with the LSP movement, which aims to prepare learners for real-world demands and satisfy their needs and interests. The content and aims of teaching are determined by the requirement of the learner rather than general education criteria. According to Strevens (1978: 190), this movement fulfils the following characteristics:

- The language-use purposes of the learner are paramount.
- The content is *restricted* to fit the learner's purposes, *selected* according to his/her interests, developed through *themes and topics* according to his/her needs and focused to satisfy his/her *communicative needs*.
- The methodology may be any that is appropriate to the learning and teaching situation.

According to Brinton, Snow and Wesche (1989: 7), "LSP courses, through the frequent use of authentic materials and attention to the real-life purposes of the learners, often follow a methodology similar to that of the other content-based models in which a major component is experiential language learning in context".

6.2.6. Similarities with bilingual education programs

The CBA uses the TL as the means of instruction and, through it, a variety of curricular subjects are taught. This is a common feature of bilingual education programmes. Two well known examples are the bilingual programs in Canada (Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Swain, 1972; Stern, 1973; Swain and Lapkin, 1982) and in the USA (CDE, 1990; Stern, 1984).

Canada

Canada enjoys a long tradition of bilingual programs which have used the TL for instruction for many years and now they have become a mass educational movement with over 250.000 children receiving the school instruction in an L2.

Lambert and Tucker (1972) started to research with immersion programmes in the late fifties, in Montreal. The children taking part in these programmes attended kindergarten and elementary schools where a foreign or second language (French) was used as the major medium of instruction. They studied several key points of great interest for other schools

which decide to take similar initiatives. An important source of confidence, at the start, derived from Vigotsky's ideas (1962) about the benefits of studying a foreign language. He claims that there exists transfer of conceptual development from the foreign to the native language.

Lambert and Tucker's major purpose was to assess and evaluate the impact of elementary schooling conducted primarily in a second language on the linguistic, intellectual and attitudinal development of children (1972: 8). They drew the following conclusions (1972: 203-212):

- The immersion programme, extended through grade IV at that time, did not have any negative effect on the pupils. They did just as well as the English controls, showing no symptoms of retardation or negative transfer.
- The children progressed well in developing second-language skills under the scheme.
- They assimilated non language subjects -such as Maths- well and performed at the same high level as the controls. The children were as able as the French control groups to grasp, assimilate and use mathematical principles taught through French.
- There was no sign of intellectual deficit or retardation, their intelligence was at the same level as the children who did not follow the immersion programme.
- Under the cognitive point of view some provisional conclusions were drawn. It was noticed that the children experienced ...
 - Capacity to compare and contrast two linguistic codes.
 - An alternative, inductive concern with words, meanings and linguistic regularities.
 - The transfer of skills across languages transfer skills from one language to the others: from L1 to L2 and from L2 to L1. This confirms Vigotsky hypothesis (1962: 110): "The child can transfer to a new language the system of meanings he already possesses on his own. The reverse is also true: a foreign language facilitates mastering the higher forms of the native language ... Goethe said with truth that "he who knows no foreign language dos not truly know his own".
 - The written language was an effective frame of reference: French written word played a central role in the children's development of expressive competence in the language.
- Under the attitudinal point of view, it was concluded that ...
 - Being French added charm to the teachers.
 - Children learnt about their group and others through comparisons of ethnic groups.
 - The children attitude towards French people was shaped continuously through teacher-pupil interaction and became more favourable: they thought of themselves as being French and English-Canadian; that is, they became bicultural.
-

Swain and Cummins (1982) have analysed the effect of bilingualism in children and have found some studies that report on some negative effects of bilingual children

(lower language skills, poorer vocabulary, weaker arithmetic skills, deficit in verbal skills) but most studies report positive and favourable associations, such as (1982: 26-30):

- Superior linguistic skills of bilinguals
- Better metalinguistic awareness
- Develop an analytic orientation to language
- Superior performance on tasks involving an ability to restructure linguistic and perceptual schemata
- High sensitivity to feedback cues
- Higher level of verbal and non-verbal intelligence
- Better general intellectual development
- Higher level of originality and creative thinking
- Higher level of divergent thinking

Bilingual education in California

In California some Spanish immersion programmes have also been introduced in several schools as an alternative to FLES programmes, where the L2 was studied through analytic and cross-lingual techniques. These immersion programmes are also essentially content-based. According to the California Department of Education (CDE, 1990), the main purpose is to deliver the whole school system curriculum to those who arrive at school speaking a language other than English, in the English language. These students are often considered limited-English-proficient (LEP) students and present a considerable cultural diversity, given the increasing number of immigrants arriving in California from Mexico and the other Latin American countries as well as from the eastern Asian countries. The CDE estimates that California shelters nearly one million of LEP students.

The educational authorities recognise that with content-based instruction in the home language, LEP students experience impressive gains and this competence correlates with the development of bilingual students' command of English. Again, Vigotsky's hypothesis and other contributions from cognitive psychology (e.g. Cummins' idea about the *common underlying proficiency*) are taken for granted. It is assumed that a) learning occurs holistically and builds on previous cognitive knowledge and b) the skills and thinking strategies developed with the L1 favour rapid acquisition of the other languages. Consequently, the CDE encourages setting up educational programmes in accordance with the following principles (CDE, 1990: 17-18):

- A great emphasis must be put on *thinking*, communication and problem-solving.
- A rich content in all curricular areas, including history, science and literature should be presented.
- They should connect the students with important political, social and ethical values.
- They must be *content-based* and emphasise central concepts, patterns and relationships from each discipline.
- They must provide a *holistic view* of learning by integrating and connecting the curricular areas.
- The approach followed in the presentation and organisation of contents must be sequentially and *spirally organised*, so that the concepts, skills and topics introduced in the first stages are cyclically exploited and treated in later stages.

- *Variety of teaching strategies.* It is recommended to use a wide range of techniques and strategies which satisfy the variety and diversity of LEP students.
- The skills and information provided must be *relevant* for the students, so that it keeps relation with the real-life situations that the students may encounter in society.

6.2.7. Relation with the Cognitive Academic Learning Approach (CALLA)

The CBA keeps important similarities with the CALLA, designed by Chamot and O'Malley (1994). The CALLA, the same as the CBA, integrates language and context for L2 instruction as follows (1994: 10):

- The content topics are aligned with an all-English curriculum.
- Practice is provided of the topics that the students will encounter in grade-level classrooms.
- Beginning with science instruction is recommended because this context, rich in discovering and hands-on-techniques, easily supports the academic language development.
- Another content subject that can be introduced is mathematics, currently involved in solving word problems.
- Social studies is the third content subject introduced in a CALLA programme.

In CALLA as well as in CBA, teachers encourage students to think. When students select the information they are provided, organise it and integrate it in their cognitive network. They develop their thinking skills through the TL.

In CALLA, the students also develop other skills which are directly or indirectly present in the CBA. These are: 1) the academic language skills in the TL through cognitive demanding activities in which comprehension is assisted by contextual support, and 2) some kind of learning strategy training, for the student's learning to become more efficient. This last component is explicit in the CALLA, but in the CBA it is more implicit.

6.2.8. Connection with the Whole Language Theory (WLT)

Snow (1998) herself has established important connections between the CBA and other teaching approaches, such as: co-operative learning (Mass, 1992), whole language theory (Freeman and Freeman, 1997; Newman, 1985), task-based teaching (Nunan, 1989; Willis, 1996; Crookes and Gass, 1993; Yule, 1997; Estaire and Zanon, 1990), the natural approach (Terrell, 1977) and literature-based teaching (Holten, 1997).

Focusing on the relationship between the WLT and the CBA, we find important connections (see Newman, 1985):

- Instead of disseminating or transmitting information, the WLT proponents favour "interpretive" teaching (see Barnes, 1976).
- It is the student who interprets and makes sense by taking an active part in his/her own learning.
- Knowledge does not exist separate from learners: they are actively engaged in creating what they know or understand, in the shaping of their own knowledge and thinking, a current practice in the CBA.

- Activities are also broad enough to accommodate the wide range of student who take part in the leaning experience. All the students do not approach an activity in the same way, with the same outcome. Activities must be open-ended and shaped by the student.
- Students take responsibility for their own learning when that learning is perceived as interesting and valuable.
- Content and procedures are inseparable, they are learnt together: what pupils learn is not only a function of the formal and explicit content that is selected; it is also a function of the manner in which it is taught. The characteristics of the tasks and the tacit expectation that are a part of the structured program becomes themselves a part of the content (see Eisner, 1982).
- Social nature of learning. The other individuals play a significant role in the students' learning. Language learning must involve collaboration in the negotiation of meaning, when each task is a form of social action and contexts are often shaped by the participants. This association between language and content teacher collaboration is also illustrated by Snow, in her recent paper on *Trends and issues in content-based instruction* (1998).
- Both approaches, the WLT and the CBA, aim to integrate the teaching of the four skills. In this respect, Brinton, Snow and Wesche write (1989:2): "In a content-based approach ... the activities of the language class ...are geared to stimulate students to think and learn through the use of target language. Such an approach lends itself quite naturally to the integrated teaching of the four traditional skills" and Newman also emphasises the same idea when she writes (1985: 5) "whole language activities .. support students in their use of all aspects of language; students learn about reading and writing while listening; they learn about writing from reading and gain insights about reading from writing".

7. MODELS OF CONTENT-BAASED INSTRUCTION

We have seen that in the CBA the TL is the means of instruction and is effectively taught through the medium of subject matter. The TL is viewed as the vehicle through which the curricular contents are taught and learnt, rather than as the object of study. This progress with the TL is often incidental and subconscious and it is achieved through immersion. Most research studies (see Snow, 1998; Krueger and Ryan, 1993; Snow and Brinton, 1997) have proved that the content-based approach works effectively when learners have specific functional needs in the TL. The key of success lies in the relevant contents and tasks that are provided, since the students are primarily focused on the meaning rather than on the language. But the approach combine the experiential and integral techniques with other teaching and learning strategies which are more explicit, analytic and formal, as Brinton, Snow and Wesche suggest (1989: 2-10):

"... theorists have suggested as a starting point the use of authentic texts which are relevant to the learner's second language needs ... These provide in concrete form the structures, functions and discourse features to be taught. ... the features ... can be taught at least partially in isolation, with lesson focused on particular language forms, functions and patterns" (p. 2).

"... second language input in relevant contexts is the key .. with contextualised analytical activities which focus explicitly on language forms, functions, and patterns playing a complementary role in the development of accuracy and precision in language use" (p. 10).

In addition to its eclectic methodology, the content based approach has been implemented following different patterns and models of organisation. But three prototypical models have been identified, which share the characteristics described in the previous sections: theme-based, sheltered and adjunct instruction. As we will see, in detail, in the following chapter, these models differ from one another in some aspects (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989: 14-16):

- a) *Theme-based* courses are organised around topics, themes or modules and the language operates as the subject matter.
- b) *Sheltered* content instruction includes a subject matter course taught to a segregated or separated class of TL learners taught by a content area specialist.
- c) The *adjunct* language instruction provides two linked courses -a language course to consolidate the linguistic points and the content course where the students focus on the subject matter.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. In order to understand how the CBA is rooted in the history of LT, a variety of teaching strategies, often opposed, that derive from methodological controversies debated for many years, have been presented. These can help us to understand the roots, connections and fundamental principles of the central approach that we have described in this chapter: the content-based approach (CBA). We have seen that the intralingual-crosslingual dimension argues about the role of the L1 and L2 or TL in language teaching. Whereas the central characteristic of the grammar translation method is crosslingual, the proponents of the direct method and natural methods, including the content-based approach, argue for the constant use of the TL. The conflict of the late 1960s between cognitivism and audiolingualism reflect the explicit-implicit option. The explicit dimension has been used for tasks involving problem-solving and reasoning and the implicit dimension has been followed for a less intellectually demanding and more intuitive way of learning. On the other hand, different degrees of communicativeness are involved in the analytic-experiential continuum. The more we stick to the experiential approach, the nearer we will be to the content-based movement.

2. Following Binton, Snow and Wesche (1989: 2), we have defined the CBA as the concurrent teaching of academic subject matter and second language skills. It focuses primarily on the teaching and learning of content and meaning through the TL. This combination of content, on one hand, plus the use of the TL for instruction, on the other, is not new. Some roots and connections can be found in other methods, approaches and teaching movements:
3.
 1. The (naturalistic) second language acquisition theory (Krashen, 1988)
 2. Intralingual strategies (Stern, 1994)
 3. The experiential approach in LT (Stern, 1994)
 4. The implicit and global dimension in LT (Stern, 1994)
 5. The direct method (Gouin and Marcel)
 6. Natural methods in LT (Montaigne, Comenius, Sauveur, Berlitz)
 7. The Natural approach (Terrell, 1977; Krashen and Terrell, 1983)
 8. The communicative approach (Widdowson, 1978; Brumfit and Johnson, 1979; Richard and Schmidt, 1983; Littlewood, 1981; Sánchez Pérez, 1993)
 9. The language across the curriculum movement (DES, 1978)
 10. Language for specific purposes (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987)
 11. Bilingual education programmes (Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Genesse, 1987; Hoffan, 1991).
 12. The cognitive academic learning approach (CALLA)
 13. The whole language theory (Newman, 1985; Freeman and Freeman, 1997).
4. The analysis of the previous methods, approaches and movements that we have made in the previous sections helps us to understand the main characteristics and implications of the CBA:
 1. It encourages naturalistic *second language acquisition*:
 - meaningful interaction
 - natural communication
 - subconscious learning
 2. It exclusively uses *intralingual techniques* :
 - the TL is used as a reference system
 - learners are immersed in the TL
 - coordinate bilingualism is sought
 3. Priority is also given to *experiential techniques*:
 - the learning activities are connected with the learners experience, life and interests
 - these are message centred; that is, the focus is centred round the topics, themes and content
 - the teaching is realistic, authentic and genuine
 - the students initiatives and ideas are incorporated in the syllabus
 - Learning is encouraged through tasks
 - Authentic language is used
 4. It promotes global and *implicit techniques*:
 - Intuitive and incidental learning is encouraged

- It seeks global understanding of the language presented
 - It aims to develop communicative, social and affective strategies
 - It relies on the unitary and global concept of language proficiency
5. It takes some principles and techniques proposed by the *Direct Method*:
 - Teaching through immersion in the TL
 - Some of the techniques used with L1 learning are used for L2 learning
 - Learning takes place through spoken interaction and communicative activities
 - The starting point of the lesson is the topic or theme
 6. It incorporates the naturalistic technique used by *natural methods*:
 - Immersion in the TL is essential
 - Learning from context is one crucial point
 7. It assumes the basic principles of the *Natural Approach*:
 - The general goal is communication
 - Production emerges after a silent period, as a result of immersion
 - Subconscious rather than conscious learning is sought
 8. It is deeply rooted in the principles of the *communicative approach*:
 - Authentic language use
 - Personal involvement of learners
 - Learning the TL through the TL
 - Topics, themes and content must be relevant
 - Semantic emphasis
 - Some communicative techniques are used: information gap, problem solving, ...
 9. It shares the philosophy of the *language across the curriculum* movement: the curricular subjects and language can be taught and learnt at the same time.
 10. It is also influenced by the *LSP movement*:
 - Teaching is organised around topics and relevant content that satisfies the students needs and interests
 11. It shares the main concern of *bilingual programmes*: developing the whole school curriculum (or part of it) through the target language.
 12. The same as the *CALLA*, it integrates content and language for SL instruction
 13. It shares some principles proposed by the *whole language theory*:
 - Language is learned as a whole, by solving "realistic" tasks and "experiencing" it in oral and written contexts
 - Learning is of a social nature, it is often collaborative
 - The four skills are better learned in an integrate way, by taking part in integrated oral and written real-like situations.

4. Finally, we believe that the content-based approach introduces very important changes that can improve language teaching and learning. In bilingual communities, it has proved to be a very effective approach to develop both the students' general education and their command with the TL. In monolingual contexts, the CBA is much more difficult to put into practice and may have to be more eclectic combining techniques from the explicit, cross-lingual and analytic approaches. But if the TL teacher has got the right preparation, the students are motivated and adequate materials and infrastructure are available, in the present European context, the CBA becomes one of the most promising present and future trends in language teaching and learning.

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