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The Use of the Dialogic Teaching Approach to Promote Communicative Competencies with a Group of Intermediate English Adult Students

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Abstract

This essay intends to explore how the use of the Dialogic Teaching Approach enables my intermediate English adult students to acquire communicative competencies in a globalized society. Many Costa Ricans have been moved to learn a foreign language for monetary reasons; however, their intentions should go beyond that. Through dialogue, students can holistically learn communicative competencies to interact as social agents in different globalized communities. They are invited to embrace diversity, debate their personal conflicts, find solutions, and overall, create a better world. I conclude that, through dialectical methods, students can find a democratic space to decolonize the English language from globalization, make their voices heard, and make meaning in their daily life activities.

Keywords: Dialogic Teaching, Communicative Competencies, Globalization of the English Language, Adult Teaching

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Introduction

As humans, we use language every day to communicate. We can express our feelings, emotions, and desires. Compared to other species, we have developed large linguistic codes to convey meanings. We have established unique phonetic sounds, morphosyntactic structures, and diverse representations of sounds and symbols to express ourselves. Not only does learning a language enable us to transmit knowledge, culture, and customs, but it is also a valuable tool to learn about others and spread ideas quickly. At the end of the day, we use it daily to go to church, work, school, the supermarket, and so on.

Language is necessary to build relationships and create a sense of community. However, Freire (1995) also considered that language goes beyond being a simple instrument of communication. He thinks it is not neutral, and it is also a way to impose a set of ideologies. It shapes identity and culture. As an English language facilitator, I have to be aware of the power of language and how it assists us in better understanding the way we behave and think. With words, we can define ourselves, establish limits, get others to agree with us, show acts of love and hope, or just replicate what the majorities believe is true.

Put it differently, communication has a tremendous influence on our personal relationships, social development, and political spheres. According to Thabit and Pawar (2018), communicative competencies (CC) comprise the ability to produce utterances using appropriate language conventions, cultural references, non-verbal signs, fluent discourses, and strategic ways to persuade the target audience. We use different language aspects congruently to convey a message or to socialize with others. Some of them are tone of voice, the structure of the message, fluency, coherence, context, turn-taking, sentence structures, and discourse intentions, among several others.

With this being said, I have found it is not simple to promote dialogue and fair relationships inside the classroom. Not only do CC entail more preparation and adequate resources, but they also require a mindset change within the whole population. Teachers should promote abilities that relate to creativity, cooperation, social relationships, semantics, pragmatics, and critical thinking, just to name a few. As active agents, my students should

be able to use the language to criticize the reality in which they operate, build knowledge with their peers, and overall build a better place to live in. Social change is not an issue of street demonstration, but an act of intellectual activism. From this perspective, this essay intends to reflect on how Dialogic Teaching Approach (DTA) encourages Intermediate English adult students to enhance their English CC and cultural understanding in a globalized society.

English Learning and Teaching in Costa Rica

Costa Rican teachers have been adapting to constant changes in learning approaches, population mindsets, and emerging class methodologies since a couple of decades ago. According to Sevilla (2017), educators have to be ready to face any unpredictable struggles. With autoethnographic research, he narrated some incidents with which teachers have to deal every day. Those exemplify how teachers have to make witty decisions to prepare their students to acquire communicative skills, face unpredictable emotional reactions from the class members, and adapt to the current social complexities. Teachers have to fight with the system and do their best to guarantee the well-being of all. They cannot isolate themselves from the public spheres and global issues.

In the last decades, economic and political forces have also pushed the population to communicate in bilingual job environments. Fallas et al. (2016) explained how globalization and corporate-oriented ideologies have influenced language learning in Costa Rica: "English has no official status but [in Costa Rica] it is largely used as a foreign language" (p. 157). After examining language programs, analyzing advertisements, reviewing English books, and reporting 30 Costa Rican University students' opinions, they mentioned how the highly capitalist economy has pushed individuals to learn English as an almost-mandatory option to get a job and to comply with global business demands. Therefore, it is critical to counteract the monetary and career-based motives. Teachers have to advocate more democratic spaces, where both teachers and learners can debate critiques towards dominant discourses.

Sevilla (2017) and Fallas et al. (2016) described how teachers struggle to cater for language socialization developments according to the students' contexts and interests. I consider it is necessary to experiment with other reasons to learn a language rather than monetary motives. My students' voices should be listened to in order to transform their reality and democratize their reasons to learn a language. Their internal moves should define their own personal development and social well-being. It has to go beyond the capitalization forces and repercussions.

Globalization, Technology, and Communication

Globalization has made the society in which we all live evolve. It has changed the way we behave, consume, think, interact, and even communicate with others. Such phenomenon has transformed our living conditions by interconnecting us in the political, cultural, and environmental spheres. Steger (2013) defined globalization as "the expansion and the stretching of social relations, activities, and interdependencies" (p. 9). It also "involves the intensification and acceleration of social exchanges and activities" (p. 11). Globalization has shifted our mindsets.

Nowadays, we rely on digital devices, mostly smartphones, and computers. Steger (2013) commented that "the Internet relays distant information in mere seconds, and satellites provide consumers with real-time pictures of remote events" (p. 11). The merger of globalization and the Information and Technology (IT) revolution has made us hyper-connected and interdependent. As social beings, we should now have the tools to become more interdependent, collaborate with others, and be part of global events. Such rapid adaptations are evident in the educational system and our daily life activities as well.

My students, for instance, are connected with their colleagues and friends through their computers or smartphones. They are exposed to different digital forms through the Internet and social networks. They communicate with their coworkers through emails, collaborate through Google Drive or Outlook, find new friends on social networks such as Facebook and Instagram, buy online through Amazon, get some entertainment through

Disney or Netflix, and search for information on Google or YouTube. With this merger, students have been obliged to get certain skills that were irrelevant in the past but are more predominant now. Some of them are English language and communicative skills.

Therefore, English language teachers have been forced to teach a specific set of skills alongside the language. We should be at the forefront of enhancing their ability to survive with the rapid-constant social developments. According to my experience as a teacher and English user, I have found the need to use IT and the foreign language as means to remove cultural barriers, break boundaries of space and time, and increase economic opportunities. It is crucial to understand how languages are interacting and the impact that they have on their speakers.

It is not a secret that globalization has increased the spread and interconnectedness of languages, in particular English. It has become universal. Gamboa and Rodríguez (2021) suggested that English is a language of business, commerce, and entertainment in Costa Rica. It is now used in different fields such as movies, literature, arts, science, and tourism, among other social and political environments. It also plays a critical role in the accessibility to education and job opportunities.

Globalization of the English Language

English is a Lingua Franca. Several people around the globe speak it as a first, second, or foreign language. It has become one of the most predominant means to interact between cultures and communities that are even non-native speakers of it. As was aforementioned, it is evident that some underdeveloped countries, such as Costa Rica, have to acquire a foreign language to adapt to economic, academic, and political demands. The English language has become a vehicle of cultural and linguistic domination. Such expansion has also endangered the global linguistic diversity because some languages and dialects are disappearing.

As an English teacher and learner living in an undeveloped country, I feel that it is

part of linguistic imperialism. According to Canagarajah and Ben-Said (2011), "linguistic imperialism refers to the imposition of a language on other languages and communities" (p. 338). Such a theoretical construct denotes why some languages are more important and used than others. The global expansion of English is the primary example of imperialism. Different ideologies, assumptions, and values are expressed through discourses, idioms, and phrases. Imposing one language over another one is a way of segregating a culture and a community identity.

Such a spread has also challenged the traditional normative of language teaching, and it has become difficult to define English. According to Kubota (2012), there are infinitive "world Englishes," dialects, and identities to explore. Even though some have wanted to impose a specific accent and structures, it is not easy to find a common ground, and instructors end up choosing one over the other. In some cases, the selection has been based on proximity or majority, segregating other users who have different dialects. Some of them are also more politically prominent than others, mainly when teaching. The relationship of power decides which one is taught. For example, many schools teach New York's or London's dialects, instead of Cockney or Black-Vernacular dialects.

There is even an assumption that English native speakers are better teachers than those who are not. According to Fallas (2018), native speakerism ideas are even predominant in Costa Rican universities: "English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs are often filled with practices and discourses that idealize native speakers of English and construct them as the models to follow" (p. 19). According to this belief, the best teachers are native speakers. The argument is that they have better pronunciation, cultural understanding, and lexicon. However, that ignores the variety of "Englishes" and its hybridity as a result of the spread of languages and mixtures of identities. It also ignores their experience as teachers and EFL learners.

Due to the linguistic imperialism and globalization forces, it seems inevitable for some people to prefer to forget their own language and be willing to acquire the culture and discourses of a powerful group. However, as a teacher, I can make small ruptures. I can

identify and explore the local ideologies and demands of each group, as well as understand the role of power that language and education play inside the classroom. I can take a critical position toward the language and methodologies that we use to teach. I feel the need to figure out ways to use my hidden curriculum. Maybe I cannot change the fact that English has become a Lingua Franca and that we need to learn English to get a job or even to publish an academic article, but I can foster critical thinking, reasoning, and autonomy in my students.

With this said, I should teach according to my students' needs and interests. Most of them want to learn the language to communicate with others, negotiate meanings, and solve problems together in different bilingual environments. In their bilingual job places, they might interact with people from different nations. They also need to have a bigger panorama. Teaching only American culture excludes the other countries and people who also speak English. Then, we need critical and dialogic education to make our students aware of their own context and conflicts, according to their age, language proficiency, and personal interests

Adult Language Learners

Regardless of age, humans are in a constant learning process. We all have the ability to create mechanisms to adapt to new environments any time we get in contact with something that is unfamiliar. From the day that we are born, we have the capacity to acquire new information, values, behaviors, and skills. Such a process continues until the day that we die because of ongoing experiences and interactions among different people and contexts.

However, adults learn differently from children and teenagers. Although it is impossible to generalize, I have realized that adults are more responsible, autonomous, and goal oriented. It means that they are intrinsically moved. According to Cozma (2015), "[they usually] have a sound reason why they are studying, and that reason will be their primary motivation" (p. 1210). My students usually perceive education as a way to change their

reality and improve their self-image, get better opportunities, or increase their chances to change job positions.

When acquiring a FL, most of my students have an intrinsic motive. I am aware that most of them are studying English because they perceive the language as an opportunity to get a better job position, travel, or communicate fluently with their colleagues and friends. Therefore, my role as a teacher is to facilitate the required tools that enable them to reach their goals. I let them hold themselves accountable for their learning process, make their own decisions to succeed, and take responsibility for their own achievements or failures.

Perhaps, such an approach and their age have made them more motivated, self-directed, and collaborative. In most cases, they are mature, and they are aware that they need to put some effort into acquiring the language. They self-assess their process and reflect on what else they can do to improve. For this reason, according to Moore (2010), "adults need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn" (p. 3). As an example, I have noticed that my pupils prefer to measure their success based on their performance rather than theory. They prefer instruction that can be practically applied and utilized in their current daily activities.

When teaching, I also consider their aptitudes. There is also an argument that aging slows down the learning process. Borg (2020) suggested that adults have more challenges memorizing information and recognizing speech sounds. It is necessary for them to "reflect on the language being learned and make extensive use of their knowledge of the language rules, since they have a greater ability for abstraction and systematization, when compared to younger learners" (Borg, 2020, p. 59). I have noticed that they are excellent critical thinkers. They memorize better when they compare and differentiate their L1 from their FL.

Furthermore, there is an outgoing discussion on Lenneberg's Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH). Slabakova (2013) explained that language may be like any other neurological development process and that there is a window period in which people have more chances to get a native-like level of proficiency. It is argued that it becomes more challenging for the brain to acquire a language after puberty. After any experience, children

can bring their development to normal ranges. However, neurophysiological mechanisms are suppressed when the brain ages, preventing users from the ultimate language attainment goals. It usually affects pronunciation and speaking abilities.

Despite the brain plasticity loss, my pupils seem to be more cognitively flexible. They can offer higher-level thinking activities and engage with abstract thoughts. They have lots of experience and existing frameworks that are concrete to them. As Cozma (2015) suggested, "adults come into the English classroom with a rich range of experiences – regarding not only learning, but also life in general" (p. 1213). They are able to link previous experiences with new ones, letting them create more solid concepts and mental connections.

All of these considered, I should guarantee their needs are covered according to their age, preferences, backgrounds, and aptitudes. Even though adults may have language struggles, they can overcome them if they are motivated and hold accountability for their learning process. My pupils tend to have strong critical thinking skills, and they can create mental connections with previous experiences. Their self-determination and former backgrounds can assist them in succeeding if I also consider their proficiency level.

Intermediate English as a Foreign Language Students

I find it personally challenging to define a proficiency level because several skills and abilities are not included in tests or certain guidelines. Most of my students have had several teachers and exposure to Anglo-Saxon culture. There is not a specific pattern to determine who is a beginner, intermediate, or advanced. However, according to my experience, I can recognize intermediate language users because they can freely communicate in conversations and texts, making common mistakes.

Intermediate English speakers are capable of talking about themselves, describing places and people, narrating events, elaborating opinions on familiar topics, expressing wishes, asking questions, and some other language functions. According to the Council of Europe (2020), similar characteristics belong to the B1 or B2 performance levels. They are described as follows:

- B1 users are able to comprehend the main points of written and spoken texts in standard language. They "can collaborate with people from other backgrounds, showing interest and empathy by asking and answering simple questions, formulating and responding to suggestions, asking whether people agree, and proposing alternative approaches" (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 92). Also, B1 users can interact fluently with topics that are familiar such as study, work or leisure. They "can convey the main points made in long texts expressed in uncomplicated language on topics of personal interest, provided they can check the meaning of certain expressions" (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 92). They are able to make connections, describe ambitions, and provide explanations and reasons to support their personal opinions.

- B2 speakers have more advanced proficiency, and they are more independent than the previous level. They "can establish a supportive environment for sharing ideas and facilitate discussion of delicate issues, showing appreciation of different perspectives, encouraging people to explore issues and adjusting sensitively the way they express things" (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 92). Even though the users are not advanced, they are able to understand and be understood across several environments and situations. They "can convey the main content of well-structured but long and propositionally complex texts on subjects within their fields of professional, academic and personal interest" (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 92). They can build on others' ideas, participate in meetings, and debate topics of their interest.

With this said, intermediate students should be exposed to topics that let them discuss their personal incidents, argue about familiar issues, and debate their opinions. To expand their input, I naturally immerse them in the language, having them watch videos and read articles online. I can guide them to identify advanced grammatical rules, unfamiliar lexical items, and pronunciation patterns. When tutoring them, I consider all the previous knowledge that they have. To promote CC, I expose them to different contexts and environments.

Communicative Competence

During the last decades, many programs have been designed to foster competencies rather than teach merely theory. According to Levine and Patrick (2019), competencies are more implemented now than before: "It is a major shift in school culture, structures, and pedagogy focused on ensuring that all students succeed and addressing the fundamental shortcomings of the traditional model" (p. 2). In this way, users are able to expose themselves to challenging situations and be equipped with certain abilities. They can navigate through their own professional and personal experiences while using the target culture.

Competence is the ability to complete a task successfully. The Council of Europe (2020) considered competence a set of identifiable abilities, definable skills, measurable knowledge, or other deployment-related characteristics. It means that it is a desirable characteristic for a human being to have such as an attitude, behavior, or physical and mental ability, and that is necessary to perform an activity within a specific business or social activity. There are different types of competencies. Some are specific capacities for a particular job or field. Some others are more general. For example, CC caters for natural interactions in any social environment.

CC encompasses both language knowledge and the ability to use it within the appropriate contexts. They include the abilities that individuals require to communicate as a member of a given socio-cultural community. Tarvin (2014) defined CC as "the ability to use language, or to communicate, in a culturally appropriate manner to make meaning and accomplish social tasks with efficacy and fluency through extended interactions" (p. 2). Language is taught in a comprehensive way, including the different types of language competence. Thabit and Pawar (2018) described four of them:

- Grammatical skills are related to grammar, spelling, phonology, and lexicon items. They involved the most methodical structures of the language, such as phonetics, morphology, and syntax. Thabit and Pawar (2018) explained that accurate

elaboration and accommodation of phonemes and morphemes enable users to interpret sentences and phrases. They are the ability to produce and recognize linguistic patterns to encode and decode words and communicate effectively.

- Sociolinguistics competencies refer to the sociocultural conditions, conventions, and manners such as rules of politeness, and norms governing relations between generations, sexes, classes, and social groups. Thabit and Pawar (2018) also discussed that these abilities also entail the strategic use of language in a particular social environment, according to the intention and the communicative situation. Users should be able to understand the context that develops the language. Their speaking acts should be framed within a place, time, and community. The meaning of the phrase can change if it is used in a business meeting, instead of in a stadium.

- Discourse competencies are related to rhetorical elements and the organization of ideas. They are concerned with the functional use of linguistic resources such as speech acts, cohesion, coherence, figures of speech, and some others. According to Thabit and Pawar (2018), they are "the ability to combine language structures and language functions into a coherent and cohesive text" (p. 306). In other words, they are the way that conversations flow. They are the skill to combine sentences and language forms to persuade and create elaborated meanings in a text or a speech.

- Strategic competencies go beyond verbal utterances and words. They are the ability to correctly use the elements such as signs, gestures, personal space, eye contact, tone of voice, turn-taking, and vocal qualities among other types of nonverbal communication. According to Thabit and Pawar (2018), this type of communication expresses attitudes concerning their interlocutors and what they say. These competencies are related to paralinguistics, and they are part of communication outside sentences or words. For example, we can infer anger, happiness, fear, surprise, or another emotion just by reading facial expressions.

In other words, CC can be defined as not only using the language correctly but also knowing when to use it according to the given environment or context. Then, language is taught through legitimate social scenarios. Its performance is described in behavioral or functional terms, rather than theoretical constructs. According to Lyle (2008), social interactions are opportunities to nurture class engagement, positive relationships, interdependence, and reasoning.

Then, my pupils should be encouraged to cooperate as active agents and to actively contribute with their peers to solve problems, negotiate concepts, or achieve common goals. Cook (2008) reckoned that such kind of socio-cultural interaction fosters an unconscious learning process. Then, I expect my pupils to use the English language as a tool to communicate. Through dialogue, they can learn how to control their feelings, persuade people, and create emotional boundaries.

When learning a FL, we acquire a new culture, a new way of behaving and socializing. Speaking entails building micro-skills and abilities. Tarvin (2014) believed that they can vary from the management of the common thread of the subject to the negotiation of the meaning of the words or gestures. It means that holistic development also includes vast abilities, such as planning a speech, negotiating the meaning of a sound and sign, or controlling the tone of voice, intonation, and diction among other aspects. These micro-skills are not only developed by the speaker, but also by the listener.

That is why memorizing structures is not enough. Knowledge has to be linked to a specific culture or a learning environment so that it can be used effectively in varied contexts and situations. When acquiring these abilities, it is insufficient only to handle surface-level structures or grammatical rules. My students need to navigate different socio-cultural aspects to generate speech acts as they do with their first language. To do so, they have to mediate between their first language and experiences with the target culture. They must be flexible to adapt to a variety of dialects, purposes, and contexts.

Consequently, grammatical and phonetic aspects should not be taught in isolation;

instead, class members should be integrated within speaking communities to develop fluency, order of ideas, affective factors, and some other linguistic elements. When simulating authentic communication, students can develop these linguistic competencies. As with any conversation, it requires at least two users, a speaker who puts oral expression into practice and a listener who receives the message and provides feedback. Then, students need their peers to acquire the language together.

As social agents, my students should be able to interact as equals and convey messages to their peers. As Zhang (2019) granted, English should not be treated as a "subject to be learned, but as a means of communication, where the focus is on the meaning first, then on the form of the language" (p. 99). My pupils should explore resources to their fullest, get more opportunities to develop their linguistic skills, and use the language in different environments. Then, the participants should be the ones who make the most meaningful contributions, taking a protagonist role.

In this vein, my students should be fully supported in developing academic knowledge and abilities to apply what they have learned in real scenarios. As Fulcher (2010) suggested, CC enhances their innate ability to communicate, which satisfies a social function to naturally express thoughts and interact with other individuals. In a foreign language, users should express their desires and needs, exchange information, develop social interactions, fit into social etiquette and routines, and overall be understood by others.

Bearing all of this in mind, the CC considers the usage of the target language as an instrument or a tool in oral and written communication. It allows for a better understanding and interaction of thoughts, behavior, and emotions. CC refers not only to the ability to handle a language, but also to understanding how to place oneself in the communicative context of each specific community, in its diverse social, cultural, and ideological formations. Therefore, all its components should be taught together, and not any of them is more important than the other. My students should be able to spontaneously interrelate with others as they do in their first language.

Dialogic Teaching

The Dialogic Teaching Approach is the opposite of the traditional monologic classrooms. Instead of the teacher being the supreme authority of knowledge, students' voices are heard and considered to create a better understanding of the world in which we all live. It is an ongoing talk among class participants to build on each other's perspectives. Everyone is encouraged to actively contribute to logical and coherent lines of inquiry. DTA uses the harness of dialogue to promote learning, critical thinking, and motivation. It stimulates learning, develops social skills, and enhances imagination and creativity

Before moving on, dialogue is defined as a conversation between two or more individuals. They equally interact to exchange ideas, cultural perspectives, and personal points of view towards a specific issue. According to Rule (2015), "this kind of conversation involves turn-taking: one person speaks, and the other replies and the conversation develops from there" (p. xvii). In other words, it is an open-ended talk, and participants do not know how it will end up because their contributions also depend on their peers' comments. It aims to develop a mutual understanding and gain consensus between members.

As with any other social activity, dialogues can vary depending on the context, the relationship among participants, common knowledge, shared codes, and other factors. Its development goes beyond ordinary conversations. It extends to being ourselves, when expressing our set of beliefs, using discourse elements, and negotiating meaning through our perspectives. "Dialogue, therefore, constitutes an act of knowing that they did not know what they thought they knew, a cognition of not knowing or a decognition" (Rule, 2015, p. 4). It aims to comprehend the world that we all share through language.

However, to accomplish an ethical and philosophical conversation, it is important to encourage a Dialectical Dialogue instead of an Echo-Dialogue or Dialogue-of the Deaf. Fishelov (2013) described Echo-Dialogue as one participant repeating what others say, Dialogue-of the Deaf as two participants talking without being able to understand each other,

and Dialectical Dialogue as the capacity to create a logical discussion of ideas. The last one is intended for participants to understand others' problems. My pupils should know how to listen to their peers' points of view and be engaged in some forms of giving and taking. Hence, they can view issues from multiple perspectives, get to common grounds, find reasonable stances, and bring reconciliation among opposite forces.

Socrates' teaching techniques are a great example of dialectical dialogues. Rule (2015) explained that "Socrates places himself in the position, not of a teacher who gives instruction, but of a pupil or learner who ostensibly seeks instruction from his interlocutor" (p. 8). In other words, he did not consider himself a knowledgeable person capable of instructing others. His way of teaching was through dialogue, guiding others to think and answer questions. He created a critical space within the discourse, and he was open to getting to know others. He was merely "concerned with the nature of virtue itself and other virtues, such as justice, wisdom, courage and piety" (Rule, 2015, p. 4). His teaching style made an emphasis on ethical questions on how we, humans, should live and participate in civic life.

Also, Paulo Freire has used dialogue as means of emancipation. To provide such spaces, Freire (2000) encouraged educators to listen to their pupils' needs, nourish love, cater for hope and encourage critical thinking. His pedagogy consists of creating trust and rapport, overall allowing participants to put theory into practice. His philosophy is based on social change, consciousness-raising, and transformation of the oppressed classes. He also challenged the idea that the teacher is the absolute authority of knowledge. Instead, he thought the class members were social agents full of experiences and abilities. Their backgrounds are valuable to be shared with others.

Freire encouraged students to cultivate values and abilities to adapt to any society. Dialogue was a tool to enhance a better understanding of the world and bring some critical awareness of our reality and conditions in the environments in which we all coexist. In this sense, dialogue represents horizontal relationships between participants who are full of mutual trust and respect. "Dialogue further requires an intense faith in humanity, faith in its

power to make and remake, to create and re-create, and faith in its vocation to make people more fully human" (Shih, 2018, p. 233). It is a humanizing action.

In other words, Freire (2000) invites his students to communicate because, through dialogue, they can recreate themselves. Dialogue is an act of love, hope, and faith. It requires mutual respect, trust, cooperation, organization, critical thinking, and cultural synthesis. Through cumulative discourses, speakers can build critically on what others think is true, creating a common ground of knowledge. Dialogue is a way to work on communicative abilities, mediation strategies, social inclusion, and even students' autonomy. According to Alexander (2005), DTA should be purposeful, supportive, collective, reciprocal, and cumulative.

DTA has had successful results within the English as a Second Language program. Gupta and Guang-Lea (2015) suggested this method as a way to enhance oral skills: "[It encourages] students to express their ideas, practice language, interact with others, stimulate thinking, and build concepts through engaging in dialogue and interactions with peers" (p. 16). Students have to work with their peers to increase the quality and quantity of talk. According to Piccardo and North (2018), we are human-making subjects. It is natural that we negotiate with our peers to solve problems together and build an identity as a community.

With this said, DTA intends to promote critical communication inside the classroom. The outgoing cumulative talks between class members provide opportunities to enhance communicative competencies in real scenarios through peer-peer interaction and dynamic assessments. Chick (2014) argued that this approach bridges the gaps between theory and practice. It engages learners in exploratory discussions, debates, and conversations to foster language awareness, contextualizing linguistic inputs. To put it differently, when using English, they interact with others through several social environments and contexts, most of them being a result of globalization and technology.

Dialogic Teaching with a Group of Intermediate English Adult Speakers

DTA perfectly fits with the target population. My intermediate pupils require a space to provide their opinions, debate issues, and discuss the way they perceive their world. DTA lets them dialogue on relevant topics, bring up social events, and raise awareness to embrace together a better place to live. Furthermore, my adult students have some accumulative knowledge. They all have lived enriching experiences with their first language, and they can socialize such backgrounds with their peers in their FL. English should be the vehicle of negotiation between different public and private spheres. As Picarado and North (2019) believed, "languages are the vehicles of our cultural, political and economic existence in society" (p. 2). They should be able to use the language to foster social sensitivity, raise cultural awareness, and negotiate through different scenarios and groups.

My adult students can share their knowledge and backgrounds, which are enriching for class development. Their depth of experience and knowledge increases over time, varying considerably with their communicative abilities and language skills. For example, most of them have studied other subjects in school and high school. They have learned how to write, deliver a speech, and persuade their peers. Therefore, as Kees de Bot et at. (2005) suggested, they are more cognitively mature. Their experience lets them comprehend several social environments.

The Use of Dialogic Teaching to Promote Communicative Competencies

DTA enables us to negotiate the class curriculum. Then, my students have the opportunity to interact as social agents. Cano (2021) discussed it as an ethical concern to "explore and adopt ideas and proposals that connect to social analysis and social action, producing transformative and dynamic interactions" (p. 5). DTA can transform their language learning environment into an inclusive, communicative, and cooperative one. When my pupils make decisions on what they want to learn, they tend to be more engaged in their individual and collective growth.

Therefore, classes should be focused on the learners' interests and backgrounds to

motivate them to talk. Lasala (2014) pointed out that interactive programs cater for written and oral abilities, enhance performance in various contexts, and encourage students to utilize the target language in real scenarios. The power of talk should be harnessed to its maximum, and my students need to be stimulated to respond to questions, real-life examples, and daily problems. Instead of asking them to identify the right answer, they should be challenged to narrate, explain, justify, summarize, or even speculate on a topic. They should be also encouraged to evaluate the content, have a better understanding of their realities, and make well-informed decisions.

My students have to be able to analyze their political, social, and economic realities. In this way, they can acquire communicative language comprehensively. It requires some other linguistic aspects, such as pragmatics and semantics. It should be meaningful across several social discourses. Language should be a tool to debate concepts, arrange agreements, and mediate in our daily conflicts. When discussing viewpoints with their peers, my students will have the chance to critically examine their own beliefs. Global markets require English users to interact with people from divergent backgrounds and mindsets. In this vein, DTA exposes my students to work on their communicative competencies, socialize with their peers, respect others' opinions and overall handle diversity with grace and maturity.

The Role of Dialogic Teaching in Globalized Communicative Environments

As was mentioned previously, globalization has put pressure on Costa Rican citizens to learn EFL, and teachers have been confronted to adapt their methodologies to enable their students to acquire a set of skills to compete in the current job markets. Teaching communicative competencies through dialogic learning is a way to decolonize language. Cano (2021) argued that DTA is a way to democratize education, integrating social relationships, cultural understanding, and authentic interactions in the target language.

As a facilitator, I need to keep in mind that teaching is a political act. We decide the number of students, contents, materials, approaches, and so on. Now, teaching English also

plays a political agenda. Students can always ask: Why do we need to learn a language? Why are you imposing on me a set of values and cultures that are foreign to my reality? Why do you want me to socialize in a different way than I normally do? These questions and some others that they may ask definitely play a political act.

English teaching is fundamentally moral because through language, my students develop their social and interactive skills. It plays a role of power. They can use it to help others, motivate people, respect, and lead teams. However, they can use language to make fun of others, insult or argue. Through language, they talk about their likes, perspectives, and experiences. It can determine the social status, level of education, and identity of a group or an individual.

Hence, I should be extra careful how I implement the class curriculum and be aware that my stance can either call for diversity or segregate others. DTA, for example, "aims at creating an ethical engagement with the subaltern Other and transforming the epistemological representation of subaltern populations" (Rodrigues et al., 2019, p. 4). Dialogues enable me to better understand their reality, advocate for their wellbeing and deconstruct hegemonic discourses. It is a space for my students to criticize their world, question the Status Quo, destabilize dominant ideologies, and favor the subaltern voices.

When teaching communicative competencies, I should opt for the decolonization of the English language. Not only should my adult students be challenged to use the language efficiently, but they also need to be able to criticize the world they all live in. English Language learning already has a purpose. It is our decision to keep using it either for monetary purposes mostly or to find other transcendental motives. I think that the value of language should be to emancipate people, unify communities and encourage diversity and inclusion, mainly of the otherness.

I find DTA is a useful approach to contrast globalization influences on EFL. This approach enables my students to get the desired skills and let them be interdependent social agents. They can interact with several groups and backgrounds. Together, they can recreate their worlds and support each other with their internal fights. DTA also is an invitation to

revolution, to oppose the dominant forces, and even to create small ruptures in the system. It is naive to think that the oppressors would think of the interest of the oppressed (Freire, 2000). We are the ones who need to initiate the change.

With this, I find an invitation to raise cultural consciousness and cater for emancipation. For example, I can start by thinking that my students do not need to sound, look and think as US citizens do. Instead, it is an invitation to respect the diversity of English users around the globe. As Zúñiga (2015) stated, "critical language learners, who are conscious about their reality, must not forget where they come from and what their identity is to be able to use two (or more) languages successfully" (p. 193). In other words, they need to understand their own world and the others' to successfully interact with different people. They should be aware of existing stereotypes, cultural events, and historical backgrounds to better tolerate and embrace diversity.

In this line, my students also have to be knowledgeable of the political, social, and cultural phenomena. It is a fact that we cannot separate language from context. However, we can decide what context we can utilize in the classroom. Instead of imposing a foreign culture and set of values, we can discuss local problems and personal perspectives. Through dialogue, my students find a space to solidarize with each other, decolonize their minds and reconsider what is common sense. They can explore the world and discover that everything is not binary. Overall, they can look for someone to share their struggles with and find together a purpose in their lives.

Conclusions

DTA is a way to implement critical education principles to transform the population's realities and make their voices heard. It is a way to fight against the repercussions of globalization and avoid using language to segregate communities. My pupils, instead, should articulate ways to create a better world to live together, regardless of the other's economic status, nationality, and living conditions. My praxis should also contribute to discourses that link pedagogy, society, and educational reforms from a dialectical relationship. For instance,

when teaching CC, I should focus less on content, manuals, and books, but I should offer more opportunities to enhance awareness of the world in which we all live and emphasize linguistic structures and students' elaborated ideas.

I can create a free community of bilingual people in the class only if I create awareness of the teaching methodology. Language should be a tool to liberate, promote cultural understanding, and minimize the "otherness" concept. Then, I teach English from the students' reality. I think that they have to explore new cultures and see the world through their own lens. I am aware that the English language has imposed a set of values and ideologies, but I am the filter to make these ideas influence my students positively. Instead of creating divisions through their identities and the others. I can promote a space of multicultural environments which embraces respect and tolerance.

At the end of the day, part of my curricula should be to include others and promote diversity. It means that people should be accepted and included in the classroom with all the characteristics and backgrounds that make them unique. The English language is part of this linguistic and cultural diversity. We should broaden our minds and think out of the box to unify people, languages, and cultures, without imposing one over the other. Learning English should be more than earning more money or getting a better job. It has to go beyond business purposes. Students should also be moved to learn a foreign language to understand another culture, socialize with more people, or communicate fluently in different environments. We have to find more intrinsic purposes so that students can be moved by their own convictions and not others'.

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DECLARACIÓN JURADA

Yo, Kenneth Andrés Pérez Segura, cédula de identidad 402160477, estudiante de la Universidad Nacional, declaro bajo fe de juramento y consciente de las responsabilidades penales de este acto, que soy autor intelectual del Trabajo Final de Graduación Titulado **"The Use of the Dialogic Teaching Approach to Promote Communicative Competencies with a Group of Intermediate English Adult Students"** para optar por el grado de Maestría en Educación con énfasis en Aprendizaje del Inglés.

Heredia, a los 4 días del mes de septiembre del año 2022.

Refrendo

Los abajo firmantes avalamos el Trabajo de Graduación del estudiante Kenneth Pérez Segura, cédula 402160477, que lleva como título **The Use of the Dialogic Teaching Approach to Promote Communicative Competencies with a Group of Intermediate English Adult Students,** dado que cumple con las disposiciones vigentes y la calidad académica requerida por el posgrado.

_____

Mag. Juan Pablo Zúñiga Vargas

Tutor del énfasis Aprendizaje del Inglés

Maestría en Educación

_____

M. Ed Rita Arguedas Víquez

Coordinadora

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