CALL for the Nordic Languages

Tools and Methods for Computer Assisted Language Learning

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CALL for Communicative Competence in Foreign Languages

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Abstract (Danish)

I denne artikel gives der eksempler på hvorfor og hvorledes CALL kan inddrages som en del af sprogundervisningen på universitetsniveau. Artiklen giver et overblik over de opfattelser af sprog og læring, som danner basis for sprogundervisning, og relaterer dette til CALL. Der konkluderes at de største muligheder ved brugen af CALL er koncentreret omkring indlæring og skriftlig formulering.

Abstract (English)

In this paper, some examples are mentioned of how and why CALL should be made part of communicative language teaching at university level. The paper provides an overview of the views of language and learning that form the rationale behind the language instruction, and relates this to CALL. It concludes that the greatest possibilities in the use of CALL can be found with respect to receptive skills and the learning of writing skills.

0. Introduction

This text focuses on the way computers and language-technology tools can be used in high-level foreign language education. The primary starting point is my experience with the teaching of Danish as a foreign language at university level in Iceland, particularly that part of the studies that has as its purpose the development of an all-round communicative competence in Danish among the students, i.e. those courses that deal with language and language usage. As a minimum, the students have been taught Danish as a foreign language in elementary school (for four years) and high school (typically one or two years).

In establishing the main objectives of the courses, the views of language and learning play a major part, since in several ways the interpretation of these concepts forms the rationale behind the training, as

described in Richards' and Rodger's theory of the connection between approach level, design, and procedural levels (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 18). The predominant paradigm within theoretical language teaching these years is one based on a general communicative (functional and interactional) view of language, built on a cognitive view of learning. Importance is attached to letting the instruction improve the learners' (receptive and productive) mastering of the language though purposeful activities (Risager 2003: 319). The views of language and learning that underlie the courses in language use will be elucidated below. As will be apparent from the following clarification of the view of language, communicative competence in a foreign language requires that the learners come to master many and different components having to do with the rules of form and language use and the occurrence of the language in many and varying manifestations. In order to achieve these goals, it is important that the teaching is efficient and has a clear object. In this regard, CALL can play a crucial role. It is, however, important to realize the varying potential of the media with respect to the various learning goals, and how the different approaches are related to the view of learning; in other words, to realize when the inclusion of CALL is an advantage and why, and in what other connections other approaches are more appropriate.

1. The View of Language

To be able to communicate in a foreign language, the language user has to master different kinds of skills or competence. The communicative view of language draws on theories about language as a tool of communication; we are, thus, dealing with a functional, sociolinguistic view of language (cf. Canale and Swain 1980; Færch, Haastrup & Phillipson 1984; Lund 1996 and 1999). According to Canale and Swain, communicative competence embraces the following components: 1) grammatical competence, i.e. knowledge about the language system; 2) sociolinguistic competence, i.e. rules about socio-cultural relations and discourse rules; and 3) strategic competence (Canale and Swain 1980: 29-31). In Canale and Swain's definition, the pragmatic dimension is joined with the discourse aspect in an all-inclusive sociolinguistic competence. The same is true of Færch, Haastrup and Phillipson's conception of competence (1984), which also includes "fluency" as a component. In later years, several researchers have

emphasized the importance of socio-cultural knowledge for possessing communicative competence (Kramsch 1998; Risager 1999 and Risager 2003). Lund (1999) employs three main components: 1) structural linguistic competence, comprising linguistic competence and textual competence; 2) pragmatic competence, comprising speech act competence, socio-cultural language use competence, and prosodic competence; 3) socio-cultural awareness, having to do with knowledge about the importance of socio-cultural conditions to language use and their imprint on language. Unlike the others, this component is not a part of language. In defining the communicative view of language, I will follow the example of Lund (1996 and 1999) and let my concept of competence include conversational and textual competence. Thus, we end up with the following components: 1) linguistic competence; 2) conversational and textual competence; 3) pragmatic competence; 4) strategic competence; 5) fluency; and 6) socio-cultural competence. Communicative competence embraces the mastering of receptive as well as productive skills.

In the following, I will deal in more detail with the types of competence that are part of the communicative concept of language.

1.1 Linguistic Competence

Linguistic competence deals with the systems that govern language in the fields of syntax, morphology, vocabulary, phonology, and orthography (Lund 1999: 13). In other words, linguistic competence concerns explicit and implicit knowledge about the systems that are crucial to the functioning of language, e.g. rules of pronunciation, word order, and spelling. Lexical knowledge, i.e. possession of receptive and productive skills relating to vocabulary, is central to possessing linguistic competence (Meara 1996 and Henriksen 1999). Lexical knowledge concerns not only single words, but also lexicalised units such as idioms, collocations, and communicative formula, i.e. knowing a word involves knowledge about what words it typically occurs with.

The mastering of linguistic competence enables the language user to decode and code single utterances or sentences that are grammatically and semantically correct (Lund 1999: 26). When it comes to interaction, other kinds of competence are needed.

At university level, great demands must be made to the students' mastering and knowledge of the components that are part of linguistic competence, which requires a focus on form (metaknowledge) as well as automation of the form rules of the language.

1.2 Conversational and Textual Competence

Conversational and textual competence concerns the language user's competence to use the target language in interaction and includes conversations (speech) as well as written texts. It concerns the logical coherence of the text and the genre and text-typological demands that are imposed on any kind of speech and written texts (Lund 1999: 26). In order to participate in interaction as either sender or recipient, being able to choose or decode adequate lexical material, or construct or decode sentences, is not enough. The language user must also be able to assess whether sentences are properly coherent, relevant to the context, and adequate to the communication situation. Furthermore, the form, content, and style of the text must adhere to the rules and norms of the text type. The development of discourse and textual competence on an academic level depends on the students becoming acquainted with a wide range of spoken and written texts; in this connection, the Internet and CALL are important resources, since here you can find a large repertoire of current, authentic text types (genres). This concerns a wide range of texts for everyday use, and everyday forms of discourse, as well as technical texts, including high-level metatexts. Furthermore, the use of CALL has great potential as a part of the development of written textual competence; for more details, see section 3. Widdowson describes textual consistence in terms of cohesion and coherence (Brumfit and Johnson 1979: 47). Cohesion markers are found on the locutionary level in the form of linguistic linking item, such as conjunctions, pronouns, and the definite suffixes of nouns. On the illocutionary level, coherence causes utterances to be perceived as logically consistent, e.g. that questions and answers appear as functionally connected. Coherence markers differ depending on textual type (Lund 1999: 27).

Using everyday conversations as their point of departure, Glahn and Holmen examine some central concepts for the analysis of discourse. The fundamental issue in conversation is the collaboration between the persons involved, who by meaningful interaction establish a common, coherent discourse. The collaboration is influenced by a number of non-linguistic features of the situation, such as time, place, the number of participants, and their social relations. The interlocutors assume the other participants to observe certain basic rules of conversation, cf. Grice's (1975) conversational maxims with respect to: quantify quality, relation, and manner (Glahn and Holmen 1989: 69). An interaction is usually made up of three phases: a ***preliminary phase***, a ***central phase***, and a ***concluding phase***. In the central phase, the interlocutors' realize their intention with the conversation by performing their speech acts. In the preliminary and concluding phases the contact is established and ended with the use of ritualised speech act types. Typically, phatic communication takes place in the preliminary and concluding phases (Henriksen 1990: 28). A characteristic feature of conversations is ***turn-taking***, i.e. the participants take turns at being the one to speak. In informal conversations turn-taking is regulated by so-called ***gambits***. These are discourse-structuring verbal and non-verbal signals that the interlocutors use to regulate their turn-taking, for instance by signifying that they wish to be given, hold, or give up the floor. Different situations of language use contain different rules for turn-taking (Glahn and Holmen 1989: 66-67).

1.3 Pragmatic Competence

The focus of pragmatics is language ***use***, i.e. how it is used to perform actions. Language use can involve listening, reading, writing or speaking, depending on whether we play the role of sender or recipient. When it comes to transmission of messages between people, it is crucial to the choice or interpretation of speech act types, what the communication system is, what the relation is between sender and receiver (for instance regarding age, sex, status, and how well-acquainted sender and receiver are), and what the purpose of the communication is. In some cases, the primary purpose of the use of language can be establishing social contact, i.e. relational communication, and in other cases it may be factual communication (Møller 1996: 124). Knowledge about speech acts include implementation strategies, i.e. what forms of linguistic expression are possible and appropriate for expressing the desired speech act in a given context. Since there is no obvious connection between the surface form of

utterances and their illocutionary force, it can be difficult to interpret the functional value of the utterances from the linguistic form alone. Thus, questions can be used to express requests or a concealed command, and modal verbs (especially in the past tense) can be used to indicate politeness (Andersen 1991: 85-89).

Goffman's concept of ***face*** describes a non-linguistic factor having to do with the interlocutors' wish to maintain their identity in their chosen conversational role, i.e. the participants' desire to save face (Glahn & Holmen 1989: 63). The concept of face is of immediate importance to the choice of linguistic expressions for the performance of speech acts. During interaction, the participants must seek to avoid threats to their face and aim at supporting face. If the verbal behaviour is in accordance with face-related needs, it is characterised as ***polite***, whereas behaviour that disagrees with this, is defined as ***impolite***. To maintain positive relations between the interlocutors, a need arises for politeness strategies.

The communicative view of language has been characterized by ascribing great weight to verbal expression skills, which has put the focus on the development of conversational competence. As previously described, the mastering of spoken language requires that the students can manage various discourse and pragmatic features characteristic of conversation. Through the use of CALL, the students can obtain easy access to spoken texts, which is important in connection to observations and analysis of spoken language. However, due to the limitations of the media, there will not be the same degree of development of pragmatic and discourse knowledge through creative interaction in the form of spoken language. On the other hand, there is ample opportunity for interaction through email and IRC; see section 3 for more on this.

1.4. Strategic Competence

By strategic competence we understand linguistic and non-linguistic communication strategies that the language user applies in case of lacking linguistic knowledge or competence. That is, the ability to overcome the gap that can arise when the linguistic resources of the language user are insufficient for his communicative needs or intentions. Thus, the language user makes use of strategic competence to get the message or the linguistic intention across. Canale & Swain distinguish between two types of

communication strategies. On the one hand, there are strategies that are connected to lack of grammatical competence, and on the other hand, those connected to lack of sociolinguistic competence (Canale & Swain 1980: 30-31). Færch, Haastrup & Philipson (1984: 154-165) distinguish between communication strategies used for language production and language reception, respectively. Strategies used for language production can consist in, e.g. paraphrase, direct translation from the native language to the target language, gestures, facial expressions, etc., and strategies used for language reception are various reading and listening strategies, e.g. guessing strategies, that the learners use to understand the connection when they encounter new or unknown words in speech or writing.

1.5. Fluency

Fluency has to do with the language user's ability to express him- or herself fluently and effortlessly, i.e. his/her ability to make use of his/her linguistic and pragmatic knowledge. Færch, Haastrup & Philipson (1984: 143) distinguish between semantic fluency, lexical-syntactic fluency, and articulatory fluency. With respect to spoken language, fluency refers to the process of producing speech. In connection with written texts, fluency refers to the product rather than the process, i.e. whether the texts are well-constructed and therefore easy to read (Færch, Haastrup & Philipson 1984: 147-148). In speech, pauses, stammering, and stuttering, e.g. due to lack of vocabulary or limited grammatical knowledge, as well as repetitions and rephrasing, are symptoms of a non-fluent level of proficiency in the language. Within the communicative paradigm, fluency plays a major role, since lack of fluency impedes communication. It should be noted that fluency does not entail a high speaking rate, even though a high speaking rate in itself is a sign of fluency (Færch, Haastrup & Philipson 1984: 147). Fluency depends on ***procedural knowledge*** – knowledge about how to do something – more than ***declarative knowledge***, i.e. knowledge about something.

To obtain fluency in the target language, it is necessary to automatise parts of language. Schmidt distinguishes between procedural knowledge and ***procedural skill***. According to Schmidt, fluency can be identified as an automatic skill rather than knowledge, since it has to do with performing

something at a given time, rather than knowledge about how to perform something (Schmidt 1992: 358-359).

1.6 Socio-Cultural Competence

Several researchers have stressed the necessity of socio-cultural competence as a component of communicative competence (Simensen 1994: 25; Risager 1999, Risager 2003). Socio-cultural competence is understood as the ability to use language in the social and cultural framework that the language is part of for the native language user. The Council of Europe's threshold level of 1990 defines socio-cultural competence as: "*the aspect of communicative ability which involves those specific features of society and its culture which are manifest in the communicative behaviour of the members of this society.*"
(quoted from Simensen 1994: 26).

Socio-cultural competence has to do with the language user's competence, in a given context, to uncover the social and cultural needs and norms that are necessary for use of the target language. Thus, we are dealing with different culture-specific social norms that are directly or indirectly attached to language. This type of knowledge is social and has to do with the ability to understand and use different linguistic registers according to the social context. This applies to, for instance, understanding metaphorical expressions and various culture-specific connotations. Questions of socio-cultural knowledge can be: How society norms emerges from language use, for instance how to address people, the norms for use of first names or family names, or rituals connected to manners and customs, for instance regarding invitations and feasts. Social conventions and rituals can be both non-linguistic and linguistic (Simensen 1994: 27). Risager describes the acquisition of socio-cultural competence as a psychological and social process, in which the individual extends and restructures his cultural repertoire (Risager 1999: 207). Risager's definition of the concept of culture distinguishes between three types of culture that reflect a chronological progression:

1. the ***traditional*** type, i.e. literary and other artistic works; literary and art history. Traditional history and geography. Institutions etc.: politics, administration, law, religion, education, culture, science, and technology. History of ideas and ideological currents
2. the ***anthropological*** type, i.e. everyday life, customs, gestures, physical environment. Values, beliefs, faith and experiences
3. the ***sociological*** type, i.e. general social conditions: geographical, economical, cultural etc., including family, mass media, sports. Inter-institutional social issues: social groups (youth, women, etc.) and social problems (environment, unemployment, urbanisation etc.)

(Risager 1989: 255-256)

The use of CALL plays a major role in developing socio-cultural competence, since the media is connected to current and actual use of the target language. When it comes to teaching Danish in Iceland, where the target language is not prominent in society, direct access to the target language is of great importance.

2. The View of Learning

As mentioned previously, the communicative paradigm is based on a cognitive view of learning, i.e. the learners' linguistic development is seen as a ***cognitive*** (intellectual), creative, and social process (Holmen 1988: 87) built up through interaction. Theories about communicative language learning takes as its starting point actual use of language. One of the very central functions of language is the transmission of messages between people. Thus, the processes that are at work when language is used are imitated in the training (Johnson 1996: 173-174). In the communicative way of teaching, the target language is used for communication and is, thus, the means as well as the end. In communicative teaching, CALL can play a central part both as a source of linguistic data and as a tool for improving many-sided receptive and productive communication in the target language, for awareness-raising about discourse and pragmatic norms and for automation of the form rules of the language, including pronunciation training.

Hatch emphasizes that by using conversation to interact with others, the learner gradually acquires the competence basic to the ability for using the language (Richards 1990: 77). Thus, it is the learner himself who builds up his language through interaction. Learning is viewed as a dynamical,

individual process where the individual's use of the target language is the force behind the language acquisition. While the language is being learned, the functions of the language are acquired at the same time, or vice versa: the language is learned because the learner needs to express certain things (Holmen 1990: 7).

2.1 A Cognitively Based View of Learning

In connection to the communicative view of learning, a process-oriented approach has been emphasized, and in that connection focus has been put on various psychological processes and their importance for language learning. According to Færch & Kasper (1983), language acquisition takes place in various ways: 1) Intellectually – by learning metalinguistic rules; 2) Imitatively – by the acquisition of unanalyzed units; 3) Analytically – by the construction and testing of hypotheses (Lund 1995: 112). These various ways of acquiring language result in the learner coming to possess the qualitatively different forms of knowledge: metalinguistic knowledge, creative knowledge, and unanalyzed units. These three types of knowledge differ in the way they are activated, and in the demands they put on cognitive resources (Glahn, Anker Jensen & Jensen 1988: 145-146).

Corder was the first to describe foreign language learning as a process where hypotheses are constructed and tested. The theories of hypothesis construction and testing as a driving force for the development of the learners' interlanguage, were further developed by Færch & Kasper (1980) and Færch, Haastrup & Philipson (1984). Hypotheses can be tested receptively as well as productively by use of language. When hypotheses are tested receptively, the learner compares his hypothesis with new input, while in the case of productive hypothesis testing; the learner uses the hypothesis in his own language production. Hypothesis testing can also be metalinguistic, for instance when the learner tests the hypothesis by looking up in academic literature or finding information on the Internet, or it can be interactional, for instance when the learner asks a conversation participant for help (Lund 1995: 117). A confirmed hypothesis is integrated in the learner's interlanguage knowledge.

Færch, Haastrup & Philipson (1984: 178) consider linguistic awareness, or meta-awareness about language and language use, a condition for the development of communicative competence, and other researchers have emphasized the importance of these forms of knowledge for language learning, e.g. Schmidt (1990). Bialystock (1978 and 1981) distinguishes between ***explicit*** knowledge (knowledge that can be verbalized, for instance about language rules), and ***implicit*** knowledge (knowledge that cannot be articulated) (Glahn, Anker Jensen & Jensen 1988: 149). Within the cognitive view of learning, emphasis is put on developing implicit knowledge, while at the same time awareness of language rules – pragmatic as well as structural – is viewed as an integral part of the learning process. According to this view of language, explicit knowledge about the rules of language can become automatic knowledge through the use of language (Holmen 1988: 86). When the process moves in the other direction, i.e. when implicit knowledge becomes verbalisable, it is referred to as ***consciousness raising***.

2.2 Declarative and Procedural Knowledge

Several researchers, e.g. Widdowson (1979) and Færch & Kasper (1985), have used the concepts ***declarative knowledge*** and ***procedural knowledge***. Declarative knowledge concerns knowledge about linguistic rules and elements – including pragmatic and discourse knowledge – in one or more languages. This kind of knowledge ("knowledge that") is static, since it is independent of its use for communicative purposes at any given time. Procedural knowledge is the knowledge that the language user draws upon in actual language use and learning situations (Haastrup 1991: 30). The two kinds of knowledge vary according to which linguistics tasks that are to be solved. In the case of reading, for instance, it is not enough to acquire a number of words or knowledge about grammatical rules (declarative knowledge), since it is also important to master the procedures that enable the language user to guess the meaning of a word in context (Haastrup 1991: 30-32). The possession of procedural knowledge is also very important in speaking situations and other communication situations that require creativity and spontaneousness, since it is a condition for the fluent use of language.

2.3 The Importance of Input for Language Acquisition

Input means all the uses of the target language that the learners are subjected to, in other words, it means their experiences with the target

language in its various manifestations (Sharwood Smith 1994: 8). Thus, input is the material for hypothesis construction, testing, and feedback. It can be any kind of text. It varies how much and what kinds of input it is possible for the learners to experience outside the educational institution; it depends, among other things, on whether it is second or foreign language education, and on the status and function of the target language in the local community in general. As regards e.g. Danish in Iceland, the options are limited for experiences with the target language outside class in direct contact with Danish people. This applies particularly to spoken language. Thus, the very learning environment and the input the students are confronted with, is of paramount importance. In that connection, CALL can play a crucial role as a tool, as a source of input, and as linguistic experience.

Corder has proposed using the concept ***intake*** to describe that part of the input that the learner somehow adopts. He defines ***intake*** as that part of the input that affects the learner's existing knowledge about the target language. The requirement for the learning of new rules, words, etc., is that the input is comprehensible and can be adapted to the learner's interlanguage knowledge (Færch, Haastrup, Philipson 1984: 187). According to Schmidt, Corder's definition is inadequate, and he propounds the hypothesis that taking notice is a prerequisite for input being transformed into intake: "...intake is that part of the input that the learner notices" (Schmidt 1990: 139). Schmidt claims that unconscious learning cannot take place, and that intake is that part of the linguistic input that catches the learner's awareness. According to Schmidt, the requirement of linguistic attention is general to all aspects of language: "*I have claimed that subliminal language learning is impossible, and that intake is what learners consciously notice. This requirement of noticing is meant to apply equally to all aspects of language (lexicon, phonology, grammatical form, pragmatics), and can be incorporated into many different theories of second language acquisition.*"
(Schmidt 1990: 149).

According to Schmidt and Frota, there is a connection between noticed input, i.e. intake, and its occurrence in language production (Schmidt 1990: 141).

VanPatten argues that the learners' main focus in their learning is on those parts of the language that are indispensable to actual transmission of communication. That means attention is directed towards decoding those parts of language that are important to the communicative message, i.e. that part of the input that has high communicative value. If the language user has not automatised large parts of the target language, cognitive resources are only available for dealing with the parts of input that contain important communicative information, while the rest is ignored. With an improved processing capacity, energy will gradually be released for dealing with other parts of the language (Lund 1995: 280-281). According to Lund's hypothesis, the functionality of the input determines the acquisition process, since it is the communicative needs that force the acquisition onwards (Lund 1995: 275).

2.4 The Importance of Output for Language Acquisition

Swain (1995) emphasizes the importance of output for language acquisition, since it gives the learner the opportunity for actively using the target language. Swain argues that the learner is pushed into language production – ***pushed language output*** – since the experience that the target language is insufficient for communication, stimulates the learner to further develop his linguistic competence (Henriksen 1990: 64). Swain particularly emphasizes three functions of the output in language learning:

1. the 'noticing/triggering' function, or what might be referred to as its consciousness-raising role
2. the hypothesis-testing function
3. the metalinguistic function, or what might be referred to as its 'reflective' role

(Swain 1995: 128)

According to Swain, output improves linguistic noticing. Through language production, learners can discover a gap between what they wish to express, and what they are able to express. In order words, Swain's output hypothesis states that linguistic problems are brought to the focus of attention through language production, which can ***provoke*** cognitive processes and lead to new linguistic knowledge. The metalinguistic function of the output arises when the learners reflect about their own use

of the target language, which enables them to control and internalize linguistic knowledge (Swain 1995: 125-126).

2.5. Small-Group Interaction

Several researchers stress the importance of comprehensible input in the learning process. When it comes to comprehension of input, the learners' possibilities for ***negotiation of input*** play a crucial role. In that connection, the potential of interaction in small groups has been pointed out, since it presupposes the uttering of those negotiations of input that are necessary for understanding the input and getting the message across in the output (Chaudron 1988: 106-109). Hatch (1978) stresses the importance of conversation in small-group interaction, since conversation can be built up through mutual exchange of language utterances (scaffolding). Hatch believes that through the use of conversation for interacting with others, the learner gradually acquires the competence that is basic to the ability to use language (Richards 1990: 77). CALL offers plenty of opportunity for electronic interaction, but when it comes to creative and spontaneous interaction through spoken language, the use of CALL is (still) limited.

2.6 Task-Based Language Learning

In relation to the communicative view of learning, it is crucial to create a learning environment where the target language is presented as a whole with meaningful, communicative needs. Priority must be given to linguistic activities where the use of language is not a goal in itself, but a means for the exchange of ideas and opinions, or a means for collaborating with others to obtain a goal (Pica, Kanagy & Falodun 1993: 10). That means that tasks – so-called communicative problem solving tasks – endow the communication with a communicative purpose (Willis 1996). Thus, one seeks to create the needs for ***goal-oriented*** communication, where the competence components of language – structures as well as functions and units (words, expressions) – are tested out in interaction with focus on meaning. Since a task is a goal-directed activity, it must result in a solution (Pica, Kanagy & Falodun 1993: 18-19). There are several definitions of tasks. The various task types have in common that they are alternatives to the traditional kinds of exercises based on the synthetic approach. Tasks demand a solution that is to be found by learners collaborating in (verbal or/and written) interaction to transfer one-way or two-way information. This is true of, for instance, the so-called converging task types (Pica, Kanagy & Falodun 1993). Thus, tasks are important in connection with interactive negotiation of input, since they assume that it is necessary to understand the other participant's contribution in order to solve the set assignment. In other words, tasks open up a communicative maneuvering space where the learners in interaction with each other and perhaps the teacher negotiate towards a solution. Paulston & Britanik emphasize three reasons for dealing with tasks: 1) they ensure comprehensible input; 2) they increase the possibility for negotiation of input; 3) they are important in connection to comprehensible output (Paulston & Britanik 1995: 80). According to Schmidt, tasks can be important because they focus on relevant features of the input, which means that they are noticed by the learners (Schmidt 1990: 149). According to Risager, language learning is facilitated: "*...through collaboration in smaller groups on specially adapted tasks, supplemented with sequences with a linguistic focus (focus on form), i.e. focus on the communicative utilization of the linguistic means of expression.*" *(Risager 2003: 319-320)*

According to Ellis (2003: 69-77), reciprocal tasks are viewed as devices for generating interaction. With regard to the relationship between language and language use, three major avenues of enquiry have been explored: negotiation of meaning, communicative strategies, and communicative effectiveness. As for foreign language teaching at university level, where the purpose is that of achieving a linguistic competence that approaches native speaker level, it has to be tasks whose solution requires a sophisticated use of the target language in various situations where several skills work in integration, and where several means and media are involved, including CALL.

3. View of Language, View of Learning, and More about CALL

In the following, the use of CALL is discussed in the light of the views of language and learning described in sections 1 and 2. Focus is on those circumstances where the use of CALL must be considered most appropriate.

Within communicative language teaching, focus is put on the learner's learning needs and interests. The premise is that different students will prefer different approaches, and their interests and needs will vary with respect to choice of language activities and materials. Some researchers, e.g. Dam (cf. Henriksen 1999: 82) emphasize the importance of a personalised vocabulary, which means that it is the interests and needs of the specific learner that control the choice and use of new vocabulary items. In the building of communicative competence one must be confronted with a varied input that reflects the authentic use of the language (cf. section 2.3), and at the same time there must be ample opportunity for output (cf. section 2.4) and interaction. In short, the competence is built through the students' use of the target language for communication. For several reasons, the use of CALL can improve the learners' communication in the target language and, thus, contribute to the building of communicative competence. To a certain extent, the use of CALL and the Internet diminishes geographical distance, and it can bring the student into contact with the target language in a flash. Let us elaborate a little more on this.

The Internet gives access to a large repertoire of actual, authentic texts that directly or indirectly deal with the social and cultural conditions associated with the target language. This is true of all possible kinds of written and spoken texts (e.g. web newspapers, a broad range of home pages, and radio recordings) as well as audiovisual media (e.g. television, texts, and movies). Thus, making use of the Internet can form the setting for content based learning and contribute to building up socio-cultural competence. Add to this that language technology tools make it possible to provide a large repertoire of different kinds of exercises and linguistics aids that can contribute to implicit as well as explicit knowledge about the rules of the target language, together with procedural and declarative knowledge. In the light of the great importance that is given to input in communicative language teaching, there are considerable merits attached to the use of the Internet. When students are using the target language, for instance for reading or listening to different texts with different purposes in view, they are applying the various reading and listening-strategies, which are considered important in connection to building up communicative competence.

Several researchers (e.g. Henriksen 1999) have pointed out that there is a world of difference between mastering a language receptively and productively. Productive mastering of a vocabulary demands deep understanding and automation, which again requires that the learners frequently are confronted with and use the word/sequence of words in a rich context where difference nuances of meaning and possibilities of linguistic composition are made visible (Henriksen 1999: 85). In connection with learning a vocabulary, repetition can be secured with a thematic approach, that is, by focusing on the same semantic field or domain for a while. This can be done by letting the students get acquainted with, and for a longer period of time follow, what is said about certain subjects in web news and broadcast texts. Similarly, focus can be put on certain domains in order to work with vocabulary for special purposes or particular subjects. This can be achieved by searching private or official home pages, for instance personal home pages or the home pages of universities or mass media, such as newspapers, journals, television or radio. Through repetition and depth with respect to the use of vocabulary in context, qualitative aspects (precise understanding of words, including their figurative or metaphorical use) as well as quantitative aspects (size of the vocabulary) of the vocabulary skills can be considered. While learning the vocabulary, the students concurrently will develop, among other things, their mastery of receptive skills and expand their socio-cultural knowledge. By means of tasks, work on the vocabulary can form part of a goal-directed communication where several kinds of competence (structures as well as functions) are tried out in interaction (verbal as well as written) and result in a solution. Here, CALL can be integrated in several respects. As regards language teaching at university level, the communication can be about tasks whose solution requires, among other things, interaction about complicated matters, and that the students possess knowledge of genre as well as meta-consciousness about adequacy in the communication situation. As already mentioned, the Internet provides access to a large repertoire of written and spoken text types and reflects its use in various forms of discourse and manifestations. Analysis of different text types, e.g. genre features and a discussion of these, can contribute to building up conversational and textual competence. Nothing prevents teachers, students, and others outside the country, from assisting in the construction

and/or solving of tasks. Of course, CALL can also be used in connection to written communication.

In connection to learning productive skills and the productive vocabulary, the output is very important, since it forces the student to use the target language. In connection to written output, the use of CALL has certain advantages, since the potential of the media enables written interaction in the target language. The very media and the equipment are all about communication, as evident in the fact that in this very moment, I am using the machine for encoding my message in order to convey it to the reader. The equipment not only makes one-way communication easier, since it can also create possibilities for interaction. In order words, it is a strength in the use of CALL that the technology enables any single student to express him- or herself freely and creatively in the target language. However, written communication holds an exceptional position in this regard. For example, one can mention the possibilities inherent in using text processing, email, and chat/IRC. Like other kinds of communication equipment, e.g. the telephone and cinema, the new media has influenced the way language is used. Thus, many depict email as a kind of mixture of speech and writing. The media enables the teacher and the students to collaborate with each other during the writing process, which is thought to advance the learning. When the instructor or a fellow student, for instance through "track changes" or email, can enter the learner's text and respond to it with commentaries and questions, it becomes possible to present constructive suggestions regarding the content, or delimit and focus on particular linguistic issues that cause difficulties or create misunderstandings, which can contribute to "consciousness raising" and, thus, improve the implicit as well as explicit knowledge about the target language. Because of the interaction that can take place between two people, either two students or the teacher and a student, through chat/IRC or email, rich opportunities can be created for building up conversational and textual competence as well as pragmatic competence. For instance, this is the case when different norms having to do with relational and actual communication, or the inherent politeness value of speech act types, are put on the agenda. In the interaction itself, the learners draw on various pragmatic and discourse components. When it comes to becoming conscious of the discourse aspect of language use, it is a major advantage that the interaction can be printed and the students' output can be made an object for linguistic observations about language and language use. It should, however, be emphasised that despite certain similarities to spoken language, IRC and email contact is not spoken language. The development of fluency in speech must take place in interaction, on the premises of speech (cf. section 2.5).

3.1 Interactive Exercises and Electronic Tools

In connection with communicative teaching, the purpose is that the students acquire explicit and implicit knowledge about the components that are part of the communicative competence. The mastering of spoken and written language requires fluency. In connection to building up explicit and implicit knowledge, form and fluency exercises (automation of rules of language form, including pronunciation) play a central part. With the use of CALL, it is possible to include different kinds of form exercises, including self-controlling, interactive exercises where the students, according to individual needs, can automatise grammatical rules or, for instance, rules about syntax, pronunciation or orthography. The same is true of various exercises with the purpose of developing the students' lexical competence. When working on the form rules of language, e.g. orthography and grammatical inflection, electronic dictionaries (see `http://www.dns.dk`, `http://www.cst.dk/ordbog`) are important aids, and the same is true of other language-technological tools, such as STO[1] which contains lexical data on the morphology and spelling of words, as well as their syntactic construction potential.

Various corpora and digital works of reference provide rich opportunity for information about, for instance, grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. For instance, Korpus2000[2] should be mentioned. In addition to single word lookup, information can be found on which groupings of words (collocations, idioms) are typical, and furthermore, Korpus 2000 and the Google search engine provide the possibility for examining the occurrence of the words in context and their frequency. A deliberate search with language-technological tools puts focus on linguistic form, vocabulary, and other communicative components. According to the underlying view of

[1] (see `http://www.cst.dk/sto/webinterface/index`)
[2] (see `http://korpus.dsl.dk/korpus2000`)

learning, consciousness raising is prerequisite for transforming input to intake.

In certain cases, translation can be preferable in connection with the building of linguistic competence, and moreover, translation forms part of language studies at university level. For that reason, it must be considered natural that the students become acquainted with translation memory and its field of application. Even if this is primarily a tool for professional translators, it can be used profitably in language teaching at university level, among other things for the purpose of drawing attention to goal-directed learning of vocabulary, including stable lexicalised units.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, some examples have been mentioned of how and why CALL should be made part of communicative language teaching at university level. As appears from the examples, CALL can contribute in various ways to the building of communicative competence on a high level. In connection to learning the four skills, the greatest possibilities can be found with respect to receptive skills and the learning of writing skills. In connection to the learning of spoken language, CALL can contribute a rich input and inspiration and can contribute to knowledge and metaawareness about spoken language, but the students' mastering of more advanced speech requires interpersonal interaction in various discourse contexts and a more complex communication than the technology can handle.

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