Facilitation theory or the humanist approach?

Teaching and learning today are completely different from yesterday because we are facing the challenges of changes in higher education for the future prosperity with todays young students and their readiness to take up these challenges to face up to the coming centuries. Understanding teaching and learning is not easy, not something that can be based on the representation of what has been perceived or limited to a few methodological prescriptions. In this chapter, we are going to go back and shed light on some theories of learning to understand better to what extent teaching is related to learning and how they can impact in society.

1. 1 languages Teaching and Learning

Language teaching and learning still requires much effort to be stored in individuals' mind perfectly. It should have acquired an appreciation of the values of a broad range of intellectual disciplines such as linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and mainly applied linguistics as well as general detailed knowledge. So, how can language pass on these disciplines to become dynamic and pragmatic in use? To answer this question, let us see what Campell's theory depicts, in figure 1 below, about the relationship between three disciplines: linguistics, applied linguistics and pedagogy. Campbell (1980: 7) says: " The relation between the language sciences and language teaching has emerged as one of the key issues in the development of a language teaching theory …" For him: Applied linguistics is the mediator between the practitioner and the theorist.". See Fundamental concepts of language teaching book of H. H. Stern,(1983: 36)

Linguistics

Applied linguistics

Pedagogy

Theoretician Mediator Practitioner

Figure1 Campell's model of the relationship between theory and practice

According to Campell's theory starting from linguistics, the scientific study of language, alone is not enough to get an effective relation between pedagogy and linguistics. The latter requires much practice to relate theory to practice and make language more effective. For that reason, to consolidate the three disciplines, Campell included three extra elements to his conceptual framework. These elements are psychology, sociology and anthropology. Campell's model of the relationship between theory and practice made Spolsky(1980: 72) argued and then modified Campbell's theory . For Spolsky, sociolinguistics discipline is very interesting to achieve a good result in the relation between theoreticians and practitioner. He divided language teaching into three main sources:

Language description: General Linguistics

Language teaching: psychology for the theory of learning and psycholinguistics for the theory of language learning

Language use in society : sociolinguistics

What we can understand from Sposky's theory language teaching is an interesting amalgam of disciplines, each one contributes to educational

language in practice and the focus here is on the educational language. Pragmatically speaking, according to many people the understanding of language is not only learning theories but it is also our reflection and thinking of knowing to what extent can be these theories impact on the teaching of language. The theories are different of how we learn, and they are useful and ready for how students learn and also how teachers teach. Each one of them, student and teachers, has own way of thinking of own different way of learning. So who are we in these theories? And what are these theories? To answer these questions let us see some fundamental theories of learning:

1. 2. 1 Reinforcement Theory

This theory was developed by the behaviourist school of psychology, notably by B. F. Skinner (Laird 1985, Burns 1995). Laird (1985) sees this aspect of behaviourism not relevant to education. It is about some positive and negative tasks the learners made in his daily life. This theory requires much Competency Based Training (henceforth, CBT), It is useful in learning repetitive tasks like multiplication tables and those work skills that require a great deal of practice but higher order learning is not involved in it. The criticism of this approach is that it is rigid and mechanical (Burns 1995).

1. 1. 3 Cognitive-Gestalt Approaches

The focus in this theory is on the importance of experience, meaning, problem-solving and the development of insights (Burns 1995, p 112). Burns notes that this theory has developed the concept that individuals differ from one to another, they have different concerns at different times with different subjective interpretations in different contexts. This theory is very close to

learners to get themselves in learning language by knowing to what extent they are different from each other. It is also very close to the learners' characteristics of today (for more details see chapter 3)

1. 1. 4 Holistic Learning Theory

The basic understanding of this theory is that the focus is on the composition of the individual personality which consists of many elements…specifically … the intellect, emotions, the body impulse (or desire), intuition and imagination' (Laird, 1985, p 121) that all require activation if learning is to be effective. This theory is about a complementary theory to Cognitive-Gestalt approaches.

1. 1. 5 Experiential learning

In this theory, Kolb's research found that people learn in four ways in learning (McGill & Beaty 1995). The ways are as follows:

Concrete experience

Testing implications of Observations and Reflections

concepts in new situations

Formation of abstract

concepts and generalization

Figure 1 the Experiential Learning Model (Kolb, 1981)

- Learning through concrete experience

- Learning through observation and reflection

- Learning through abstract conceptualization

- Learning through active experimentation

In discussing these theories, we confirm from the educational researchers' concept that learners are different in their way of learning. Kolb, one of these educational researchers whose interests are involved in proving that learner, individually, can choose any style and way of learning which reflects his behaviour to act in learning which is the link between him and his society through actions and reflective process (McGill & Beaty 1995). This theory confirms Spolsky's argument (1980: 72)

1. 1. 6 Facilitation Theory or the Humanist Approach

Carl Rogers and others have developed the theory of facilitative learning. The basic introduction to this theory is that learning will occur by the educator acting as a facilitator, that is by establishing an atmosphere in which learners feel comfortable to consider new ideas and are not threatened by external factors (Laird 1985). Other characteristics of this theory include:

- Human beings must be eager to learn (prompt willingness)

- Human beings must be curious to learn (curiosity)

- To change on self's concept we must be involved in a significant learning. (flexibility and readiness).

Carl and Rogers see that:

The Characteristics of Facilitative Teachers are:

- They are not more protective of their beliefs than other teachers

- They are affectionate they are all listening to learners, especially to their feelings

- They are much attentive to their relationship with learners in the classroom.

- be open-minded and apt to accept feedback, whether positive or negative and to use it as a reflective and constructive insight into themselves and their behaviours.

Some of these characteristics do fit our changes into innovative and modern teachers but others still to be modified according to our readiness for being autonomous teachers. In this work, we are going to focus on the changes from the traditional, affectionate and facilitative teachers into modern teachers.

The characteristics of learners:

- Must be courageous, autonomous and responsible for their own learning

- Must care and provide much information (input) for the learning which occurs through their deep perception (insights) and experiences.

- are encouraged to evaluate themselves before their teachers and to be aware of their learning needs to focus on what factors may contribute to achieving significant results.

These characteristics are mandatory and required in the new systems implementation.

To understand better this theory which impacts strongly our work we must understand the relationship between teachers and learners or in another words between learning and teaching as well as the strategies made to enhance this relationship. So what is learning and what is teaching? And what is the relationship between them. Teaching is to get and pass on knowledge while learning is to acquire this knowledge by

studies; it is also the process where knowledge is created through transformation of experience (see page 3 David Kolb 1981). It seems that the relation between them is very strong and interrelated. From these definitions, we can also understand that the relationships between teaching and learning lead to the best academic achievement for students having the desire to acquire learning language which represents an individual's receptive cognition to learning different tasks depend on the context (Peterson, et al., 2009). It is an input which differs from one individual to another depends on the teachers in regard to what type of information is most effective.

The concept that students and teachers have different competence that vary from one to another to learning and teaching language in different styles and ways lead theoreticians and practitioners, those who are responsible for curriculum control and revision, to think of the curriculum framework, i. e. how to be in charge of approaches and systems to structure teaching language and planned in the curriculum frame work. The curriculum is now very interesting to empower both learners and teachers to develop their potential in knowledge. So, what is Curriculum? Who are responsible for

planning it? And what is it for? To respond to these questions we need first understand the curriculum meaning.

1. 2 What is Curriculum?

The curriculum is concerned with two terms teaching and learning, i. e. what is given in learning and teaching, and how they take place. What teachers teach or learners learn comprises aims, strategy, knowledge, skills and outcomes of learning students are intended to make obvious. The how of the curriculum concern teaching/learning methodology, teaching strategies and media resources.

The curriculum has been changed due to changes in systems implementation such as CBA, LMD and ICT's integration in the classroom. The latter needs some cases of the invention of new technology to modify the content and enlarge knowledge to make a good curriculum. The systems , CBA, LMD and ICT's integration, in many ways can be seen to be affecting the curriculum both in terms of content and methodology.

Further, we mean by the word curriculum " run a Course", i. e. it describes a series of steps in teaching and learning specific contents. It is also considered as a sequence of learning experiences; the fact of these definitions that without curriculum none can control the individual students' experiences. Thus through curriculum students can be provided with opportunities to learn a specific content. From the latter, we can understand also that the suitable definition to the curriculum is' a sequence learning opportunities given to students in their study for specific purposes'. A sequence of learning opportunities cannot be seen but it can be planned and

made through the classroom activities. Thus, curriculum appears in different aspects which exist in textbooks for specific contents to facilitate teaching and make teachers efficient to pave this sequence of learning opportunities for students.

It is actually made to develop learners' competence; herein we are speaking about the importance of curriculum development

1. 3 The Importance of Curriculum Development

The importance of curriculum development appears in its focus on knowledge transmission and skills development in regard with competency based language teaching (henceforth CBLT) or learning outcomes. That is to say, working on the four skills (reading, speaking, writing and listening), knowledge and attitudes make effective teaching strategies. In relation to CBLT, Docking says that:

CBLT [Competency-Based Language Teaching] is designed not around the notion of subject knowledge but around the notion of competency. The focus moves from what students know about language to what they can do with it. The focus on competencies or learning outcomes underpins the curriculum framework and syllabus specification, teaching strategies and assessment.

(Docking, 1994: 16)

From the above quotation basing on what have been already said, we can understand that Competencies focus on four main parameters appears in the following:

Learning outcomes

Curriculum

Syllabus

Teaching strategies (a course)

Assessment

Figure 1: The Main Parameters of Learning Outcomes or Competencies

Figure one represents the relationship between curriculum and its aspects (syllabus, teaching strategies and assessment) in regard with learning outcomes. These four fundamental concepts help theoreticians and practitioners to define the context in relation to the student's needs about the curriculum framework which is clearly related to students' learning needs. To respond to learning needs and CBLT the curriculum planning must take care of the following points:

Setting: Students' number, age, gender, purpose, education

Aim: Type and purpose of course, mandatory and required tests .

Materials needed or available: text, books, e- books, magazines, articles or computers, laptops with their connection to the net and so forth.

Time: How many hours, day of week, time of day.

These four points can also be viewed as part of syllabus. The latter is very important to design a course that must focus on the needs of learning outcomes. Herein, to understand more the concepts given let us have a look at what is a course in regard with syllabus or vice versa.

1. 3. 1 Course

A course is " an integrated series of teaching-learning experiences, whose ultimate aim is to lead the learners to a particular state of knowledge". (Hutchinson and Waters 1996: 65) The distinction between a curriculum and a course is important because some of the areas of concern in curriculum development as: societal needs analysis, testing for placement purposes or program wide evaluation may be out of the hands of teachers who are developing courses (Richards, 2001).

1. 3. 2 Syllabuses

Syllabus is a more detailed and operational statement of teaching and learning elements which translates the philosophy of the curriculum into a series of planned steps leading towards more narrowly defined objectives at each level

Dubin & Olshtain, (1997: 28),

Syllabus is essentially a statement of what should be taught, year by year – through language – syllabuses often also contain points about the method of teaching and the time to be taken

(Lee 1980: 108).

Another opinion is that that

Syllabus is a more detailed and operational statement of teaching and learning elements which translates the philosophy of the curriculum into a series of planned steps leading towards more narrowly defined objectives at each level"

Dubin &Olshtain, (1997: 28).

Syllabuses are more localized and are based on accounts and records of what actually happens at the classroom level. Given these definitions it is suggested that it seems helpful to define a curriculum and a syllabus as separate entities. To conclude we can now ensure that we can see syllabus design as part of course design, they are complementary and parts of curriculum whose importance appears also in the following:

"

" The educational purpose of the program.

The content teaching procedures and learning experience which will be necessary to achieve this purpose .(the means)

Some means for assessing whether or not the educational ends have been achieved."

(Richards, Platt and Platt 1993: 94)

From these most significant points Allen sees that:

Curriculum is a very general concept which involves consideration of the whole complex of philosophical, social and administrative factors which contribute to the planning of an educational program.

(Allen quoted in Nunan, 2000: 6)

Thus, it is the change of instructions in teaching and learning in all over the world. For that reason, most developing countries' institutions among them Algerian institutions have amended and revised their curricula in another

words their syllabuses, methods, approaches and systems to respond to the world requirements, taking into account the various factors(external or internal) that influence learning process. To understand more this policy of education we must understand its basic notions in the structural education such as competencies or learning outcomes, syllabus, course, assessment and curriculum.

Today, there are many of teachers and students who think that curriculum is syllabus; in fact, syllabus is a part of a curriculum. It describes the content of a course . i. e. It shows the content of what is going to be taught including a set of knowledge and skills. Herein, the importance of presenting the basic notions education is to go over the global changes and structures of the various disciplines to learn from others and to be apt to know what others think of us.

In addition to curriculum development made by policy makers which enables learning to take place, during the course of study, in terms of knowledge and skills, teachers should highlight the main syllabus to present the main learning and methods and to provide the learners with resources and equipments to support the effective teaching of the course. In this case the teacher' notion must focus on how to structure the knowledge to be well received by learners. The following quotation ensures our saying the learning structure through teaching.

Teaching is knowledge transmission, management of learning. The teacher is a decision maker, provider of learning structure, collaborator, and resource. (Adapted from Graves 2000: 31)

Our aim from understanding the curriculum development and its importance is to ensure a successful and effective teaching of the language through official curriculum delivered by policy makers to be implemented in schools and universities. Implementing such curriculum requires much effort to respond to the learners' needs and competence.

Algeria as one of developing countries and a multilingual schooling is in the process of growing out of its historical roots run riot to make changes in educational policy encouraging the education ministry to revise, modify and update the curriculum for basic education, particularly in basic education programs.

Speaking about changes in educational programs and organizing content lead us to think of the CBA approach and LMD system that are the fundamental concepts, today, of the curriculum whose interests are in organizing and exploring learner's competence (knowledge and skills). They both work on input (data/ knowledge) and outcomes. The question to be raised here what are these implementations? These systems implementations are CBA approach in primary and secondary schools and LMD system in universities.

1. 4 Historical Background about CBA

In 1973, the word competency was introduced to psychology literature when David McClelland argued in his article ' Testing for competence rather than for intelligence' that neither job performance nor success can be got through old and traditional tests of academic discipline. Thus, the search for theory

and tools that could unfailingly see coming effectiveness in the workplace began (McClelland, 1973).

In1982 it was Boyatzis who first drew together comprehensive data that had been collected inthe USA using the McBer & Company ' Job Competence Assessment' method. Since then, competency has become a significant factor in HR development practices (Simpson, 2002). The word competency comes from a Latin word meaning " suitable" (Bueno & Tubbs, 2004). Boyatzis (1982) defines a competency as " an underlying characteristic of a person which results in effective and/or superior performance in a job" (p. 97).

According to Boyatzis (1982) a job competency represents ability. An individual's set of Contemporary Management Research 49 competencies reflect their capability or what they can do. A job competency may be a motive, trait, skill, aspect of one's self-image or social role, or a body of knowledge that an individual uses, and the existence and possession of these characteristics may or may not be known to the individual. Similarly, Mitrani et al. (1992) state that competencies could be motives, traits, self-concepts, attitudes or values, content knowledge, or cognitive or behavioral skills.

A competency is an individual characteristic that can be measured or counted

reliably and that can be shown to differentiate significantly between superior and average performers, or between effective and ineffective performers. Meanwhile, competency can be described as a set of behavior patterns that

an incumbent needs to bring to a position in order to perform its tasks and functions in the delivery of desired results or outcomes (Bartram, et. al, 2002; Woodruffe, 1992). Spencer and Spencer (1993) viewed competency as " an underlying characteristic of an individual that is causally related to criterion-referenced effective and/or superior performance in a job or situation" (p. 9).

They recognized five types of competency characteristics consisting of motives, traits,

self-concept, knowledge and skills. First, motives are the things that an individual

consistently thinks about or wants that stimulate action. Motives drive, direct and select

behavior toward certain actions or goals and away from others. Second, traits are physical characteristics and consistent responses to situations or information. Third, self-concept is an individual's attitudes, values or self-image. Fourth, knowledge is the information that an individual has in specific content areas.

Finally, skill is the ability to perform a certain physical or mental task. Knowledge and skill competencies tend to be visible and relatively surface characteristics, whereas self-concept, traits and motive competencies are more hidden, deeper and central to personality. Surface knowledge and skill competencies are relatively easy to develop and training is the most cost-

effective way to secure those employee abilities (Spencer & Spencer, 1993).
Figure 1 illustrates central and surface competencies.

Knowledge

Attitudes, Values

Trait Motive

Surface: Most easily developed Core Personality: Most difficult to develop

Skill Knowledge

Self-Concept Trait Motive

T

Skill Knowledge

Self-concept

Trait Motive

tr
The Iceberg

Visible

Hidden

Figure 1 The Iceberg Model and Central and Surface Competencies

Source: Spencer and Spencer (1993: 11)

In other words, visible competencies such as knowledge and skills may be

somewhat technical competencies basically required by the job, whereas hidden

competencies such as self-concept, traits and motives are behavioral competencies that

drive an individual's performance in the job. Boyatzis (1982) states that motive and trait

competencies have the most direct impact on self-concept and also have an impact on

skill. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO, 2002) defines

competency as a set of skills, related knowledge and attributes that allow an individual to perform a task or activity within a specific function or job. If an individual possesses

these three elements of competency they can effectively perform duties as required by the specific job.

From the wide range of related literature, the definition of competency can be

summarized as an underlying characteristic of an individual that is causally related to

criterion-referenced effective and/or superior performance in a job or situation. Job

competency is a set of behavior patterns that a job incumbent needs to bring to a position in order to perform its tasks and functions with competence. A job competency can be a motive, trait, skill, self-concept, body of knowledge or an attribute that allows an individual to perform a task or activity within a specific function or job.

1. 4 The Implementation of the CBA Approach in the Algerian Classroom

The CBA approach has been adopted by the Algerian education ministry to be integrated in the primaries and secondary school to improve teaching and learning. It is imposed on both teachers and learners to explore their competence and roles in lifecycle. A competency based approach is a new reform contributes to better the learners' knowledge situations that may varied in a range of skills. The CBA is closely related to a context-of-use. In other words, students will be good learners to use language effectively in their lifecycle by drawing a map to master what they have learned in schools.

1. 5 The reasons of the CBA Approach Implementation in the Classroom

The reasons why the Algerian authoritarians those who are responsible for educational policy implement the CBA approach in the primary and secondary school classrooms is to develop students' linguistic and problem-solving capacities that will make students to deal with different tasks cognitively and pragmatically challenging any difficult situation in the classroom. It will also make learners autonomous and see learning as an essential process for both their studies and their future. So it is implemented

in schools because it is a productive approach basing on what the learners are expected to do rather than on what they are expected to learn about.

1. 6 The Characteristics of the CB Approach

The CBA approach enables learners to check their capacity to overcome obstacles and problems; it is problem- solving approaches that make learners think of well doing. It is a creative use of a newly constructive knowledge. Moreover, it characteristics can be listed as follows:

It makes students challengers to endure and encounter all kind of complexity and ambiguity in learning.

It is about reflection, self-assessment, and performance review are fully integrated into the exercise. As a result, challenge becomes success.

Collaboration in teamwork is essential to the effective learning experience.

It enables student's competence to affect the world beyond the classroom and to make contributions that are valued by professional and experts.

It provides learners with information based on assessment tasks.

It is based on authentic language proficiency across sociolinguistic context.

It reveals the learners' innateness.

It is usable for instruction and curriculum adaptation to the learners' needs.

It is based on the outcomes as in Schenck's saying:

It is outcome-based and is adaptive to the changing needs of students, teachers and the community ... competencies differ from other students' goals and objectives in that they describe the students' ability to apply basic end other skills in situations that are communally encountered in everyday life.

Thus CBE (Competency Based Education) is based on a set of outcomes that are derived in life role situations.

Schenck (2001: 14)

To reinforce what has been said about " CBE" let us see some extra definitions of Competency Based Education to understand better from where does CBA come from? Richards and Rodgers (2001) says:

Competency Based Education focuses on outcomes of learning. CBEaddresses what the learners are expected to do rather than on what they are expected to learn about. CBE emerged in the United States in the 1970s and refers to an educational movement that advocates defining educational goals in terms

of precise measurable descriptions of knowledge, skills, and behaviors students should possess at the end of a course of study.

Richards and Rodgers(2001)

To reinforce Richards and Rodgers's definition of CBE Savage see that CBE is a functional approach to focus on skills depends on the learners' needs and competence. He sees in his definition the following:

Competency Based Education is a functional approach to education that emphasizes life skills and evaluates mastery of those skills according to actual leaner performance. It was defined by the U. S. Office of Education as a " performance-based process leading to demonstrated mastery of basic and life skills necessary for the individual to function proficiently in society.

Savage (1993: 15)

For Mrowicki, referring to skills only is not enough in speaking about CBE because competency is an interesting amalgam of knowledge and attitudes for more effective results. Thus he sees in his definition the following:

Competencies consist of a description of the essential skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors required for effective performance of a real-world task or activity. These activities may be related to any domain of life, though have typically been linked to the field of work and to social survival in a new environment.

Mrowicki (1986: 144)

It is very interesting to understand what we have presented as most significant definitions of CBE regarding the Communicative Approach which is at the basis of the Competency Based Approach, the educational system applied in Algeria, and which can be also considered to be at the basis of the LMD system applied at the level of the University, next section is devoted to the presentation of the latter, i. e. of the LMD system, to see in what way is the LMD system a continuation of the CBA.

1. 7 What is LMD?

The LMD system, introduced in the Algerian universities by 2003-2004, is a current issue that specialists in Algeria and elsewhere are interested in. The LMD system (Licence, Master and Doctorate) is the latest reform applied in the Algerian universities. It aims at bringing the Algerian diploma to the universality and to bring the Algerian student to a higher level of learning on the one hand and to the world of job on the other hand. The introduction of LMD in the Algerian universities should be accompanied by these new ideas for innovative teaching practices to improve the performance of the university system but also lead to greater employability of graduates.

1. 8 The Characteristics of the LMD System

In practice, we observe that the formalization of thes