

The Power of the Communicative Language Approach (CLA) in English as a Second Language (ESL) tourism classrooms

Paula Rama-Da-Silva

Senior Lecturer, Centro de Estudos Anglísticos da Universidade de Lisboa, Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril.

Abstract:

Learning a language is an ongoing process which must be meaningful to a student. In the tourism sector workers need to be able to professionally communicate with the clients and interact in such a way that makes them not only pleasant but essentially efficient. Speaking a foreign language effectively is therefore of utter relevance.

This paper describes two different activities that were undertaken in higher education tourism classes with Portuguese students. Both activities had as main goals to develop the communicative competence, according to Richards (2006), by using language for different purposes and functions according to the settings and participants, producing different types of text and maintaining communication through the use of different strategies. As such students were invited to (1) develop a creative tourism experience to present to future clients; (2) engage children, as part of a kids club activity, in a storytelling process.

Tomlinson (2024) describes the communicative ability as the ultimate goal of any language use and any language teaching. In our classes the purpose was to give students the tools which would enable them to perform real-life goals by integrating different skills thus making it more realistic being the teacher a mere facilitator in the learning process.

Examples of activities and feedback will be given as to justify the importance of the methods and tasks developed by students.

Keywords:

Communication, ESL, tourism, TBL.