"ACTION KNOWLEDGE" THROUGH COMMUNICATIVE, PROCESS-ORIENTED INTERACTION IN THE EFL CLASSROOM --- SOME ISSUES IN DOUGLAS BARNES' FROM COMMUNICATION TO CURRICULUM

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I. INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I would like to discuss some of the critical issues in Douglas Barnes' book From Communication to Curriculum, one of the featured textbooks and teacher's guides on educational philosophy, which presents a framework that aims for communication as a goal in the classroom and as a measurement of students' achievement. Barnes has drawn on the best present research to proclaim the case for change in classroom communication. Indeed, as recent trends in Japanese EFL indicate, in this world of internationalization EFL teachers are expected and even obliged to be much more aware of the urgent need for EFL learners in Japan to be communicative in real interactional situations they are supposed to face in their everyday lives.

According to Barnes, "What is required is a qualitative change in the teacher's awareness of language, a shift from content to process, from awareness of forms to awareness of strategies." (1976, 169) As Barnes advocated it should more than a decade ago, the current literature on EFL research has been mainly concerned and has dealt with problems in process-oriented classroom interactions and communication strategies in terms of "skill-using" stage rather than in terms of the content or forms that are so greatly emphasized in "skill-getting/ acquisition" stage of knowledge-based language teaching.

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Barnes' unit of analysis, based on the definitely clear and the most significant distinction for ESL/EFL teachers to remember between what he calls "action knowledge" and "school knowledge," should be of great importance. Although Barnes refers to a wide range of classrooms, what is to be discussed in this paper is, within the realm of its limited perspective, the application of what he advocates in terms of his distinction between "action knowledge" and "transmission knowledge" to the EFL teaching, in general, in Japan.

Even in the formal educational settings Japanese EFL teachers should be aware of the crucial difference between "action/interpretation knowledge" and "school/transmission knowledge" whenever they think about the purpose of instruction. Teachers are supposed to lead students to communicate with each other through their own ideas, thoughts, and words by putting themselves into those situations where various kinds of interactions are going on. Indeed, I agree with Barnes on the point that learning to communicate is at the heart of education, and teachers should continue working towards this goal in any kind of pedagogical environment.

II. DISCUSSION

Let me introduce a sample setting in an EFL classroom in Japan. The teacher in classroom Y is explaining concept X. It could be a minute and detailed grammar point or almost anything. Student A and Student B are sitting next to each other in the back of the room. Student A is explaining to Student B something about what the teacher said which B did not understand. The teacher becomes aware that someone is talking and says in a loud, assertive voice, "Please stop that noise." The students have kept silent before A has started explaining to B and are silent after A has completed the explanation to B.

We can describe the above phenomenon from two standpoints, which is called the "outside" view and the "inside" view. The outside view would find the teacher's behavior quite reasonable and acceptable, and even necessary, because the students should sit down passively while the teacher "gives" them the knowledge of whatever he or she is talking about. If, therefore, the students interrupt him or her, they are being "noisy." Borrowing Barnes' description in the first chapter of <u>From Communication to Curriculum</u>, the teacher was using language "as a pattern of expectations which constitutes an important part of what children learn,"(1976, 31) in telling the students to stop talking. Since what the students are saying by "interrupting" is without value, it is depicted as "noise." In fact, to this type of teacher, whatever is in class unless explicitly asked for has no value. On the contrary, if the teacher asked Student A for an answer which Student A correctly gave, the correct answer would probably be praised with a "very good" which implicitly means "That's just what I wanted."

As shown above, Students A and B were using language quite differently; as a means of learning, which they can use to make sense of what is presented to them and relate it to what they already "know." (Ibid.) Student B probably asked Student A: "What did the teacher say? Why is this true? How do you know?, etc." Here both of the students can benefit from these questions, for they can come to a deeper level of understanding in Student A's responses. Student A must ask of him-/herself the reason why something is true when asked by Student B before he/she can give a definite answer, and must even retrospectively check with his/her previous knowledge to find a justification for his/her response. Actually, this whole process implies a more highly sophisticated level of mental processing than only giving an answer which is accepted and left at that. This is

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exactly what Vygotsky has called "inner speech," "the most accessible part of thought which makes our thinking and feeling open to introspection and control." (Barnes, 1976, 19) Thus, language is a means of formulating knowledge through looking at new information, adding this information to previous knowledge and altering both accordingly, to come up with new conclusions.

The uses of language as a way of structuring the distribution of power in the classroom and as a means of learning are not, however, separate entities bearing no relationship to each other as in the example mentioned above. If, when the teacher interrupted them, Students A and B had not finished their discussion which was taking place for the sole purpose of helping B understand some concept, the arrival at an understanding would have been aborted. In this way, the teacher's use of language can either distract or assist the extent to which students can use language to learn. So, when students do use language to learn, the teacher should not govern or control them totally. Consequently, the form of such interactions depends upon several factors, including each student's prior knowledge, experience, and degree of connection the students can make between these and what is being looked at or observed in the present. As a matter of fact, talking provides a way to reflect "upon the bases upon which they are interpreting reality, and thereby change them."
· In fact, what needs to be done in language classrooms is to let students always make some relationship between what they know already and what the school has presented or offered to them. In this way, learning to communicate might mean developing one's own interpretative system by taking in some other different viewpoints and even totally opposite ideas and opinions. Actually, on some occasions one can broaden one's way of seeing things by encountering various contradictory statements and comments or some other helpful suggestions through interacting with

other people.

As for Barnes' standpoint concerning education, he seems to agree with the idea that it domesticates people and serves to make them conform to what is expected of them by society. In fact, he says,

> "Pupils are expected to receive knowledge as static and closed; they are not world makers but world receivers. Their task is to memorize received knowledge and master standard skills; they are not expected to participate in the making of knowledge to devise methods for themselves."
> (Barnes, 1976, 157)

As shown above, unfortunately, most institutions of learning do not encourage learners to be inventive or creative in terms of their own skills and for their own ends. Barnes prescribes few solutions to bring about any change in the status quo, but he does diagnose many of the illnesses prevailing in those institutions today. Indeed he attempts to show just how teachers consistently respond to what students say and how this leads to a communication pattern which inhibits the learner and encourages him/her to be a passive recipient of knowledge presented by the teacher.

In addition, teachers even tend to formulate knowledge for the learner, often discouraging learners from using knowledge they do possess to make sense out of knowledge presented to them. So, in understanding new concepts, students are supposed to do so in accordance with the teacher's point of view, for it is the teacher that has tight control over classroom communication. It is true that the teacher elaborately constructs questions which the students are expected to answer by filling in the blank with the correct factual information. There is a commonly fixed pattern of communication in the classroom of every age group in industrialized countries all over the world: the

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question and answer routine, also known as the recitation pattern. Thus, knowledge is shaped for the students by the teacher, which never becomes "action" or "interpretation" knowledge, but stays as a "school" or "transmission" knowledge.

Here, I agree with the significance of the interpretation knowledge, as Barnes does, rather than the final draft type of school transmission knowledge. What is important in terms of the result of the whole pedagogical process is a kind of "exploratory talk" in the course of interacting autonomously with each other for the purpose of communicating with other human beings. Through the "exploratory talk" we can carry out "assimilation" and "accommodation" of the new knowledge to the old, including controlling thinking, frequent hesitations, rephrasings, false starts, and changes of direction. Put differently, the important idea here is the role of other people in the recoding of knowledge as we bring our own interpretative systems into interaction with the interpretative systems of other people. We change our knowledge by verbalizing and using new knowledge as a means of recoding former experiences.

Thus, each of us becomes an active participant in the making of meaning(s), renewing it in the course of sharing our lives. This "sharing" is "communication." Therefore, the whole process of thinking aloud with monitoring one's own thought and reshaping it can be called "communication," which should definitely be the function of language. Not only this idea of seeing language as a means of learning (i.e., speech as reflection) but also that of seeing it as the communicative system (i.e., speech as communication) should be considered highly, as it involves the important social functions of the language playing a passive role as the recipient of socialization. As a result, how the communicative system interacts with the reflective system is critical here.

In many cases, the student is expected to recall a particular fact which is most likely irrelevant to anything real in the student's own experience. He/She is asked to make a link from one meaningless item to another and as a result he/she can only make some reckless guesses at what the teacher has in mind. A look at the following example will illustrate this.

1)T: Yes. Is that wrong, what I said? Is it wrong?

2)S: No, there's some trade...

3)T: Can you tell me why it's not wrong?

4)S: Er, er...em...you learn a trade like...jo...er your father's like joinering, and...

5)T: Yes, so that, that word "trade" does mean something else as well, doesn't it? But it means buying and selling to make a profit, in the way that we were using it last time. That's really what it means... buying something, and selling it to make a profit. Does anyone know what a profit means?

6)S: Money. It means money.

As illustrated in line 5), the teacher had a locked-in sequence to follow in the lesson and any digressions on the part of the students would damage the plan. This is why the teacher simply provides the students the information needed then and keeps them from making any meaningful associations or relationships. Even though a student tries to make some sense out of the topic being discussed by drawing from personal experience, he/she is often met with impatience, indifference, and even made fun of by the teacher, as indicated below.

1)T: Now that moisture in the atmosphere, that condenses after a warm day and appears during the night. What do we call it?

2)Ss: (Several hands are raised.)

3)T: Yes, Tom?

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  4)S1: Dew

  5)T: Answer in a complete sentence.

  6)S2: I got up this morning and found steam on my window.

  7)T: Kathy, I thought you were smarter than that.

(laughter)

  8)T: That's dew. It's not steam!

Here the teacher undermines the student's attempt at making a hypothesis by insisting that he/she use the "correct word" or a "complete sentence." In this way, teachers tend to ignore the validity of the student's message only because it has not been worded "properly" or "accurately." Such strictness in the teacher's discipline is frequently witnessed and observed in the following pseudo-conversations in ESL/EFL classes:

  1)T: Who can speak Chinese in this class?

  2)S: Sam Chiu

  3)T: Please give me a complete sentence.

  4)S: Sam Chiu speak Chinese.

  5)T: Sam Chiu speaks Chinese.

  6)S: Sam Chiu speaks Chinese.

  7)T: That's right./Good!

Retrospecting on my own teaching in freshmen or sophomore English classes at college or university level, I find myself exactly the same as the teacher described in the above pseudo-conversation. That is, the teacher is apt to devalue the impor-tance of communicating effectively by correcting rather than responding. As a matter of fact, even a presumably-positive feedback such as line 7) enhances the artificiality of this dialogue. Perhaps, this kind of feedback, regardless of it's being positive or negative, can be a reinforcing device for em-phasizing the teacher's control over the student and keeping the traditional authoritarian responsibility on the teacher's part as well as that of submissive attitudes of the learner.

According to Barnes' study on secondary school teachers' attitudes towards written work, we can find certain patterns among teachers' views about teaching and learning, which he synthesized as the "Transmission" view and the "Interpretation" view. He hypothesizes a relationship between: (1) the teacher's view of knowledge (2) what he values in pupils (3) his view of his own role, and (4) his evaluation of his pupils' participation."(Barnes, 1976. 144) The following (Fig.1) is a diagram for his description, originally presented by 4 former classmates, who were graduate students at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, Joan Aiciati, Luis A. Guzman, Amy Jacobs, and Eliza Jensen.

The Transmission teacher   vs.   The Interpretation teacher

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(1) Believes knowledge to exist in the form of public disciplines which include content and criteria or performance.

(1) Believes knowledge exists in the knower's ability to organize thought and action.

(2) Values the learner's performances insofar as they conform to the criteria of the discipline.

(2) Values the learner's commitment to interpreting reality so that criteria arise as much from the learner as from the teacher.

(3) Perceives the teacher's task to be the evaluation and correction of the learner's performance, according to criteria of which he/she is the guardian.

(3) Perceives the teacher's task to be the setting up of a dialogue in which the learner can reshape his/her knowledge through interaction with others.

(4) Perceives the learner as an uninformed acolyte for whom access to knowledge will be difficult since he/she must qualify him-/herself through tests of appropriate performance.

(4) Perceives the learner as already possessing systematic and relavant knowledge and the means of reshaping that knowledge.

Fig.1 Comparative features/characteristics of two types of teachers: The Transmission teacher & The Interpretation teacher

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As Barnes does not need to explicitly label his two kinds of teachers as "lousy" and "wonderful" respectively, this categorization should be a basis for our objective measure to describe what sort of teacher he/she is. What is significant here, therefore, is that it leads us to consider what notions we as teachers may have about our students as learners, how they learn, and what constitutes knowledge for us. As Barnes says, "an interpretation teacher is more likely to hold knowledge in a more flexible way, and to allow his pupils everyday understanding some relevance in it" (1976, 144), whereas "a transmission teacher is likely to defend fiercely the boundaries of his subject and be quick to dismiss the non-specialist (pupils and colleagues) as unqualified to hold opinions." (Ibid.)

Moreover, Barnes accounts for the "hidden curriculum," a kind of social learning in which everyone, students and teachers alike, learns to adopt and follow the expected behavior. The communication patterns of the classroom are reflected at all levels throughout the school system and of the society in which we live. "A culture which reduced pupils to passive receivers of knowledge is likely to reduce teachers to passive receivers of curricula, and to deny them the time and resources that would enable them to take active responsibility." (Ibid., 188) Indeed, this forms a vicious cycle surrounding teachers in the real world. The pattern of the vicious cycle would be the following: A teacher's need to control students should respond to what the parents and students expect from school, which enhances the teacher's exercise of power, which gains the colleagues' admiration, which may obtain administration approval or disapproval, which leads to the possibility of promotion, which may enhance the teacher's need to control the students, going back to the beginning. As Friedenburg, (Barnes, 1976, 182) writes, in his description of an American high school,

about what students were learning first hand, they were "unimportant recipients of a system controlled elsewhere." We could add that most teachers are, too.

Furthermore, Barnes, insisting that "social order is the pattern of communication" used (1976, 183), concludes that "to understand why classroom communication is as it is we would finally have to go outside the classroom, beyond teachers' beliefs about knowledge and learning, to consider some of the functions performed by school knowledge in our society." (Ibid., 176)

In order to develop a meaningful curriculum, therefore, we should alter the communication that is teacher-oriented into the one which is enacted by students. Indeed, as Barnes says,

> "... a curriculum made only of teachers' intentions would
> be an insubstantial thing from which nobody would learn
> much. To become meaningful a curriculum has to be enacted
> by pupils as well as teachers, all of whom have their
> private lives outside the school. By "enact" I mean come
> together in a meaningful communication- talk, write, read
> books, collaborate, become angry with one another, learn
> what to say and do, and how to interpret what others say
> and do." (1976, 14)

This type of curriculum is successfully presented by the notion and basic principles of Cooperative Learning developed by Johnson and Johnson (1975), which is, according to Keiko Hirose and Hiroe Kobayashi (1991), a teaching methodology aiming at maximizing learning by fostering or facilitating cooperation among peer learners and also requires that learners develop and use effectively social skills for succeeding in their collaborative classroom activities. In fact, featured by its three fundamental principles, that are, (1) positive interdependence, (2) individual accountability, and (3) collaborative skills relevant

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to small group interaction, "Cooperative Learning provides an excellent context for social language" (Ringdahl et al., 1986, 26), for the teacher cxan achieve in introducing socially-appropriate language functions such as greeting, thanking or showing appreciation or gratitude, expressing disagreement, per-suading or convincing other people, and encouraging, as well as the negotiation of meaning represented by confirming or by clarifying.

The above-mentioned collaborative skills would be most effi-ciently facilitated by group work, which neatly fits Barnes' belief in exploratory talk as the means by which people animate or activate latent knowledge and propel the development of new understanding or expansion of ideas, which leads him to propose that students work regularly together in small groups on specific tasks. As a matter of fact, Barnes highly regards group work, for it can be an ideal alternative method for com-plementing the inadequacies or the anti-learning effect of other patterns of classroom communication he discusses, namely, "recitation," which has been conventionally adopted in foreign language teaching. In talking to a few peers about a problem, individual students can really be more readily adopt what he calls an " open approach" or "hypothetical mode" of thinking/speaking than if they were working alone or being led by a teacher.

As for the language featuring this hypothetical mode, it is tentative, involving frequent use of the conditional such as "let's suppose," "I wonder if," etc., and of questions. This linguistic approach serves the cognitive process in two ways: (1) it facilitates one's own thinking by leaving the mind open to alternatives, and (2) it encourages collaboration by keeping open the right of each member to contribute (Barnes, 1976, 55). Thus, the idea is that together students can push understanding

forward or support and elaborate the ideas, either by picking up and expanding on each other's comments and perceptions, or by pushing an individual speaker to be him-/herself more explicitly.

In addition, it may be possible to assume that the distinction between "school knowledge" and "action knowledge made by Barnes should be somewhat equated, though not entirely, with Krashen's distinction between "learning" and "acquisition," despite the fact that the former relates to a larger and more general pedagogical context than the specific language learning context which the latter is applicable to. There seem to exist some parallels between the work of the two in terms of their underlying educational-philosophical messages. "Learning" is a conscious state of internalizing the grammatical rules of the target language, which is best exemplified by passive "rote-memorization" or "pattern practice" in the audio-lingual approach; while "acquisition" is an unconscious process of generating the target language in "Monitor-free" situations, which is quite analogous to the active "creative construction" in a sense that it internalizes rules and formulates and tests out hypotheses about how language works in order to generate new sentences.

Moreover, looking back on the history of linguistics, according to Diller's classification described in Language Teaching Controversy, we can make further analogies between the previously-mentioned distinctions and the types of linguists as well as those of teaching methodologies. That is, the Barnes' distinction between "the school/transmission knowledge/teacher" and "the action/interpretation knowledge/teacher" can be absolutely analogous to the distinction between "structuralists/empiricists," who advocate "audio-lingual method" or "oral approach," represented by "pattern practice" or mechanical "rote-

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memorization," and "rationalists/cognitivists," whose belief is
the ESL/EFL learners' "creative construction" or their "LAD
(i.e., language acquisition device)," borrowing Chomsky's ter-
minology, represented by active and creative "cognitive-code
learning." In other words, the process of "habit-formation" is
compared to "transmission," which Barnes uses for elaborating
the description of his term "school knowledge," which is
mechanical, one-way directed to students, and thus teacher-
centered; while the process of "cognitive construction" can be
essentially creative, two-way communicative as well as reflec-
tive, and student-oriented/initiated. As far as the fundamental
educational philosophy is concerned, we can make such analogical
statements among the contrastive schools of theories stated
above, which leads us to establish such comparison or paral-
lelism between school knowledge, rote-memorization, learning vs.
action knowledge, cognitive creativity/creative construction,
and acquisition.

III. SOME IMPLICATIONS TO EFL CLASSROOMS

In the following, let me suggest examples of "communicative,
process-oriented" interactional activities to achieve the goal
of creating an actual "skill-using" environment, referring to
some principles advocated by some scholars in the field.
1) The teacher asks each student to write his/her own diary,
which is meaningful to the students, for they can feel free to
write whatever topics relevant to their everyday life, e.g.,
about their dreams and hopes, future plans, or experiences
concerning friendship, and so on.
2) In class, students share their opinions or values in the
form of group debates or discussions about what they read, by
means of which they are expected to acquire communicative skills
through autonomous interaction. They are given more meaningful

contexts in which they learn the foreign language, for they have to "think," "discuss," and "write" about their own experiences. 3) The teacher can incorporate "values clarification" activity advocated by Simon, Howe, and Kirschenbaum, in which the teacher can demonstrate that what goes on in the classroom should be relevant and attached to the real things that are going on in students' lives --- "their daily encounters with friends, with strangers, with peers, with authority figures; the social and academic tasks that assault or assuage their egos." (1972, 13) In addition, "This is a confusing world to live in. At every turn we are forced to make choices about how to live our lives. Ideally, our choices will be made on the basis of the values we hold; but frequently, we are not clear about our own values." (Ibid., 14) Everything we do calls for thought, opinion-making, decision-making and action based on our consciously or unconsciously-held beliefs, attitudes and values. As a result, the humanistic "values clarification" approach is appropriate and applicable to teach EFL students. While they study English, they should learn to acquire the skill or ability to solve problems in their daily life situations by means of their values.

4) Having students do tasks in pairs and in small groups provides the "use of situations of utterance," which allows language learning to become "a process of acquiring a new aid to action." This offers them an important environment where they can establish social relations and share information and ideas and teach and help other peers create new ideas or reshape and improve them in the language. As Rivers & Temperley state, "Our goal is for the students to be able to interact freely with others." (1978, 3) Through discussion students are able to "compare his/her mental picture with someone else's." (Stevick, 1982, 62) Students are expected to be involved in situations

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that reveal the interactional nature of language: "establishing
social relations and maintaining them; seeking and giving
information; learning, or teaching others, to do or make some-
thing." (Herron, 1981, 296) Moreover, Sandra Savignon (1972),
Ronald Applebaum (1974), and Dewey (1897) assert that the new
slogan of communicative competence is the ability to function in
a truly communicative setting --- that is, in a dynamic exchange
of information, and a model of communication must include a
situational context, and the essence of communication is to act
together for a common purpose. (Herron, 1981, 295)
5) Having the students make their own speeches is another way
to "increase their feeling of personal investment in what they
are doing from moment to moment, and to increase the likelihood
that what they are doing fits exactly into what they know and do
not know and are ready for at any given time." (Stevick, 1982,
62-63)

Thus, using productive skills after having practices recep-
tive skills, teachers can move students "from the skill-
acquisition stage to the skill-using one," for "knowledge" from
the information and "intensive practice (skill-getting)" from
listening and cloze exercises are not enough to ensure confident
interaction. Just memorizing basic sentences and new words does
not guarantee that students can express themselves fully in real
communicative situations. Although it is true that "vocabulary
learning is an integral part of learning about new things and
expressing new thoughts, the words are not our words, the
thoughts not our thoughts." (Diller, 1978, 36) Furthermore,
vocabulary should be taught in a living language because it is
easier for us to remember when each new word expresses for us a
thought or concept which we want to remember. As Diller says,
"If the word is essential for the thought, we will remember the
words." (Ibid., 35) Therefore, in language learning it is quite

necessary for learners to make "association" in the course of studying lexical items with thoughts or ideas expressed in texts. Students should practice in actual, purposeful conversational exchange with others, which would make them think in the language and create their own living languages to communicate with others, where "Learning becomes the learner's responsibility." (Morrow, 1981, 63) The teacher can help and advise, but only the learner can learn. Borrowing one Chinese proverb which says, "I hear, and I see, then I touch, and I learn," "Only by practicing communicative activities can we learn to communicate." (Ibid., 64)

IV. CONCLUSION

As illustrated above, Barnes' model of communication-learning suggests a change or an innovation in terms of the patterns having been prevalent still now. This reform is necessary, for the way in which most foreign language classes are conducted now hardly allows students to use their potential, which does not lead to what Barnes calls "real learning." Instead, language teachers are greatly advised to let students enact knowledge by having them work in small groups, which seems to be practically the essential idea or central core of Barnes' pedagogical implications. Here, we can find the intrinsic value of fostering communication and letting students freely explore and try out their cognitive skills, although we have not yet been able to come up with a plausible definition as to the specific approach to develop, handle or account for some variabilities in the degrees of hypothetical and independent modes of thinking in individual EFL learners.

Barnes, not being judgmental, makes his best contribution by developing theoretical expectations to confront with what happens in the real world. Consequently, in terms of making a

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hypothetical contribution, he goes from one pole to the other:
(1) from teacher control to students formulation of knowledge,
(2) from language as reflection to language as communication,
(3) from a classroom constrained by outside main variables to a
classroom free for learning,
(4) from a teacher subject to a "hidden curriculum" to a teacher
free to act.
Finding him-/herself somewhere alone the above-described con-
tinuum, a teacher considers Barnes quite encouraging and enrich-
ing, as he/she can take into account other thinkers to establish
new connections. In this way, From Communication to Curriculum
gives a clear message to teachers, asking them to be responsible
for what is going on in the classroom, stating that what goes on
in the classroom has little relation with what goes on outside.

As a result, we can summarize Barnes' points of discussion in
accordance with the series of distinctions he makes a case for
in his book, which are, especially between Transmission and In-
terpretation styles of teaching, between Presenting and Sharing,
Classification and Framing, School Knowledge and Action
Knowledge, and between the student as world-receiver and as
world-maker, that are all aspects of two almost contradictory
systems of rules. The first system is depicted as static,
closed system of unchangeable Truths, whereas the second as ten-
tative, which calls for the hypothetical thinking and therefore
accepts a range of self-generated alternatives for both student
and teacher as well as values the present experience of the
learner, with an understanding of how new knowledge changes that
experience even if it proceeds from it. Indeed, in this ex-
ploratory way of thinking, no Truth is to be passed on, and in-
stead, it is an ever-changing phase of knowing that can always
be explored anew and in new ways.

Consequently, the ideal learning situation would be rich in

choices of individual contexts for exposure to and use of the language being learned, with the content of communication always taking precedence over the form it takes, and language being more of a means than an end, which exactly portrays what Barnes depicts near the end of his last chapter as the "multi-cultural classroom," in which "knowledge is equally accessible to all pupils, whatever sub-culture they come from," and which "would accept as valuable a far wider range of beliefs, understandings and values" than presently prevails.

To sum up, I believe that language learning should be carried out in learner-centered, communicative, and personalized situations, so that the aim of the overall education, namely, nurturing the ability to acquire the true "action knowledge" indispensable for each student's life on his/her own, should be fulfilled even in such one-phased and limited "skill-getting/acquiring" language classrooms.

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