PROFESORES DE ENSEÑANZA SECUNDARIA · INGLÉS · JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA

TEMA

03

The Communication Process. Functions of Language. Language in Use. The Negotiation of Meaning

El proceso de comunicación. Funciones del lenguaje. La lengua en uso. La negociación del significado.

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Material de elaboración propia a partir de las fuentes oficiales que se citan al final del tema. No es un temario oficial ni sustituye a la normativa publicada.

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1. INTRODUCTION

"Our talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks, and would not be rational if they did." With these words, in his essay "Logic and Conversation" (1975), the philosopher Paul Grice reminded us that communication is not a string of sentences thrown into the air but a cooperative effort in which each participant recognises a common purpose, or at least a mutually accepted direction. That idea is a good compass for this topic, because everything a language teacher does in the classroom, from a greeting to a debate, depends on understanding how people actually exchange meaning.

The topic has four parts, and I will deal with them in this order. First, I will examine the communication process: the classic transmission models of Shannon and Weaver and the model of Roman Jakobson, with the factors that take part in any speech event. Secondly, I will study the functions of language, comparing the proposals of Jakobson, Halliday, Austin and Searle. Thirdly, I will turn to language in use, that is, communicative competence, the cooperative principle, politeness, and the difference between transactional and interactional talk. Fourthly, I will analyse the negotiation of meaning, from Long's interaction hypothesis to Swain's output hypothesis and the notion of mediation. Finally, I will consider the pedagogical and didactic implications for the Secondary classroom, before closing with a conclusion.

Before moving on, I would like to mention the sources consulted for this topic: George Yule's Pragmatics (Oxford University Press, 1996); Gillian Brown and George Yule's Discourse Analysis (Cambridge University Press, 1983); Patsy M. Lightbown and Nina Spada's How Languages Are Learned (Oxford University Press, fifth edition); and Halliday's Introduction to Functional Grammar, by M. A. K. Halliday, revised by Christian Matthiessen (Routledge, fourth edition, 2014). I have also consulted the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001) and its Companion Volume (2020), and, for the legal framework, Ley Orgánica 3/2020 (LOMLOE), Real Decreto 217/2022 and Real Decreto 243/2022, and the Extremaduran Decrees 110/2022 and 109/2022.