



## COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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**Abstract:** *Today, communities are increasingly facing rapid and profound changes and tensions that affect the social, economic, and political aspects of life. The role of education has also become questionable in the millennial era. A matter of fact, 21 century education requires a gradual shift in curriculum construction focusing on the transferable competencies that learners need to develop in instructional settings. In today's knowledge-based, types of skills and competencies that students need to gain are different from in the past. Emphasizing the communicative competence is one of the most influential developments in language education. The implementation of communicative activities in EFL/ESL classroom prepares learners to use English in the world beyond based on their own needs, interests and opportunities.*

**Keywords:** *communicative competence, communicative approach, social language, task-based language learning, text-based teaching.*

The role and influence of English today are gaining a higher speed in the world. The main factors for this phenomenon include expanding communication with the world after gaining independence and increasing speed and scope of information exchange in the global village. The dominant position in the internet space by the language of the published content is firmly held by English, which is a strong motivation to learn English for those who wish to promote their global competencies [1;19]. A communicative approach is an approach which is worldwide known and established it has established itself in many parts of the world as a way of teaching languages, especially English. It is the approach that



has prevailed in English Language Teaching over the past 50 years, and it is still used nowadays [2;34].

The origins of the Communicative Approach are to be found in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The communicative approach is the product of some linguists and educators who had grown dissatisfied with the previous two methods used for foreign language teaching; the audio-lingual method and Grammar-translation method. These great linguists and educators who contributed to the rise of this worldwide used approach are Hymes, Chomsky, Wilkins, Van Ek and Alexander, and the Council of Europe.

However, all these linguists and educators felt that students during those years were not learning the language in the right way. They claimed that they did not learn the 'whole language' and realistic language. Students did not know how to communicate outside the classroom in real life situations, using the appropriate social language. So far they were relying on the structures of language instead of relying on functions and notions of language. This made them unable to communicate in the culture of the language studied [3;90].

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which is an approach to the teaching of second and foreign languages, emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language. It is also referred to as the "Communicative Approach". Historically, CLT has been seen as a response to the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM), and as an extension or development of the Notional-Functional Syllabus. Task-based language learning, a more recent refinement of CLT, has gained considerably in popularity.

Communicative language teaching can be understood as a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom.



Communicative competence includes the following aspects of language knowledge:

Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions;

Knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants;

Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts;

Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge.

So, Communicative Language Teaching is an approach to the teaching foreign languages that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language [4;94].

Principles of CLT:

In the CLT approach, the meaning is given prime importance. The main focus of the approach is to make the learners able to understand the intention and expression of the writers and speakers.

In this approach, it is believed that communicative functions are more important rather than linguistic structures. Littlewood states that «one of the most characteristics features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combine these into a more fully communicative view». Each language has a limited number of sentence patterns. Mastering only those sentence patterns does not help the learners to communicate in the target language. The learner needs to learn the communication functions of those structures.

While using the CLT approach in teaching language, the target language is used in the classroom. The target language is a vehicle for class room communication, not just the object of study [1;56]. Because if the learners continue



to use their native languages, they are not able to communicate in the target language. It is believed that the native language should be used judiciously.

Appropriate use of language is emphasized rather than accuracy. Accuracy comes at the later stage. It is believed that when the learners learn to use the language appropriately accuracy comes automatically.

Language should be taught by integrating all language skills and not by only one skill. It means communication approach is not limited to only speaking skill; reading and writing skills should be developed.

Language cannot be learnt through rote memorization. It cannot be learnt in isolation. It should be learnt through social interaction. To communicate in the target language, there is a need to struggle with language. Richards and Rodgers state that the target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate.

While using this approach, the major focus is to make the learner able to communicate in the target language. Errors are tolerated by the teacher because what is more important is to make them able to speak in the target language. The teacher should not correct them during the activities in which they are using the target language. The teacher can note the errors of the learners and make it correct after the activities are over.

CLT approach provides opportunities to communicate in the target language to the learners.

It encourages teacher-student and student-student interaction. It helps to encourage the cooperative relationship among students. The teacher should give work in a group or in pair which give opportunities to share the information among them. It also helps to promote communication among them. Richards and Rodgers state that students are expected to interact with other people, either in the flesh, through pair and group work, or in their writings.



CLT approach provides the opportunities to the learners not only about what to say and but also about how to say.

The teacher should create situations which help to promote communication. The teacher should teach them how language should be used in a social context. The teacher should give activities such as role play which help the learners to learn the language in social context.

Language teaching techniques should be designed in such a way that it encourages the learners to use the target language. Functional aspects of language should be given importance.

Dramas, role plays, games should be used in the classroom to promote real communication.

-Students should be given opportunities to listen to language as it is used in authentic communication. They may be coached on strategies for how to improve their comprehension [8;98].

Today CLT can be seen as describing a set of core principles about language learning and teaching, as summarized above, assumptions which can be applied in different ways and which address different aspects of the processes of teaching and learning. Some focus centrally on the input to the learning process. Thus content-based teaching stresses that the content or subject matter of teaching drives the whole language learning process. Some teaching proposals focus more directly on instructional processes. Task-based instruction, for example, advocates the use of specially designed instructional tasks as the basis of learning. Others, such as competency-based instruction and text-based teaching, focus on the outcomes of learning and use outcomes or products as the starting point in planning to teach.

Today CLT continues in its classic form as seen in the huge range of course books and other teaching resources that cite CLT as the source of their methodology. In addition, it has influenced many other language teaching approaches that subscribe to a similar philosophy of language teaching.



Communicative Language Teaching is an approach which provides an opportunity to the learners to communicate in the target language. The use of the functional aspect of language makes them able to communicate in the target language in their day to day life. The activities which are used in CLT approaches such as dramas, role plays, and games make learning enjoyable.

Generally, communicative language teaching makes use of authentic material because it is important to give them the opportunity to understand how language is actually used outside the classroom. Students are involved in real life situations tasks that require communication. In this approach, the teacher sets up a situation, in which students are likely to be involved in real life. In some activities, the outcomes of them are unknown to the students. The result depends on their reactions and responses. Thus, they will be kept motivated and they will be kept in suspense until they finish the activity and see the clear outcome [6;11]

Furthermore, in a communicative language teaching class use the language through communicative activities. Most of these exercises are completed through pair and group work.

Those activities give students the opportunity to be involved in real or realistic communication.

Normally those activities are fluency-based activities, such as role-plays, games information gap activities, interviews [7;27].

The communicative approach supports that learning is more student centered than teacher centered. A typical communicative language teaching lesson follows a PPP model. The teacher may present some part of the lesson, and students complete some exercises, but then students produce the language in freer activities that help them to communicate. As a result, the student talk is increased, whereas the teacher talk is decreased. The teacher establishes situations which promote communication and he facilitates students' communication. During the activities, he does not interrupt them, but he monitors their performance. Error correction is





not immediate. If he notes a mistake and he realizes that he has to work on it, he does it later during a more accuracy-based activity. However, the role of students is to communicate by negotiating to mean. Even if their knowledge of the target language is not complete, they still have to try and make themselves understood, but also understand their classmates' intentions of communication.

The communicative approach is based on the idea that in order to learn a second language successfully, you have to communicate real meaning. Thus, when learners are involved in real communication, their natural strategies for language acquisition will be active and used, and this will allow them to learn to use the language.

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