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Communicative language teaching

The ever-growing need for good communication skills in English has created a huge demand for English teaching around the world. Millions of people today want to improve their command of English. And opportunities to learn English are provided in many different ways such as through formal instruction, travel, study abroad, as well as through the media and the Internet. The worldwide demand for English has created an enormous demand for quality language teaching and language teaching materials and resources. Learners set themselves demanding goals. They want to be able to master English to a high level of accuracy and fluency. Employers, too, insist that their employees have good English language skills, and fluency in English is a prerequisite for success and advancement in many fields of employment in today's world. The demand for an appropriate teaching methodology is therefore as strong as ever.

The Communicative Approach – or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) – is a teaching approach that highlights the importance of real communication for learning to take place. In the Communicative Approach, real communication and interaction is not only the objective in learning, but also the means through which it takes place. This approach started in the 70s and became prominent as it proposed an alternative

to the then ubiquitous systems-oriented approaches, such as the Audiolingual method. The development of this approach was a reaction to previous methods that had concentrated on form and structure rather than meaning. In other words, grammatical competence was the focus of methods until the 1970s whereby it is acknowledged that language and language learning goes beyond just focusing on form and structure. It could be said that CLT developed due to the dissatisfaction of some linguists with the grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods.

The main goal and philosophy behind the inception of CLT was the "teaching of communicative competence". CLT was developed to provide language learners with the ability to use the target language in real-life conditions. In other words, it would enable the learners to satisfy the needs they have to handle a communicative situation effectively. Situations can be exemplified as when a learner needs to buy a ticket, do shopping, invite a friend to a party or make an appointment with the doctor. The activities in a classroom that is run through CLT are based on the needs of learners in real-life communicative situation whether in written or spoken communication. According to Jack C. Richards, Communicative language teaching sets as its goal the teaching of communicative competence. What does this term mean? Perhaps we can clarify this term by first comparing it with the concept of grammatical competence. Grammatical Communicative Language Teaching competence refers to the knowledge we have of a language that accounts for our ability to produce sentences in a language. It refers to knowledge of the building blocks of sentences (e.g., parts of speech, tenses, phrases, clauses, sentence patterns) and how sentences are formed. Grammatical competence is the focus of many grammar practice books, which typically present a rule of grammar on one page, and provide exercises to practice using the rule on the other page. The unit of analysis and practice is typically the sentence. While grammatical competence is an important dimension of language learning, it is clearly not all that is involved in learning a language since one can master the rules of sentence formation in a language and still not be very successful at being able to use the language for meaningful communication. It is the latter capacity which is understood by the term communicative competence.

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 (e.g., knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication)

Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interviews, conversations)

Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g., through using different kinds of communication strategies).

Since the 1990s, the communicative approach has been widely implemented. Because it describes a set of very general principles grounded in the notion of communicative competence as the goal of second and foreign language teaching, and a communicative syllabus and methodology as the way of achieving this goal, communicative language teaching has continued to evolve as our understanding of the processes of second language learning has developed. Current communicative language teaching theory and practice thus draws on some different educational paradigms and traditions. And since it draws on several diverse sources, there is no single or agreed upon set of practices that characterize current communicative language teaching. Rather, communicative language teaching today refers to a set of generally agreed-upon principles that can be applied in different ways, depending on the teaching context, the age of the learners, their level, their learning goals, and so on. The following core assumptions or variants of them underlie current practices in communicative language teaching.

Ten Core Assumptions of Current Communicative Language Teaching

1. Second language learning is facilitated when learners are engaged in interaction and meaningful communication.
2. Effective classroom learning tasks and exercises provide opportunities for students to negotiate meaning, expand their language resources, notice how language is used, and take part in the meaningful interpersonal exchange.
3. Meaningful communication results from students processing content that is relevant, purposeful, interesting, and engaging.
4. Communication is a holistic process that often calls upon the use of several language skills or modalities.
5. Language learning is facilitated both by activities that involve inductive or discovery learning of underlying rules of language use and organization, as well as by those involving language

analysis and reflection.

6. Language learning is a gradual process that involves creative use of language, and trial and error. Although errors are a normal product of learning, the ultimate goal of learning is to be able to use the new language both accurately and fluently.
7. Learners develop their routes to language learning, progress at different rates, and have different needs and motivations for language learning.
8. Successful language learning involves the use of effective learning and communication strategies.
9. The role of the teacher in the language classroom is that of a facilitator, who creates a classroom climate conducive to language learning and provides opportunities for students to use and practice the language and to reflect on language use and language learning.
10. The classroom is a community where learners learn through collaboration and sharing.

Current approaches continue to refer to some extent to traditional approaches. Thus classroom activities typically have some of the following characteristics:

- They seek to develop students' communicative competence through linking grammatical development to the ability to communicate. Hence, grammar is not taught in isolation but often arises out of a communicative task, thus creating a need for specific items of grammar. Students might carry out a task and then reflect on some of the linguistic characteristics of their performance.
- They create the need for communication, interaction, and negotiation of meaning through the use of activities such as problem-solving, information sharing, and role play.
- They provide opportunities for both inductive as well as deductive learning of grammar.
- They make use of content that connects to students' lives and interests.
- They allow students to personalize learning by applying what they have learned to their own lives.
- Classroom materials typically make use of authentic texts to create interest and to provide valid models of language

Approaches to language teaching today seek to capture the rich view of language and language learning assumed by a communicative view of language.

Jacobs and Farrell (2003) see the shift toward CLT as marking a paradigm shift in our thinking about teachers, learning, and teaching. They identify key components of this shift as follows:

1. Focusing greater attention on the role of learners rather than the external stimuli learners are receiving from their environment. Thus, the center of attention shifts from the teacher to the student. This shift is generally known as the move from teacher-centered instruction to learner-centered instruction.
2. Focusing greater attention on the learning process rather than the products that learners produce. This shift is known as the move from product-oriented to process-oriented instruction.
3. Focusing greater attention on the social nature of learning rather than on students as separate, decontextualized individuals.
4. Focusing greater attention on diversity among learners and viewing these difference not as impediments to learning but as resources to be recognized, catered to, and appreciated. This shift is known as the study of individual differences.
5. In research and theory-building, focusing greater attention on the views of those internal to the classroom rather than solely valuing the views of those who come from outside to study classrooms, investigate and evaluate what goes on there, and engage in theorizing about it. This shift is associated with such innovations as qualitative research, which highlights the subjective and affective, the participants' insider views, and the uniqueness of each context.
6. Along with this emphasis on context comes the idea of connecting the school with the world beyond as means of promoting holistic learning.
7. Helping students to understand the purpose of learning and develop their purpose.
8. A whole-to-part orientation instead of a part-to-whole approach. This involves such approaches as beginning with meaningful whole text and then helping students understand the various features that enable texts to function, e.g., the choice of words and the text's organizational structure.
9. An emphasis on the importance of meaning rather than drills and other forms of rote learning.
10. A view of learning as a lifelong process rather than something done to prepare students for an exam

Moreover, there are a lot of techniques and Materials in Communicative Language Teaching, for example:

- **Scrambled Sentences**

The teacher gives a text in which the sentences are in a scrambled order. This text may be seen before or they have worked with before. The sentences are restored to their original order as they are told to unscramble the sentences. This kind of exercise gives information the students about the cohesion and coherence properties are bound together through formal devices of linguistic such as anaphoric pronouns, which make a text cohesive and semantic propositions, which unite a text and make it coherent. Also, the student might be asked to put the pictures of a picture in order strip story and write lines to go with the pictures at the same time.

- **Games**

In the communication Language Teaching games are used often. They are found enjoyable by the students and they give students very useful communicative practice if they are designed in a correct manner. Games have three characteristics of communication; information gap, chaise and feedback.

By the use of games an English teacher can apply different techniques, such as true and false, story-telling, word psychology and etc. The teacher should use the best one from the others for the maximum benefit. In fact, games require little or no preparation, they are easy to play and short enough to occupy, a convenient space in the conversation program and also they entertain the students.

- **Realia**

Many proponents of Communicative Language Teaching have advocated the use of "authentic", "from-life" materials in the classroom. These might include

language-based realia, such as signs, magazines, advertisements and newspapers or graphic and visual source around which communicative activities can be built, such as maps, pictures, symbols, graphs and charts. Different kinds of objects can be used to support communicative exercises, such as a plastic model to assemble from directions.

- **Problem Solving Activities**

As a communicative technique an example of using a problem solving task was described as problem-solving task generally consist the three characteristics of communication so their tasks work well in the Communicative Language Teaching.

Students share information or work together to solve if they can be structured, what's more. In negotiating meaning this gives students practice.

Plays are one of the role-play activities. In the case of plays, the activity that comes to mind first all is acting. Having the students act out a play, or at least part of it, is a most fruitful experience, it is an amusing activity so that the students enjoyed this activity enormously and participated in a very lively way.

Plays are acted in front of the classroom. The teacher brings a kind of play and distributes the text of the play to students. A student is assigned the part of the character to appear first. He or she is sent in front of the class and told to act out his/her role from memory. Then the teacher assigns more roles by whispering into the students' ears and sends these characters on stage in order of their appearance in the play. The activity then keeps going without any direct interference from the teacher. The students act according to their roles and thus know more or less what to say along the line of the events in the play. All the teacher has to do is to send in new characters or to exchange those in action by choosing a replacement from among the audience.

In conclusion, there is an inner circle of students who are engaged in solving a linguistic task without any direct interference from the teacher. The students in the outer circle can replace or relieve the participants in the inner circle either at the request of the teacher or out of their own free will. It seems clear that this kind of activity can be developed even further applied to other areas in the teaching of English language and literature.

- **Community-Oriented Tasks**

Community-oriented tasks are based on the real communicative practise outside the classroom. This practise enables learners to interact with the native speakers of the language that is being taught outside the classroom through their acquired information.

- **Social Formulas and Dialogues**

This technique includes greetings, introductions, and refusals. A short conversation between two people or more presented as a language model-the dialogue often receives top billing in the manipulative phase of language learning. Dialogues provide students with a minimal amount of control and can be used to highlight effective conversational strategies which must be employed in improvisations, interviews and group and panel discussions. Dialogues can be made interesting in several ways. One way is for the teacher to prepare one-sided dialogues.

• **Group Projects**

Projects involving hobbies, craft, physical exercise, sports and civic services are extremely fruitful for English conversation groups, provided that any English is spoken during a given activity. When the teachers design different kinds of project work, they try to bear in mind that the students need to use the language as effectively as possible to communicate something to one another.

Both pair and group work allow students to use language in a practical way.

Through group work the students participate actively in discussions, sharing opinions, agreeing and disagreeing with each other, or simply stimulating real-life situations. Besides, the students have more opportunities to talk. Group work is one of the most important activities in the communicative approach; that is why it is perhaps the best way to do these kinds of projects. There are several reasons why group work is useful and effective.

- The students become independent from the teacher.
- Social interaction occurs and effective learning is increased.
- The students exploit their language resources to the utmost.
- The students remember much better things that they do and learn on their own. Regardless of the type of project, the teacher should become a participant, a coordinator when necessary, someone who, from the middle distance, evaluates and checks the language used in the activity. Project work demands enthusiasm on the part of the teacher, not only for the syllabus in which projects work is included, but also for the students. Project work also requires careful planning and the ability to create a learning situation that will ensure a constant supply of stimuli to the learners, which will keep them active.

A file of simple pictures is invaluable. With picture strip stories many activities can be done. Some criteria to be made the pictures effective for class use include the following. They should be:

- Large enough to be seen from all parts of the room.
- Clear and simple in design.
- Without captions so that they can be used for diverse purposes.
- Both in black and white and in colour for practice in more advanced units.
- There should be more than one picture of each concept: person, animal or thing in different situations for the reasons mentioned below on this page.

The pictures should be kept in categories related to the cyclical topics. A box of flash cards corresponding to the name of each item (person, thing or animal) in the pictures should be available in order that young beginners, adult illiterates, functional illiterates or students who need to be given individualized instruction can match the picture and the associated word. For teacher use, the back of the picture may contain an indication of the subject to avoid turning the pictures when engaging in contextual substitution, replacement or other drills.

Where feasible, there could be two pictures files: one with pictures related to the lives and experiences of learners in their native land; one with pictures related to the target country.

- **Authentic Materials**

Communicative Language Teaching supports the use of authentic language materials. The teacher uses a copy of a true newspaper article. In addition, he/she decides the students' homework, requiring they listen to live radio or television broadcast. Of course, these are doing at a high intermediate level of proficiency. Authentic language materials may not be used with lower proficiency for students in the target language it is not important that the materials be realistic as it is that they be used authentically. For the use of authentic materials with a lower class the other possibility is to use realia about which a lot of dispute could be generated. The target language's menus are an example; timetables are another.

There are a lot of advantages of this approach, and now we are going to talk about it. As opposed to grammatical and linguistic competence that is focused for example on audio lingua land grammar-translation methods, Richards (2006) mentioned that CLT focuses on and aims at communicative competence. Thus, enabling the learners to use the language in a communicative situation to satisfy their needs in real-life communication is a priority in CLT. In contrast, Brown(1994) mentioned that the grammar-translation method "does virtually nothing to enhance a student's communicative ability in the language". In this regard, the meaning is emphasized in CLT(Finocchiaro and Brumfit, 1983). Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983)pointed out that CLT focuses on meaning as opposed to methods like audio-lingual that focus on form and grammatical or linguistic knowledge. So, CLT shifts from learning structure of language to learning how to communicate and how to communicate effectively .In CLT, the linguistic system of the target language is learnt best while the learner is attempting to communicate. In

this case, the major portion of the learning process is not upon the teacher thus illustrating that CLT classes have moved from teacher-centeredness to learner-centeredness. CLT gives the learners more responsibility and involvement in the process of learning. In other words, learner-centeredness takes precedence over teacher-centeredness. Thus, the role of the teacher in a CLT class can be regarded as a facilitator that helps the students and learners in the process of learning to conduct effective communication. This notion is helpful as it is the learner who must learn how to communicate effectively and use the language comprehensibly. Thus, the learner should exercise and communicate enough in the CLT class to achieve communicative competence. In other words, the learner must be well involved in the process of learning. At the same time, the learner is also trying to use the language correctly. Therefore, the focus of CLT on linguistic competence is contextualized and is achieved through the process of accomplishing effective communication (Brown, 2001). In CLT, learning items are contextualized (Finocchiaro and Brumfit, 1983) but in grammar-translation method, only memorizing a "list of isolated words" is practiced (Brown, 2001). A CLT class may start with communication and communicative activities whereas this stage starts after a long process of exercising and drilling in audio-lingual (Finocchiaro and Brumfit, 1983). Furthermore, in a CLT class, mastering speech takes precedence over reading and writing. Reading and writing are postponed until the speech is mastered. Following the emphasis of CLT on meaning, communicative competence and use of the target language in a communicative situation effectively, it can be concluded that functions play an important role and are focused in CLT. It is worth mentioning that not only the functions but also the sequence of the functions are taken into consideration in CLT books. The sequence of units in CLT books for CLT classes is determined according to the functions that are of interest to the learner and is based on the needs of the learner in a communicative situation. For example, a CLT book would start with greeting lesson because it is the most basic need of a learner in real-life communication. As the units of the book develop, the topics of each unit take into consideration more advanced needs of a learner in real-life communication. For example, reserving flight tickets and making an appointment with the doctor are the subsequent units that would appear in the book for CLT class.

Thus, the content of the units of CLT books that are used in CLT classes are based on the functions of language and needs of the learners in the real-life communicative situation and the sequence of the units are based on

the learners' interest and their importance for the learners. Apart from the above-mentioned advantages of CLT, in the context of Iran, for example, the method of teaching English that is applied in its public schools such as high schools is different from the method applied in private English language centres. What is practiced in the English language classes in public schools include the translation of sentences and texts which leads to extensive use of the first language or mother tongue, as well as the emphasis on grammatical competence or linguistic knowledge of the learners rooted in structuralism. Moreover, memorization of vocabularies and phrases as well as the emphasis on pronunciation and application of repetitive drills were the other practices in the Iranian high school English classes that can be traced back to audio-lingualism.

Of course, there have been various criticisms on the principles of the communicative approach to teaching and learning language. Discussions on the disadvantages of this method are essential to critically evaluate CLT. Hiep (2007) refers to the recent articles that have launched debates on CLT. Moreover, Hughes (1983) mentions that communicative language teaching leads to the production of "fluent but inaccurate" learners. What is predicted to happen here is the danger of giving priority to fluency over accuracy in CLT classes. In other words, error correction has no significant place in CLT classes. As mentioned above, teachers play the role of facilitator in a CLT class since CLT classes are learner-based. Thus, the teachers would try not to stop the learners repeatedly to correct their grammatical errors so that they can achieve the goal of speaking effortlessly. In this case, accuracy is ignored and "fossilization"(Brown, 1994) of errors would occur and the fossilized errors may never be corrected. That is why prioritizing fluency over accuracy can be regarded as one of the disadvantages of CLT. So, CLT can follow methods like the direct method and audio-lingual method in teaching grammar to focus on accuracy apart from fluency. However, concentrating on grammar and form in CLT can be different from the two mentioned methods in the way that grammar can be focused and practiced in real communication instead of practicing grammar repetitively(Brown, 2001) in individualized sentences as practiced in audio-lingual method. The teacher can supervise the learners who are practicing effective communication and inform them of their grammatical errors thus enabling them to be fluent as well as accurate. Hence, both accuracy and fluency will be taken into almost equal consideration in a CLT class. Another disadvantage to be pointed out about CLT is that it is difficult to be implemented in an EFL context or

classroom. Burnaby and Sun(1989) and Chau and Chung (1987) pointed out in their articles that applying CLT is difficult in an EFL context due to the lack of sources and types of equipment like authentic materials and native speaker teachers as well as large size of the classes. In EFL classes, the classroom is the only place that the learners receive input to learn how to conduct effective communication. Since the mother tongue is also used to manage EFL classes, the environment cannot be motivating enough to enhance the communication skills of the learners. In addition, lack of native speaker teachers in EFL contexts leads to low-quality input and unauthentic material. Thus, implementing CLT in an EFL context turns to be difficult and challenging both for the teacher and the learner.

To conclude, I can say that Communicative Language Teaching is best considered an approach rather than the method. Although a reasonable degree of theoretical consistency can be discerned at the levels of language and learning theory, at the levels of design and procedure there is much greater room for individual interpretation and variation than most methods permit. It could be that one version among the various proposals for syllabus models, exercise types and classroom activities may gain wider approval in the future, giving Communicative Language Teaching a status similar to other teaching methods. On the other hand divergent interpretations might lead to homogeneous subgroups.

In the Communicative Language Teaching, there is an idea of being able to use the language suitable to a given social context. It means to teach the students communicative competence. To do this, students have to know the linguistic forms, meanings, functions and different forms of functions. So they will choose the most suitable form, given the social context and the roles of the interlocutors. Also, they will be more responsible managers of their learning as the theatre is less dominant in the classroom. On the other hand, through communicative activities such as games, role-plays and problem solving task, students use the language a great deal. Another advantage of the Communicative Language Teaching is the use of authentic materials gives students an opportunity to develop strategies for understanding language as it is actually used by native speakers. They learn to do something useful with the language they study. In addition, with the help of the teacher, students find a chance to express their individuality by having them share their ideas and opinion on a regular basis. This provides students "to integrate the foreign language with their personality and to feel more emotionally secure with it". So, student security is increased by the many opportunities

for cooperative interactions with their teacher and fellow students. On the other side, students work with language at the discourse level. Though this level, they learn about cohesion and coherence properties of language. They learn how sentences are bound together at the substantial level. In this method, all skills work. This is very useful from the view of target language learning. As the student's native language has no special role in the Communicative Language Teaching, the students realize that the target language is a vehicle for communication, not jilts on the object to study. As the teacher assesses their students' fluency, they learn to speak fluently in the target language and the teacher assesses his students' performance to do this.

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Abstracts

ГРИЦЯК ЛЕСЯ. Комунікативний підхід у викладанні іноземних мов. Статтю присвячено актуалізації комунікативного підходу у викладанні іноземних мов. Також увагу присвячено мові як інструменту міжкультурного ділового спілкування.

Ключові слова: міжкультурна компетенція, глобалізація, формування компетентності, сучасна освіта, пріоритетні завдання, професійна діяльність.

ГРИЦЯК ЛЕСЯ. Коммуникативный подход в преподавании иностранных языков. Статья посвящена актуализации коммуникативного подхода в преподавании иностранных языков. Также внимание посвящено языку как инструменту межкультурного делового общения.

Ключевые слова: межкультурная компетенция, глобализация, формирование компетентности, современное образование, приоритетные задачи, профессиональная деятельность.

GRYTSIAK LESIA. Communicative language teaching. The article deals with the actualization of the communicative approach in teaching foreign languages. Special attention is paid to the language as an instrument of intercultural business communication.

Keywords: communicative language teaching, intercultural competence, globalization, competence building, modern education, priorities, professional activity.

HRYCIAK ŁESIA. Podejście komunikacyjne w nauczaniu języków obcych. Artykuł dotyczy aktualizacji komunikacyjnego podejścia do nauczania języków obcych. Zwrócono również uwagę na język jako narzędzie międzykulturowej komunikacji biznesowej.

Słowa kluczowe: kompetencje międzykulturowe, globalizacja, kształtowanie kompetencji, nowoczesna edukacja, zadania priorytetowe, działalność zawodowa.