



## **HOW TO MAKE LANGUAGE LEARNING PROCESS MORE EFFECTIVE THROUGH THE ASSISTANCE OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This article discusses Communicative language teaching (CLT), or the communicative approach, as an approach to language teaching that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of study.*

*Language learners in environments utilizing CLT techniques, learn and practice the target language through the interaction with one another and the teacher, the study of "authentic texts" (those written in the target language for purposes other than language learning), and through the use of the language both during the lesson and outside of the lesson.*

*Learners talk about personal experiences with partners, and instructors explain topics outside of the realm of traditional grammar, in order to promote language skills in all types of occasions. This method also proves to encourage learners to incorporate their personal experiences into their language learning environment, and to focus on the learning experience in addition to the learning of the target language.*

*In CLT, the objective of language education is the ability to communicate in the target language. This is in contrast to previous views in which grammatical competence was commonly given top priority. CLT also focuses on the teacher being a facilitator, rather than an instructor. Furthermore, the approach is a non-methodical system that does not use a textbook series to teach the target language, but rather works on developing sound oral/verbal skills prior to reading and writing.*

**KEY WORDS:** *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Second Language Acquisition, Language learning, Approach, grammatical competence, oral/verbal skills.*

***"You simply cannot teach a language to an adult the way a child learns a language. That's why it is such a hard job"***

***By Chomsky***

It is generally said that learning a language can be crucial asset to obtain huge opportunities, that's why it is too important how people learn any language, sometimes they may come across some difficulties in learning period, perhaps, it must be carried out whatever can be able to do something which makes learning more efficient and easier. There are lots of methods which can teach a language in a different way have already accomplished by

scientists and specialists. Language teaching was originally considered a cognitive matter, mainly involving memorization. It was later thought, instead, to be socio-cognitive, meaning that language can be learned through the process of social interaction. Today, however, the dominant technique in teaching any language is communicative language teaching.

This method has already been in common among educational fields of study for a little period of time. In view of the fact that there is considerable improvement on the process of learning of the students. It can be seen that there are some successful researches in such an effective way which were carried out by the specialists.



It was Noam Chomsky's theories in the 1960s, focusing on competence and performance in language learning, that gave a promotion to communicative language teaching, but the conceptual basis for CLT was laid in the 1970s by linguists Michael Halliday, who studied how language functions are expressed through grammar, and Dell Hymes, who introduced the idea of a wider communicative competence instead of Chomsky's narrower linguistic competence. The rise of CLT in the 1970s and early 1980s was partly in response to the lack of success with traditional language teaching methods and partly due to the increase in demand for language learning. In Europe, the advent of the European Common Market, an economic predecessor to the European Union, led to migration in Europe and an increased population of people who needed to learn a foreign language for work or for personal reasons. At the same time, more children were given the opportunity to learn foreign languages in school, as the number of secondary schools offering languages rose worldwide as part of a general trend of curriculum-broadening and modernization, and foreign-language study ceased to be confined to the elite academies. In Britain, the introduction of comprehensive schools, which offered foreign-language study to all children rather than to the select few in the elite grammar schools, greatly increased the demand for language learning.

According to "The appeal and poverty of CLT" by Robert O'Neill and he said 'the belief is so widely held and so frequently repeated that language is a means of communication is wrong in a way that has been devastating to any adequate conception of what humans are and how they differ from other species. Communication is just one use to which language can be put'. One of the specialists of CLT is Derek Bickerton stated that Communicative Language Teaching has enormous intuitive appeal. Despite this, I have come to believe that at the heart of CLT- especially in fundamentalist version of it- we find a naive, even impoverished view of language". In CLT 'communication' means using language to make requests, give advice, agree and disagree, complain, praise, to try to persuade people to do things, and so on. The focus should be on meaning, not on form. Some supporters of CLT, like Geoff Thompson argue that this is a misconception of CLT. However, even he admits that there are good reasons for this 'misconception'. To demonstrate it, there is something called a 'communicative syllabus' which replaces and is superior to a structural syllabus. It is often argued that a typical structural syllabus focuses on the grammatical structure of language rather than on the 'communicative' or pragmatic uses of those language. For example, so the argument goes terms like "The Present Continuous", tell us little or nothing

about the fact that typical examples of this form such as 'You are standing in my way' or 'you are driving too fast' are complaints, or that one of the most frequent uses of the Present Progressive is not to talk about actions in the present but about pre-arranged actions in the future, for this reason, many CLT supporters used to argue and still do that language lessons should not be about 'The Present Continuous' or 'Present Perfect', but about 'Giving and getting personal information', 'Asking for and giving directions', 'Expressing opinions' and etc.

It is obviously true that the majority of people who learn any foreign language consider that the process of learning of grammar is a bit difficult because of so many numbers of grammar rules that can make them confuse and lead to unpleasant situations. It is commonly known that there are several types of learning skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening all of the skills are main parts of learning a language. However, speaking is more significant for everybody who wants to learn a language quickly than the rest of them. In speaking it is not so necessary to speak correctly with all grammar rules. Such kind of rules can cause to slow down of learning. Nevertheless, it does not mean that grammar is unnecessary, it is impossible to learn a language perfectly without grammar, the only thing is that one should not be extremely dependent on grammar. In my point of view, CLT is one of the most effective methods which have already acquired some promising results in learning. Presently, many classrooms are arranged so that all students face forward to the teacher; the manager is clear; the teacher dominates; all information will come from the teacher; interaction between or among students is less valued. Such situations are quietly found boring and monotonous. In fact, it is apparently accepted that one can feel boredom with being in the same situation for a long period. With purpose of diminishing the situation, other various seating arrangements which encourage people to be cooperative, communicative pair-work and group-work have been presented, as a consequence of that the efficiency of learning a language increase with considerable paces. To state the point clearly some examples can be shown. For instance, if students work in a group-work or pair-work, they become more active and feel independently than they work as usual. As well as by working together as a member of a group each student can express their ideas, argue with each other about any topics, they can receive more information from each other.

CLT teachers choose classroom activities based on what they believe is going to be most effective for students developing communicative abilities in the target language (TL). Oral activities are popular among CLT teachers, as opposed to



grammar drills or reading and writing activities, because they include active conversation and creative, unpredicted responses from students. Activities vary based on the level of language class they are being used in. They promote collaboration, fluency, and comfort in the TL. The six activities listed and explained below are commonly used in CLT classrooms.

### **Role-play**

Role-play is an oral activity usually done in pairs, whose main goal is to develop students' communicative abilities in a certain setting.

Example:

1. The instructor sets the scene: where is the conversation taking place? (E.g., in a café, in a park, etc.)
2. The instructor defines the goal of the students' conversation. (E.g., the speaker is asking for directions, the speaker is ordering coffee, the speaker is talking about a movie they recently saw, etc.)
3. The students converse in pairs for a designated amount of time.

This activity gives students the chance to improve their communication skills in the TL in a low-pressure situation. Most students are more comfortable speaking in pairs rather than in front of the entire class.

Instructors need to be aware of the differences between a conversation and an utterance. Students may use the same utterances repeatedly when doing this activity and not actually have a creative conversation. If instructors do not regulate what kinds of conversations students are having, then the students might not be truly improving their communication skills.

### **Interviews**

An interview is an oral activity done in pairs, whose main goal is to develop students' interpersonal skills in the TL.

Example:

1. The instructor gives each student the same set of questions to ask a partner.
2. Students take turns asking and answering the questions in pairs.

This activity, since it is highly structured, allows for the instructor to more closely monitor students' responses. It can zone in on one specific aspect of grammar or vocabulary, while still being a primarily communicative activity and giving the students communicative benefits.

This is an activity that should be used primarily in the lower levels of language classes, because it will be most beneficial to lower-level speakers. Higher-level speakers should be having unpredictable conversations in the TL, where neither the questions

nor the answers are scripted or expected. If this activity were used with higher-level speakers it wouldn't have many benefits.<sup>[11]</sup>

### **Group work**

Group work is a collaborative activity whose purpose is to foster communication in the TL, in a larger group setting.

Example:

1. Students are assigned a group of no more than six people.
2. Students are assigned a specific role within the group. (E.g., member A, member B, etc.)
3. The instructor gives each group the same task to complete.
4. Each member of the group takes a designated amount of time to work on the part of the task to which they are assigned.
5. The members of the group discuss the information they have found, with each other and put it all together to complete the task.

Students can feel overwhelmed in language classes, but this activity can take away from that feeling. Students are asked to focus on one piece of information only, which increases their comprehension of that information. Better comprehension leads to better communication with the rest of the group, which improves students' communicative abilities in the TL.

Instructors should be sure to monitor that each student is contributing equally to the group effort. It takes a good instructor to design the activity well, so that students will contribute equally, and benefit equally from the activity.

### **Information gap**

Information gap is a collaborative activity, whose purpose is for students to effectively obtain information that was previously unknown to them, in the TL.

Example:

1. The class is paired up. One partner in each pair is Partner A, and the other is Partner B.
2. All the students that are Partner A are given a sheet of paper with a time-table on it. The time-table is filled in half-way, but some of the boxes are empty.
3. All the students that are Partner B are given a sheet of paper with a time-table on it. The boxes that are empty on Partner A's time-table are filled in on Partner B's. There are also empty boxes on Partner B's time-table, but they are filled in on Partner A's.
4. The partners must work together to ask about and supply each other with the



information they are both missing, to complete each other's time-tables.

Completing information gap activities improves students' abilities to communicate about unknown information in the TL. These abilities are directly applicable to many real-world conversations, where the goal is to find out some new piece of information, or simply to exchange information.

Instructors should not overlook the fact that their students need to be prepared to communicate effectively for this activity. They need to know certain vocabulary words, certain structures of grammar, etc. If the students have not been well prepared for the task at hand, then they will not communicate effectively.

### Opinion sharing

Opinion sharing is a content-based activity, whose purpose is to engage students' conversational skills, while talking about something they care about.

Example:

1. The instructor introduces a topic and asks students to contemplate their opinions about it. (E.g., dating, school dress codes, global warming)
2. The students talk in pairs or small groups, debating their opinions on the topic.

Opinion sharing is a great way to get more introverted students to open up and share their opinions. If a student has a strong opinion about a certain topic, then they will speak up and share.<sup>[12]</sup>

Respect is key with this activity. If a student does not feel like their opinion is respected by the instructor or their peers, then they will not feel comfortable sharing, and they will not receive the communicative benefits of this activity.

### Scavenger hunt

A scavenger hunt is a mingling activity that promotes open interaction between students.

Example:

1. The instructor gives students a sheet with instructions on it. (e.g. Find someone who has a birthday in the same month as yours.)
2. Students go around the classroom asking and answering questions about each other.
3. The students wish to find all of the answers they need to complete the scavenger hunt.

In doing this activity, students have the opportunity to speak with a number of classmates, while still being in a low-pressure situation, and talking to only one person at a time. After learning more about each other, and getting to share about themselves, students will feel more comfortable talking and sharing during other communicative activities.

Since this activity is not as structured as some of the others, it is important for instructors to add structure. If certain vocabulary should be used in students'

conversations, or a certain grammar is necessary to complete the activity, then instructors should incorporate that into the scavenger hunt.

In the final analysis, language is primarily a tool of communication. Learning a language means learning to perform communicative speech acts with it. We recognize that different learners have different preferred styles of learning. If this is true of learners and their learning styles, it is also true of teachers and their teaching styles. One of such styles is CLT that is really beneficial for both teachers and students. Firstly, it is a good opportunity for students to show their talents and abilities to do something; it is a period of being active as a member of a group; it is a chance of getting along with their groupmates friendly. Secondly, it is an opportunity for teachers to organize the lesson very interestingly and enjoyably; it is a chance to know about more each of the students.

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