

THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN MODERN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS

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Annotation. This article explores the significance of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in contemporary English classrooms. It examines how CLT promotes effective communication, enhances students' speaking and listening skills, and fosters interactive learning. The study highlights practical methods for implementing CLT, including pair and group activities, role-plays, and authentic language tasks. Emphasis is placed on creating a learner-centered environment that encourages participation, motivation, and cultural awareness. The article also discusses challenges faced by teachers in applying CLT and strategies to overcome them.

Key Words: Communicative Language Teaching, CLT, English language learning, learner-centered approach, speaking skills, listening skills, interactive activities, authentic tasks, classroom methodology.

INTRODUCTION.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach aimed at developing learners' meaningful perception and understanding of a foreign language, as well as mastering language material to construct verbal expressions. Primarily, the communicative approach in foreign language teaching is designed to teach students to navigate confidently in a foreign-language environment and to respond appropriately in various linguistic situations.

The communicative approach in foreign language teaching first emerged in the 1970s as a result of the work of experts from the Council of Europe. Since then, this approach has gained wide recognition worldwide and has become one of the main methods of teaching foreign languages [2, p. 223].

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODS.

Many teachers may find it difficult to give an exact definition of the communicative approach. What exactly is meant by the communicative approach? Is it focused on teaching conversation, omitting grammar instruction, or lessons emphasizing open discussions? To better understand what the communicative approach entails, it is useful to examine the full set of principles associated with it [3, p. 640].

The main principles of the communicative approach can be summarized as follows:

During the learning process, students are engaged in exploring the surrounding world.

Learners are encouraged to express their own opinions, feelings, and share experiences.

Learners take responsibility for their learning outcomes and develop a sense of ownership in the learning process.

The role of the teacher varies depending on the tasks at each stage.

The primary goal of teaching is to develop students' **communicative competence**. The meaning of this term becomes clearer when compared to the concept of **grammatical competence** [4].



Grammatical competence refers to the ability to construct phrases and sentences correctly, use and agree on tenses properly, knowledge of parts of speech, and understanding how different types of sentences are structured. Grammatical competence is often the focus of many textbooks, which provide specific grammar rules and exercises to practice and reinforce these rules.

Undoubtedly, grammatical competence is important, but it is far from the only aspect of language learning. A person who has fully mastered all grammatical rules and can construct sentences correctly may still face difficulties in real communication in a foreign language. In other words, the person may lack **communicative competence** [5].

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS.

Communicative competence may include the following aspects:

Knowledge of how to use the language for various purposes and functions;

Understanding how language changes depending on the communicative situation and participants involved (for example, the difference between formal and informal speech, or spoken versus written language);

Ability to create, read, and comprehend texts of various types and genres (e.g., stories, interviews, dialogues, reports);

Ability to maintain conversation even with limited vocabulary and grammatical knowledge.

Currently, the communicative approach actively occupies the top position in the popularity of teaching methods. As its name suggests, it is aimed at practical communication. This method works very effectively in Europe and the USA. As indicated by its name, the communicative method focuses primarily on the opportunity to communicate. Among the four “pillars” of any language training (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), special attention is given to the latter two. You will not encounter particularly complex syntactic structures or advanced vocabulary during classes [2].

Oral speech of any competent speaker differs significantly from written language. The communicative method is primarily designed to reduce learners’ fear of communication.

A person equipped with a standard set of grammatical structures and a vocabulary of 600–1000 words can easily find common ground in an unfamiliar country. However, there is a downside: the use of clichéd phrases and a limited lexicon. The Oxford and Cambridge approaches to language share the feature that most of their courses are based on the communicative method, integrated with some traditional teaching elements. This approach implies maximum student immersion in the language-learning process, which is achieved by minimizing students’ appeal to their native language.

The main goal of this method is to teach students first to speak the language fluently and then to think in it. Equally important is the absence of mechanical, repetitive exercises; instead, they are replaced by role-playing situations, partner work, error-detection tasks, comparisons, and contrasts that engage not only memory but also logic, analytical, and creative thinking. The entire set of techniques helps create an English-speaking environment in which students actively “function”: reading, communicating, participating in role-plays, expressing their thoughts, and drawing conclusions.

Oxford and Cambridge courses focus not only on language knowledge but also on fostering students’ creativity and overall worldview. Language is closely intertwined with the cultural characteristics of the country; therefore, these courses inevitably include a cultural studies component. The British consider it necessary to give individuals the ability to navigate



a multicultural world easily, which is facilitated by such a powerful unifying factor as the English language. We have not yet fully overcome isolation to fully understand the importance and inevitable necessity of this aspect.

The communicative approach is based on the assertion that for successful foreign language acquisition, students must not only know linguistic forms but also be able to use them in real communication. This approach is a necessary, well-thought-out methodology aimed at developing foreign language communication skills [4].

Exercises and tasks used by teachers in class should align with these principles, and therefore with the communicative approach as a whole:

- Projects;
- Communicative games;
- Communicative exercises;
- Dramatizations;
- Discussions.

Regarding the organization of a course, this can easily be illustrated by the English File textbook, which ranks among the leading courses in Russia. This course (or English learning system) was specially developed by London-based methodologists John and Liz Soars for youth and adults. Each of the five levels (Elementary, Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate) has its own “methodical kit,” including a textbook, student book, teacher’s book, audio cassettes, and can be completed in approximately 120 academic hours.

Each practical lesson consists of several sections. The first is usually dedicated to developing speaking skills, analyzing some grammatical structures, completing written exercises for communication practice, discussing specific topics in pairs, practicing dialogues based on prompts, listening to audio cassettes, and reviewing material from previous lessons. The second section focuses on skills development: refining vocabulary through oral and written exercises. This is followed by working with texts (typical for English textbooks: short numbered paragraphs), where reading is varied (scan reading, reading for gist, summary reading, etc.). Before working with the text, students typically engage in pair or small group work, answer questions, and complete tables. All of this helps prepare students for understanding the information that follows and stimulates interest in reading [5].

Lessons usually conclude with an audio section, preceded by exercises that help students more easily absorb new material. A distinctive feature of the English File course is that grammar is studied at two levels: first in the lesson context, and then more fully in the student workbook (self-study and revision exercises), summarized at the end of the textbook in a special appendix.

If, during a lesson, the time when students are speaking is significantly extended, the lesson can confidently be called communicative. Even though the teacher’s speech is reduced, a range of non-verbal techniques can be used to save class time. The teacher can use gestures to show how to complete a task or explain the meaning of a word. For example: a hand wave from top to bottom – *sit down*, the opposite – *get up*, hand near the ear – *listen*, circling the classroom – *all together*, clap – *all together*, waving a finger side to side – *you are wrong*, nod – *you are right*.

CONCLUSION.

All these methods and techniques, without a doubt, produce results, as evidenced by monitoring student knowledge. The findings indicate the effectiveness of the communicative approach and the need to implement it widely in English classrooms.



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