

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

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1. Revision:

• Link each method with its main principle

1. Grammar Translation Method	a. Learning is a collective experience that should be facilitated through establishing interpersonal relationships between the teachers and learners
2. Direct Method	b. Students should be exposed to a list of vocabulary and rule explanations followed by translation activities
3. Silent Way	c. The students need a relaxed but focused state when learning the language through making use of soothing, rhythmic music, and a comfortable, relaxing environment
4. Audio Lingual Method	d. Students should be taught in a natural way (in the target language) in the same way children learn their first language
5. Total Physical Response	e. Students should be presented with language patterns and dialogues, which they have to mimic and memorize.

6. Suggestopedia	f. Learning is facilitated if the learner discovers or creates rather than remembers and repeats what is to be learned with a silent teacher
7. Community Language Learning	g. Use and Understanding of the language should be developed through movements of the student's body using imperative verbs

- The field of second language teaching has undergone many shifts and trends over the last few decades. Numerous methods have come and gone. However, it is generally believed that there is no one single method that meets the goals of all learners. Why?

- Briefly explain the following statement:

Effective teaching is not about a method. It is about understanding and implementing principles of learning

2. Introduction:

The communicative language teaching approach could be said to be the product of educators and linguists who had grown dissatisfied with the traditional approaches and methods (audiolingual and grammar-translation methods, etc.). They felt that students were not learning enough realistic, whole language. According to Richards (1990), "When the communicative language teaching began in the 1970s, there was a movement away from the traditional approaches which focused on the mastery of items of grammar and practice activities

such as memorization of dialogues”. For many years CLT **created a great deal of enthusiasm and excitement** and language teachers and teaching institutions all around the world soon began to rethink their teaching, syllabuses and classroom materials.

3. Background:

In 1970s, educators began to question if they were going about meeting the goal to communicate in the target language. Some observed that students could produce sentences accurately in a lesson but could not use them appropriately when communicating outside the classroom. Others noted that being able to communicate required more than mastering linguistic structures. Students may know the rules of linguistic usage, but be unable to use the language. **It became clear that communication required that students perform certain functions** (inviting, requesting, complementing, apologizing, etc.) **within a social context**. In short, being able **to communicate** required more than the linguistic competence; it **required knowing when and how to say what and to whom**. Such observations contributed to the emergence of communicative language teaching.

4. What is Communicative Language Teaching?

Communicative language teaching (CLT) **makes use of real-life situations that necessitate communication**. The teacher sets up a situation that students are likely to encounter in real life. Unlike the audiolingual method of language teaching, which relies on repetition

and drills, the communicative approach can leave students in suspense as to the outcome of a class exercise, which will vary according to their reactions and responses. The real-life simulations change from day to day. Students' motivation to learn comes from their desire to communicate in meaningful ways about meaningful topics.

Richards and Rodgers (1986) described CLT as an approach rather than a method, since it represents a philosophy of teaching that is based on communicative language use. According to them, **the main pedagogical goal** of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) **is to develop learners' communicative competence** (i.e., the ability to use the linguistic system in an effective and appropriate way).

5. What is Communicative competence?

Communicative competence includes the following aspects of language knowledge:

1. Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions
2. Knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants
3. Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts

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

Canale and Swain (1980, 1983) identify the above aspects into four components of **communicative competence**:

- **Grammatical competence**: the knowledge of the language code (grammatical rules, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc.).
- **Sociolinguistic competence**: understanding of the social context in which communication takes place, including role relationships, the shared information of the participants, and the purpose for their interaction
- **Strategic competence**: the ability to use the verbal and non-verbal actions that L2 learners employ to reach their communicative goals.
- **Discourse competence**: the ability to combine language structures into different types of texts that are cohesive and coherent.

6. Principles of Communicative Language Teaching

1. Language teaching is based on a view of **language as communication**. That is, language is seen as **a social tool** that speakers use to make meaning; speakers communicate about

something to someone for some purposes, either orally or in writing

2. **Meaning** is primary; **contextualization** is basic.
3. Attempts to communicate in TL are encouraged in the beginning of instruction (**in groups or in pairs**).
4. **Games are important** because they have certain features in common with real communicative events.
5. **L1 is acceptable when feasible**.
6. Communicative interaction encourages **cooperative relationships among students**. It gives the students the opportunity to work on **negotiating meaning**.
7. Activities and strategies for learning are **varied**.
8. **Communicative competence is the goal of instruction**.

7. Teachers' roles

The teacher has **two main roles**:

1. **To establish situations likely to promote communication in the classroom**
2. **To act as an independent participant during the learning-teaching process**. This implies that the teachers should be:
 - a- An **organizer** and as a resource himself
 - b- A **guide** within the classroom procedures and activities
 - c- A **researcher** and a **learner** as well.

Learners' roles

1. The learner should be a negotiator between himself and the other in the classroom.
2. He should interact with his peers or with the teacher to obtain communicative purposes
3. He should contribute as much as possible he gains and thereby learn in an independent way

8. Practice in the classroom

1. Students use the language a great deal through communicative activities such as games, role plays, and problem-solving tasks, information-gap activities.
2. These activities should not only help learners engage in communication but also require them to use processes such as information sharing, negotiation of meaning and interaction.
3. These activities can include:
 - a- Comparing sets of pictures and noting similarities and differences.
 - b- Discovering missing features in a map or a picture
4. The use of authentic materials is very important

5. There should be less attention to grammatical rules but fluency should never be encouraged at the expense of clear, unambiguous, direct communication.
6. The materials should include all the four skills, that is, speaking, listening, reading, and writing to support and encourage learners to engage in communicative activities,