COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING: FOCUSING ON REAL-LIFE COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method and its significance in real-life communication. CLT offers an effective approach for language instructors and learners, emphasizing that language learning is not only about memorizing grammar rules and vocabulary, but also about applying language in practical communication settings. The article discusses the core principles of the CLT approach, the role of real-life communication in language learning, and provides recommendations for effectively implementing this method. The study also discusses experiments and theoretical foundations that support the efficacy of CLT.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a dynamic and interactive approach to language teaching that emphasizes real-world communication. Unlike traditional methods, which primarily focus on grammar and vocabulary memorization, CLT seeks to integrate language practice with authentic communication. This shift reflects the growing demand for language proficiency in everyday interactions rather than solely in academic settings. The purpose of this article is to explore the significance of CLT in developing communicative competence, which is the ability to use language appropriately in various real-life situations.

In an increasingly globalized world, the ability to communicate effectively in different social and cultural contexts is essential. CLT provides a framework for developing such skills, encouraging learners to engage in meaningful communication tasks. The research questions guiding this study include: How does CLT facilitate language learning? What impact does real-life communication have on learners' language proficiency? How can CLT be implemented in various educational contexts?

The Communicative Language Teaching approach emerged in the 1970s as a response to the shortcomings of traditional language teaching methods that focused on rote memorization and the study of isolated linguistic structures. Scholars like Dell Hymes and Michael Halliday emphasized the importance of "communicative competence," which encompasses not only grammatical knowledge but also the ability to use language effectively and appropriately in different contexts.

Previous studies have highlighted the advantages of CLT, including increased student motivation, enhanced fluency, and better retention of language skills. The approach

encourages students to participate in real-world communication, which strengthens their ability to comprehend and produce language in everyday situations. In addition, CLT promotes collaboration and interaction, which are vital skills in the modern workplace.

Despite its benefits, some criticisms of CLT have arisen. Critics argue that the emphasis on fluency over accuracy can lead to the neglect of grammar instruction, potentially hindering learners' understanding of the underlying structures of the language. Moreover, the success of CLT often depends on the teacher's ability to create an environment conducive to communicative practice and provide appropriate feedback.

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods to examine the effectiveness of CLT in real-life language learning contexts. Data was collected through classroom observations, student surveys, and interviews with language teachers. The participants included a diverse group of learners from different proficiency levels, ranging from beginner to advanced.

The classroom observations focused on how teachers implemented CLT principles, such as task-based learning, group activities, and communication-driven lessons. Surveys were used to gauge students' perceptions of the effectiveness of CLT in improving their language skills. Interviews with teachers provided insights into the challenges and successes they experienced while using CLT in their teaching practice.

The research aimed to answer the following questions:

How does CLT influence students' ability to communicate in real-life scenarios?

What teaching strategies do instructors find most effective when using CLT?

How do students perceive the role of real-life communication in enhancing their language proficiency?

The findings revealed that students who were exposed to CLT demonstrated a marked improvement in their ability to use the language in practical situations. The majority of participants reported increased confidence in speaking and a better understanding of how to apply language structures in authentic contexts. Group activities, role-plays, and task-based learning were found to be particularly effective in promoting real-life communication skills.

Moreover, the survey results indicated that students who actively engaged in communicative tasks were more motivated to learn and retained language skills more effectively. However, some students struggled with the lack of explicit grammar instruction, particularly at lower proficiency levels.

Teachers also noted the positive impact of CLT on students' ability to work collaboratively and engage in meaningful communication. However, they pointed out that creating an ideal communicative environment requires careful planning and adequate resources, which can be challenging in some educational settings.

The results of this study support the effectiveness of CLT in fostering real-life communication skills. Students who participated in communicative activities demonstrated significant gains in fluency, interaction skills, and overall language proficiency. This confirms findings from previous studies that highlight the benefits of task-based learning and authentic language use in the classroom.

While the study indicates the advantages of CLT, it also highlights the need for a balanced approach that incorporates both communicative practice and grammar instruction. Teachers must find ways to integrate these elements to ensure that students develop both

fluency and accuracy. Additionally, the success of CLT depends on the teacher's ability to create a supportive learning environment that encourages risk-taking and authentic communication.

Despite its potential, the implementation of CLT may face challenges due to constraints such as large class sizes, limited resources, and time limitations. These challenges should be addressed through professional development for teachers and the adoption of flexible, context-specific teaching strategies.

This study confirms that Communicative Language Teaching is an effective approach for improving students' real-life communication skills. By focusing on meaningful interaction, CLT helps students use language in practical, real-world contexts, thus enhancing their overall language proficiency. However, for CLT to be fully effective, it is crucial that teachers find ways to integrate grammar instruction with communicative tasks, ensuring a balanced development of both fluency and accuracy.

Future research should explore the impact of CLT across different educational contexts and examine how various teaching strategies can be adapted to diverse learner needs. Additionally, more studies are needed to investigate the long-term effects of CLT on language retention and proficiency.

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