

THE ESSENCE OF CLT OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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Abstract:In the ever-evolving landscape of language education, various teaching methods have come and gone, each attempting to address the challenges and nuances of learning a new language. One of the most significant and widely adopted approaches is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Emerging in the 1970s, CLT revolutionized the way foreign languages were taught by shifting the focus from traditional grammar-based instruction to an emphasis on communication and real-world language use. This shift reflects a fundamental change in how language learning is viewed, with CLT prioritizing fluency over mere accuracy and emphasizing functional language use. This article explores the essence of CLT, its principles, key features, and how it has shaped modern foreign language teaching. By understanding the core concepts of CLT, educators can better appreciate its potential to improve language learners' communicative competence and overall language proficiency.

Key words:CLT, communicative competence, real-life conversation, fluency, discussion, discussions, brainstorming, speech activity.

Speaking as one of the types of human activity has all the psychological and psychophysiological characteristics of activity, being only one of the ways to implement speech activity. Thus, speaking in the psychological process of speech activity is a way of expressing thoughts by means of language, so oral speech activity has special psychological and psychophysiological mechanisms for turning thoughts into utterances. (M.P. Breen 1980)

Interpretation based learning, when is the oral introductory course and further observed quite a large gap between oral and written language in respect of digestible material, the role of oral language (which follows from the name of a verbal base) is extremely high: it is used as a learning tool when reading the study material and training, as well as a means of communication in the implementation of the method of application. (J.W. Creswell 2003) When working with the material being studied, the teacher uses all methods: familiarization, training, and application without visual reinforcement in the form of printed (written) text, i.e. without reference to reading and writing.

However, these methods for specific material are not always used vertically in the lesson mode. Usually, the learning of the material is carried out in several lessons, in the mode of different lessons, as if horizontally. For example, in one lesson, students are introduced to a new structural group. The teacher, using certain methodological techniques, introduces a structural group only for listening and determines whether the students understood or did not understand the material being introduced. In case of insufficient understanding, the procedure is repeated. In the second lesson, the teacher returns to this structural group, and the students not only perceive it by ear, but also train in reproducing this structural group in a given lexical content. Students perform speech exercises: they name objects or actions, ask different types of questions in connection with communication situations and answer them. In other words, students apply the acquired skills in listening, their own statements and conversation. The educational material acquired

through oral speech and for use in oral speech is then included in written speech, i.e., in the written language. Reading and writing, when using methods of familiarization (with the graphic form of words and the graphical representation of sentences of a structural group) and training in reading and writing them, so that the learned material can be used for independent reading and writing.

Key Features of CLT

Several key features distinguish CLT from traditional language teaching methods. These features reflect its focus on communication, meaning, and the functional use of language. Some of the most notable features include:

1. **Real-Life Communication:** One of the defining characteristics of CLT is its emphasis on real-life communication. Language learners engage in activities that mirror the kind of communication they are likely to encounter outside the classroom, whether in social interactions, workplace settings, or travel experiences.
2. **Authentic Materials:** In CLT classrooms, authentic materials such as newspapers, videos, audio recordings, and even social media posts are regularly used. These materials provide learners with exposure to real-world language and the opportunity to learn how language functions in different social and cultural contexts.
3. **Role-plays and Simulations:** Role-playing activities are a staple of CLT. These activities allow students to take on different roles and engage in simulated interactions that mirror real-life situations. For instance, students might role-play a job interview, a customer-service interaction, or a discussion about cultural differences.
4. **Collaborative Learning:** In CLT classrooms, group work and pair work are commonly used to promote communication among learners. Collaborative tasks encourage students to practice their language skills in a supportive, interactive environment, where they can negotiate meaning, clarify doubts, and help each other learn.
5. **Focus on Functional Language:** CLT emphasizes the learning of language that is functionally useful for communication, such as asking for directions, making requests, giving opinions, and agreeing or disagreeing. These functional language skills are prioritized over the memorization of isolated grammar rules or vocabulary lists.
6. **Emphasis on Fluency:** Rather than focusing solely on the accuracy of language production, CLT places a strong emphasis on fluency. Activities designed to improve fluency often involve timed conversations, debates, or discussions where learners can practice speaking without constantly worrying about making grammatical errors.

Speaking is one of the main types of speech activity, which has a number of characteristics that are directly relevant to a person. It is as inherent as any other kind of human activity. Speaking is a way of expressing thoughts by means of language. The main problem with learning to speak is that initially there is a problem in the design of the oral message due to the fact that it is an intermediate stage between the thought and the oral message itself. It is necessary to develop appropriate speech skills.

Speaking as clarified by P.H. Hiep, (2007) can be approached as a goal and as a means of learning. In the first case, it acts as a means of communication, transmission of information, etc. This is what a foreign language is taught for. In the second, with the help of oral speech, the development of automatism in the reproduction and transformation of the assimilated material is carried out.

In modern methods of teaching foreign languages, speaking is used as a means of teaching, thereby allowing students to engage in speech communication from the very beginning of

learning a foreign language. It is used when getting acquainted with new educational material, when training and implementing the application method. Oral training exercises give students the opportunity to apply the material they learn in speech and make reading and writing easier.

Clarified by E. I. Passov (1991), speaking has always been considered as the most popular type of speech activity. For many students, this is a basic skill. Speaking skills, like any other skills, are not formed by themselves; for their formation, it is necessary to use special exercises and tasks that are designed to eventually form and polish the ability to navigate in natural communication situations. Another field is lingo-didactics that studies the process of learning and teaching a language from a theoretical and practical perspective, located at the intersection of linguistics and pedagogy. Lingo didactics is aimed at developing methods and technologies for effective language teaching to students, covering not only the language system, but also the principles, methods and tools for organizing the learning process

Concluding the article I would like to emphasize that the essence of communicative language teaching lies in its commitment to helping students use language effectively in real-world situations. By focusing on communication, interaction, and functional language use, CLT offers a dynamic and engaging way for learners to develop their language skills. While challenges exist in implementing CLT, its many benefits—such as increased learner motivation, improved communicative competence, and enhanced fluency—make it a powerful approach to foreign language teaching. As the global demand for proficient language users continues to grow, CLT remains an essential methodology for educators seeking to equip students with the tools they need to communicate confidently and effectively in a multilingual world.

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