

# Theoretical Overview and Application Communicative Language Teaching, And Intercultural Language Learning/Teaching

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**Abstract:** This article discusses the application of communicative language teaching and intercultural language teaching in today's English classroom. Based on the author's own teaching experience, this paper studies the articles of some former scholars and summarizes some practical teaching skills and ways to improve language classrooms.

**Keywords:** Communicative language teaching, Intercultural language teaching, Language classroom.

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## 1. Introduction

English plays a vital role on the world stage as the universal language of the world, and the new era has higher standards and requirements for students' English learning. Therefore, it is difficult to become an English teacher and how to teach English efficiently and combine it with the pace of the new era. The traditional English teaching modes, such as the cramming teaching method, can no longer meet the requirements of students in this era. English teachers need to learn and apply new teaching methods to improve classroom quality. Recent advances in L2 teaching represent a change away from the normal definition of method and toward a new one that has the ability to reshape the interaction between scholars and teachers by supporting teachers with knowledge, expertise, and autonomy. So empowered, instructors might create a distinct, cohesive, and meaningful alternative to methodology, one based on information-grounded pragmatism. This essay demonstrates how to use the two methods of communicative language teaching, and intercultural language teaching in today's language classroom.

## 2. Communicative Language Teaching

### 2.1. Introduction

In the previous language environment, people used language just to get the desired point of information without paying attention to communication and language ability. This is true both in everyday life and in language classes. However, Hymes (1972) and Vygotsky (1992) emphasize the competency element of language learning in order to construct a vision of the communicatively competent individual in terms of knowledge and experience and integration of social, cultural, and language levels. When this point of view was put forward, people began to pay attention to language ability. And this view also affects the language classroom. This became the foundation for a list of requirements for a first-level communicative language course. Since then, the CLT teaching model has gradually begun to be used in language classrooms. For me, it is difficult to fully use the CLT teaching mode in the classroom because the classroom time is limited, there are many language

knowledge points to be taught, the curriculum syllabus is closely arranged, and the course progress is very fast, so there is no way for students to make all activities done by using CLT. By researching an empirical research article, combined with my own teaching experience, I will illustrate how to improve the use of CLT in language classrooms.

### 2.2. Analyse of Empirical Studies and Implications

The article I selected is called Communicative language teaching as conceptualized by bhutanese English as second language teachers (Dorji, 2017). In the literature review part, communicative language teaching is a student, experience-based approach to second language instruction that focuses on developing students' communication abilities (Richard & Rodgers, 1986). CLT is a common language classroom teaching method. Its focus is on communication. It requires students to use language to achieve communicative goals. At the same time, CLT is also a student-centered teaching method. It emphasizes the relationship between teachers and students. This teaching method fully returns the classroom to the students, and the students become the leaders of the classroom. CLT is beneficial for improving students' enthusiasm and motivation for autonomous learning and language learning. CLT enables students to utilize the target language outside of the classroom (Savignon, 1983). This means that CLT can create an opportunity and environment for students to use the target language. For example, in the classroom, students can achieve communication goals by completing some activities. In addition to this, students can also use this method outside the classroom. For example, students can complete daily conversations with roommates in the target language in the dormitory. CLT enables students to have a lot of opportunities to use the target language outside of the classroom, which is beneficial to students' language learning. Furthermore, CLT strives to promote sociolinguistic ability by making the learners aware of the target language culture and the proper verbal or nonverbal standards of target language use. However, in many cases, executing the method has proven difficult. One of the obstacles in implementing CLT research indicated was that instructors had difficulty comprehending and implementing CLT, reflecting a mismatch between the theory and teachers' comprehension

(Chang, 2011). Individual ideas, attitudes, and cultural variations in how instructors perceive communicative competence were found to impact their conception of CLT. Therefore, this study investigated Bhutanese ESL instructors' understanding of CLT with a research question (What are the Bhutanese ESL instructors' perspectives on CLT?) to guide this study. A mixed method of research was carried out. This research, however, solely reports on the qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews and participant observations. Four ESL teachers took part in the semi-structured interviews. The researcher observed teaching activities in order to collect primary data regarding ESL teachers' instructional practices. The information gathered through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations was examined using the idea of content analysis.

It can be concluded that all participants agree that the purpose of language instruction should be to improve students' communicative skills in English. According to the findings, participants believed that CLT is a language teaching style that helps build students' communicative skills. This belief supports the premise of communicative language education, indicating that the participants have a correct understanding of CLT. Meanwhile, based on the replies provided, it can be concluded that participants evaluated CLT as a language teaching strategy that increases L2 learners' capacity to utilize English in real-life situations. Nevertheless, when it comes to teaching, they tend to stray from their convictions, preventing pupils from having true conversations in the classrooms. This demonstrates that, despite their correct understanding of CLT as promoting the use of actual language, they give insufficient time for pupils to develop language. Furthermore, CLT, according to all participants, implies not using one's mother tongue in English class. Although respondents stated that they utilize their mother tongue to face adversity in convincing students of complex notions, they also stated that they aim to avoid using the mother tongue as much as possible. The participants confirmed that by not speaking their native tongue in the classroom, they may persuade pupils to create a habit of using English.

For the results of this research report, I have some opinions and inspirations for my own future teaching. The results mentioned that we should not use the mother tongue to aid CLT teaching. I have a dispute about this. If it is facing some high-level students, we can certainly do this. Because students with high English proficiency do not have too many problems at the knowledge level, teachers can use the CLT teaching mode to create a language environment and opportunities for them to use the target language. However, if it is facing some elementary English students, it is not advisable to use CLT without the help of the mother tongue. Because if the teacher wants to use the CLT teaching mode, she will design some classroom activities and tasks to allow students to participate, which combines the task-based teaching method. However, if the teacher does not explain the tasks and requirements to the students clearly, they cannot participate in the activities. For students with elementary English proficiency, they cannot understand what the teacher wants to express without the help of their mother tongue. Therefore, my advice on this and my teaching implications are to be judged more realistically. The level of mother tongue assistance is controlled according to the level of students. I will reduce the number of students receiving mother tongue assistance as students improve their English ability. From easy to difficult, give students an adaptation process.

### **3. Intercultural Language Learning/Teaching**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Intercultural Language Teaching (ILT) is an instructional approach to EFL classrooms that strives to alter language learners via their language educational experiences. It is based on an integrated perspective of the underlying principles of language, culture, and learning (Byram & Wagner, 2018). Using the ILT teaching model, teachers explain knowledge to students, and at the same time, explaining culture and using culture are also an important part of the classroom. Students are not considered just as users of language but as collaborators in it, which necessitates the development of an understanding of the nature of language, culture, and communication. Therefore, it is difficult for both teachers and students. I feel that there are some difficulties in using the ILT teaching model in my English class. First, as a teacher, I have to think and solve how to create an intercultural environment for teaching. The concept of culture is very abstract. What method should I use to make students accept and understand it? Secondly, as students, their role is not simply a learner; they have to adjust their roles and study and think as a part of society, which is very difficult for a student to complete such a change of mind. Therefore, in the following sections, I will analyze an empirical study, combined with my own teaching experience, to discover the implications for the future teaching classroom.

#### **3.2. Analyse of Study Report**

The article I selected is called Intercultural communication in English language teacher education (Dogancay-Atkuna, 2005). In the literature review part, many educational platforms, such as the ELT Journal, have disputed the cultural content of language teaching materials, approaches for improving appreciation of the culture of the target language group, and the culture of English as a Global Language (Guset, 2002). With the development of globalization, today's language classrooms cannot simply explain some very basic language knowledge to students. Teachers must use a global perspective and combine language teaching with culture in order to cultivate the talents required by the era of globalization. Admittedly, Cortazzi and Jin (1996, p.169) say that teachers have revealed how "the type of behavior in L2 language classrooms is established within methodologies of anticipations, beliefs, values, and opinions about what makes effective learning, about how to train or learn, whether and how to discuss issues, what teaching materials are for, and how teaching method relates to broader issues of the nature and purpose of academic achievement." Therefore, how to effectively use the ILT teaching model is a test for teachers. This essay discusses why and how ILT concerns can be used in language learning and teaching for a variety of aims, including providing educators with a better understanding of potential sociocultural alteration in language learning and teaching, digging deeper and highlighting teachers' preconceived notions about numerous groups of learners; and analyzing the sociocultural appropriateness of their suggested language instructional approach for specific target groups of students.

Combining the literature review section and my own environment, I discovered the inadequacies of the current ILT teaching model in China. According to Hu (2002), CLT has not had the desired influence on ELT in China because the

underlying assumptions of CLT contradict the Chinese teaching style. In Chinese English classrooms, teachers focus on the accuracy of the language rather than the ability of the language. Therefore, the English classroom in China is dominated by teachers. Students' attitudes towards English are limited to understanding the knowledge points taught by the teacher and being able to answer the correct questions. Students do not have their own critical thinking and do not know how to apply the language they have learned in real life (the ability to use language is poor). It is precisely because of the teacher-led classroom in China that the teaching mode of CLT is difficult to use or fails. Likewise, the teaching model of ILT is difficult to use in Chinese ESL classrooms. As I said before, students focus only on marks and correctness without thinking about how to improve their language skills. With the process of globalization, some Chinese English classrooms are also using some western classroom activities such as debates, interviews, and so on. But the effect is not ideal. So, how to improve the ILT teaching mode is worth thinking about for Chinese teachers.

Sollon's (1995) model is built on four interconnected areas that work together to underpin group discourse patterns. These four criteria are broad enough to apply to a variety of situations. After learning Scollon's framework I try to design a activity to apply this framework in ILT teaching method.

Topic: Write a report about traditional Chinese and Western festivals by interviewing Chinese and Western teachers.

Analysis of the situation and the goal of teaching: The cultural background of the students in this class is China (the first requirement in the framework is met). But as international school students, they have the opportunity to meet more foreign teachers to gain an understanding of different cultural backgrounds and cultural differences. As students in international schools, teachers should cultivate students from a diverse perspective. In the process, Chinese students and foreign teachers will encounter some cultural conflicts. At this time, Chinese students played a role in disseminating culture, explaining culture, and promoting the process of cultural development (the second requirement in the framework is met). This activity requires students to combine spoken and written language (interviews and reports), which meets the third requirement of the framework. This activity can not only promote exchanges between teachers and students but also help learners learn about different cultures. contributed to the cultural dissemination of the nation (The fourth requirement in the framework is met).

Teaching materials: Some interview questions which are designed by students themselves.

Participants: Students and teachers who come from China and Western countries.

Requirements: Students need to interview Chinese and Western teachers. Supplement composition details by designing some interview questions (for example, ask what to prepare for when the traditional festival comes, how to spend it, whether there are some special ceremonies, etc.). Integrate the interview answers and lay out the writing structure. Finally, finish the report.

Evaluation: The English classes of international school students need to use the ILT teaching model. By comparing the differences between Chinese and Western traditional cultures, students can learn about different cultures. At the

same time, the use of interview activities (a kind of frequently used in Western teaching) in this assignment further promotes the application of the ILT teaching model in China. Through this activity, students have a good grasp of the requirements of intercultural language teaching.

## 4. Conclusion

Through the analysis of autonomous learning, communicative language teaching, and intercultural language learning, this paper reveals the advantages and disadvantages of the three language teaching methods. Combined with my own experience, I explained the implications brought by these three teaching methods to myself. In the future, I will make good use of their advantages to bring better language teaching to students.

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