

THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN ESL CLASSROOMS

Bakhtiyorova Shakhina

English language and literature of the Philology Faculty of the Shahrizabz State
Pedagogical Institute 4-invasion student

ABSTRACT

This research examines the role of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in ESL classrooms and its influence on learners' communicative development. The study aims to analyze how communicative tasks affect students' motivation, participation, and language performance. A qualitative approach was used, involving classroom observations, questionnaires, and informal interviews. The results demonstrate that CLT significantly improves students' speaking confidence, interaction skills, and overall engagement in the learning process. The findings also suggest that CLT creates a supportive learning environment that encourages learners to use English more actively.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, ESL, communicative competence, learner interaction, language acquisition.

ANNOTATSIYA

Ushbu tadqiqot ESL (ingliz tili ikkinchi til sifatida) sinflarida Kommunikativ til o'qitish (CLT) metodining o'rni va uning o'quvchilarning kommunikativ rivojlanishiga ta'sirini o'rganadi. Tadqiqotning asosiy maqsadi kommunikativ vazifalarning talabalar motivatsiyasi, darsdagi ishtiroki va til ko'nikmalariga ta'sirini tahlil qilishdan iborat. Tadqiqotda sifatli (qualitative) yondashuv qo'llanilib, sinf kuzatuvlari, so'rovnomalar va norasmiy suhbatlar asosida ma'lumotlar to'plandi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, CLT o'quvchilarning gapirishdagi ishonchini, o'zaro muloqot ko'nikmalarini va umumiy faolligini sezilarli darajada oshiradi. Shuningdek, tadqiqot natijalari CLT o'quvchilarni ingliz tilidan faolroq foydalanishga undaydigan qo'llab-quvvatlovchi o'quv muhitini yaratishini ko'rsatadi.

Kalit soʻzlar: Kommunikativ til oʻqitish, ESL, kommunikativ kompetensiya, oʻquvchi oʻzaro aloqasi, tilni oʻzlashtirish.

Introduction

In the modern educational context, English has become a global means of communication in academic, professional, and social settings. As a result, language teaching has shifted from traditional grammar-based instruction toward communicative approaches. Many ESL learners spend years studying grammar and vocabulary but still struggle to communicate effectively. This problem highlights the need for teaching methods that prioritize real language use. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emerged as a response to the limitations of traditional methods. It emphasizes meaningful communication, learner involvement, and real-life language practice. Instead of focusing solely on accuracy, CLT encourages fluency and interaction. The main purpose of this study is to explore the role of CLT in ESL classrooms and to examine its impact on learners' communicative competence. Furthermore, this study aims to address the following research questions:

1. How does CLT influence students' participation in ESL classrooms?
2. What are the effects of communicative activities on learners' speaking confidence?
3. What challenges do teachers face when implementing CLT?

Methods

Research Design. This study adopted a qualitative research design to gain a deeper understanding of learners' experiences in CLT-based classrooms. Qualitative methods were chosen because they allow for detailed observation of classroom behavior and learner attitudes.

Participants. The participants consisted of 40 intermediate-level ESL students aged between 18 and 22. They were enrolled in a private language institute. In addition, two ESL teachers with more than five years of teaching experience participated in the study.

Data Collection. Data were collected over a six-week period using three main instruments:

- ✓ Classroom observations
- ✓ Student questionnaires
- ✓ Informal interviews with teachers

During classroom observations, the researcher focused on students' interaction patterns, participation levels, and use of English. Questionnaires were used to gather learners' opinions about communicative activities. Interviews provided insights into teachers' perspectives on CLT.

Teaching Procedures. CLT-based activities were implemented in regular lessons. These included role plays, pair discussions, group presentations, problem-solving tasks, and information-gap exercises. The teacher acted as a facilitator, guiding students and providing feedback when necessary.

Results

Student Participation. The results revealed a noticeable increase in student participation during communicative activities. Learners were more willing to speak in pairs and small groups than in whole-class discussions. Many students who were usually quiet became more active when working collaboratively.

Speaking Confidence. One of the most significant findings was the improvement in learners' speaking confidence. Students reported feeling less anxious about making mistakes. They focused more on expressing ideas than on grammatical perfection.

Language use. Observations showed that students used English more frequently during CLT lessons. They attempted to negotiate meaning, ask questions, and clarify misunderstandings. This active use of language contributed to better vocabulary retention and improved fluency.

Learner motivation. Questionnaire results indicated higher motivation levels. Most students described CLT lessons as "interesting," "useful," and "enjoyable." They felt that communicative tasks helped them understand the practical value of learning English.

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm the effectiveness of CLT in ESL classrooms. Increased interaction allows learners to practice language in meaningful contexts, which supports natural language acquisition. When students actively use English, they develop both linguistic and social skills. CLT also creates a learner-centered environment where students take responsibility for their own learning. This autonomy leads to higher motivation and engagement. However, some challenges were identified. Large class sizes made it difficult to monitor all students. Time constraints sometimes limited the depth of activities. Teachers also reported that beginner-level students needed more support and structure. This suggests that CLT should be adapted to

learners' proficiency levels and combined with other teaching methods when necessary.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Communicative Language Teaching plays a vital role in enhancing learners' communicative competence in ESL classrooms. The study demonstrates that CLT improves student participation, confidence, and motivation. Although certain limitations exist, the benefits of CLT outweigh its challenges. Therefore, it is recommended that ESL teachers integrate communicative activities into their teaching practice and create supportive learning environments that encourage active language use.

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