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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SUPPORT OF MODERN SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: a collection scientific works of the International scientific conference – Madrid, Spain, 2026, Issue 5.

Languages of publication: Uzbek, English, Russian, German, Italian, Spanish,

The collection consists of scientific research of scientists, graduate students and students who took part in the International Scientific online conference «**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SUPPORT OF MODERN SCIENCE AND INNOVATION**». Which took place in Spain, 2026.

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COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS AND THEIR EFFECTIVENESS IN EFL CLASSROOMS

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Abstract: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has become one of the most influential approaches in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education. Unlike traditional grammar-focused methods, CLT emphasizes meaningful communication, interaction, and the practical use of language in real-life situations. The approach aims to develop learners' communicative competence by integrating speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in authentic contexts.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, CLT, EFL classrooms, communicative competence, language acquisition, learner-centered approach, interaction, fluency, English language teaching, classroom communication.

Introduction

The teaching of English as a Foreign Language has undergone significant changes over the past several decades. Traditional teaching methods such as the Grammar-Translation Method and Audio-Lingual Method mainly focused on grammatical accuracy, memorization, and repetition. However, these methods often failed to develop learners' ability to communicate effectively in real-life situations. Today, CLT is widely adopted in EFL classrooms around the world because it encourages active participation, authentic communication, and learner engagement. This article explores the main principles and techniques of CLT and evaluates its effectiveness in foreign language education.

The Concept of Communicative Language Teaching: Communicative Language Teaching is an approach that focuses on enabling learners to communicate effectively and appropriately in various social contexts. The approach was influenced by the concept of communicative competence introduced by Dell Hymes, who argued that language learning should involve not only grammatical knowledge but also the ability to use language appropriately in communication.

CLT emphasizes:

- Meaningful interaction;
- Real-life communication;
- Learner participation;
- Functional language use;
- Integration of language skills.

The primary goal of CLT is to help learners develop communicative competence, which includes grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence.

Main Principles of Communicative Language Teaching:

Learner-Centered Instruction: CLT places learners at the center of the educational process. Students actively participate in discussions, role-plays,

problem-solving activities, and collaborative tasks rather than passively receiving information from teachers.

Communication as the Main Goal; The approach emphasizes the use of English for meaningful communication. Accuracy is important, but fluency and the ability to express ideas effectively are given greater priority during communicative activities.

Use of Authentic Materials: CLT encourages the use of authentic resources such as newspapers, videos, podcasts, interviews, and real-life conversations. These materials expose learners to natural language use.

Integration of Language Skills; Speaking, listening, reading, and writing are taught together rather than separately. Integrated-skills instruction reflects how language is used in real communication.

Teacher as Facilitator: In CLT classrooms, teachers act as facilitators, guides, and organizers of communicative activities rather than authoritative lecturers.

Communicative Language Teaching Methods and Techniques:

-Role-Play Activities: Role-play allows learners to practice language in realistic situations such as ordering food, making appointments, or participating in interviews. These activities improve speaking confidence and social interaction skills.

-Pair and Group Work: Collaborative learning activities encourage students to exchange ideas, negotiate meaning, and solve problems together using English.

-Information Gap Activities: In information gap tasks, students possess different pieces of information and must communicate to complete a task. Such activities promote authentic interaction and listening comprehension.

-Task-Based Learning: Task-based activities require learners to complete meaningful tasks using English. Examples include planning trips, conducting surveys, or solving practical problems.

-Discussions and Debates: Classroom discussions help learners express opinions, develop critical thinking, and improve fluency in speaking.

Conclusion

Communicative Language Teaching has transformed English language education by emphasizing meaningful communication and learner interaction. The approach provides learners with opportunities to use English actively and confidently in realistic situations. Through communicative activities such as role-plays, discussions, and task-based learning, students improve their fluency, communicative competence, and motivation.



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