THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT) IN DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF UZBEK LEARNERS AT SECONDARY EDUCATION

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Abstract. This paper examines the role of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in helping learners develop communicative competence in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Unlike traditional methods such as the Grammar-Translation Method

(GTM) or the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM), CLT focuses on fluency, interaction, and meaningful use of the target language. The article presents the historical background of CLT, its principles, advantages, challenges, and classroom practices. It concludes that CLT is one of the most effective approaches to teaching English, especially in contexts where communicative competence is the main goal.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, communicative competence, EFL, ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida, methodology, second language acquisition.

The teaching of English has gone through different stages, starting from grammar-focused methods to more communicative ones. For many years, the Grammar-Translation Method was dominant, but it mainly helped students read texts and translate sentences without developing real speaking skills. Later, the Audio-Lingual Method became popular by emphasizing drills and repetition. However, this method also did not lead to natural communication.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) appeared in the 1970s as a reaction to these traditional methods. The main purpose of CLT is not only to teach grammar or vocabulary but to help learners use English effectively in real communication. This article explores the background, principles, and effectiveness of CLT in developing communicative competence.

The concept of communicative competence was first introduced by Dell Hymes (1972). He argued that knowledge of language is not only about grammar, but also about its use in social contexts[2]. Later, Canale and Swain (1980) described communicative competence as a combination of four components:

1. Grammatical competence, which is about knowledge of grammar and vocabulary.
2. Sociolinguistic competence describes understanding how to use language appropriately in different situations.
3. Discourse competence is about the ability to connect sentences into a meaningful conversation.
4. Strategic competence implies the ability to use strategies to overcome communication problems [1].

Richards and Rodgers (2014) explain that CLT is based on these ideas and focuses on interaction, authentic communication, and student-centered learning[3]. Consequently, the principles of CLT are worth discussing:

- The main goal of language teaching is communicative competence.
- Fluency is sometimes more important than accuracy. Mistakes are accepted as part of the learning process.
- Activities should be meaningful and connected to real life.
- The classroom should be student-centered, with the teacher acting as a facilitator.
- Pair work and group work are encouraged to increase interaction.

Teachers who use CLT design activities that involve real communication and active participation. Examples include:

- Role plays (e.g., ordering food in a restaurant, asking for directions).
- Interviews and surveys among classmates.
- Discussions and debates about everyday topics.
- Games and problem-solving tasks that require teamwork.

Such activities help Uzbek learners not only practise grammar and vocabulary of the English language at secondary school, but also acquire pronunciation, intonation, and cultural aspects of communication in the English context. As most educators admit CLT to be a more dynamic and interactive (Canale & Swain) approach in second language acquisition, its implementation in the Uzbek classroom presented successful communication of students on

a wide range of topics, thus encouraging creativity and free expression of English, which is generally hard to achieve relying on translation, memorization, repetition, and drilling. Observation of English lessons showed that the use of CLT has shifted learning from accuracy-centered to fluency-centered, thus making CLT especially effective in preparing students in Uzbekistan for real-life communication.

In conclusion, CLT represents one of the most influential methods in modern English language teaching in Uzbekistan. By focusing on real communication and meaningful activities it helps Uzbek learners develop communicative competence. Although there are challenges in its application, especially in contexts where exams dominate, CLT remains an effective approach for preparing students to use English confidently in real-life situations.

References

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