

THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN IMPROVING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Annotation. *This article examines the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in developing English-speaking skills among university students. The study focuses on the role of communicative activities in enhancing learners' fluency, confidence, and communicative competence. Data were collected through classroom observations, speaking assessments, and student feedback. The findings indicate that CLT significantly contributes to the improvement of oral communication skills and promotes active learner participation in the language-learning process.*

Keywords: *Communicative Language Teaching, speaking skills, communicative competence, English language learning, university students, language education.*

Introduction

The growing importance of English as a global language has increased the demand for effective language teaching methodologies. English is widely used in international communication, higher education, science, technology, and business. As a result, language educators continuously seek innovative approaches that can help students achieve communicative competence.

In many educational institutions, English instruction has traditionally focused on grammar rules, translation exercises, and memorization of vocabulary. Although these methods may improve students' knowledge of grammatical structures, they often fail to develop practical speaking abilities. Consequently, many learners experience difficulties when communicating in real-life situations despite years of formal language study.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emerged as a response to these limitations. This approach emphasizes meaningful communication, interaction, and the practical use of language in authentic contexts. Rather than concentrating solely on grammatical accuracy, CLT encourages learners to use language as a tool for communication.

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching in improving English-speaking skills among university students studying English as a foreign language.

Methods

The research was conducted among undergraduate students enrolled in the English Philology program. A total of 60 students participated in the study. They were divided into two groups consisting of 30 students each.

The experimental group received instruction through Communicative Language Teaching techniques, including role-playing activities, pair work, group discussions,

debates, information-gap tasks, and problem-solving exercises. The control group continued learning through traditional grammar-based methods.

The study lasted twelve weeks. Data collection involved several instruments:

- Pre-test and post-test speaking assessments;
- Classroom observations;
- Student questionnaires;
- Teacher evaluation reports.

The speaking tests assessed pronunciation, fluency, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary usage, and overall communicative effectiveness. Quantitative data were analyzed statistically, while qualitative information obtained from observations and questionnaires was interpreted descriptively.

Results

The results revealed substantial differences between the two groups. Students in the experimental group demonstrated greater improvement in speaking performance compared to those in the control group.

The average speaking score of the experimental group increased from 62% to 84%, representing a significant improvement. In contrast, the control group improved from 64% to 71%.

Classroom observations showed that students participating in communicative activities were more willing to express their opinions and engage in conversations. They displayed reduced anxiety and greater confidence when speaking English.

The questionnaire results further supported these findings. Approximately 87% of students reported that communicative tasks helped them improve their speaking skills. More than 80% stated that pair and group activities increased their motivation to learn English.

Students also emphasized that communicative exercises provided opportunities to use newly learned vocabulary and grammatical structures in meaningful contexts. This practical application contributed to better retention and understanding of language forms.

Discussion

The findings confirm that Communicative Language Teaching is an effective approach for developing speaking skills among university students. The positive outcomes can be explained by several factors.

First, CLT creates an environment where learners actively use the target language rather than passively receive information. Frequent interaction enables students to practice communication strategies and develop fluency.

Second, communicative activities simulate real-life situations. As a result, students learn how to apply language knowledge in practical contexts. This process strengthens both linguistic and communicative competence.

Third, CLT promotes learner autonomy and collaboration. Students become responsible for their own learning and benefit from peer interaction. Such experiences contribute to increased confidence and motivation.

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These findings are consistent with previous studies conducted by Richards (2006), Brown (2014), and Nunan (2004), who argued that communication-oriented instruction leads to more effective language acquisition.

Despite its advantages, the implementation of CLT may face challenges. Large class sizes, limited instructional resources, and insufficient teacher training can affect the effectiveness of communicative activities. Therefore, educational institutions should provide appropriate support for teachers who wish to adopt communicative approaches.

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that Communicative Language Teaching significantly improves English-speaking skills among university students. Learners exposed to communicative activities showed greater progress in fluency, confidence, and communicative competence than those taught through traditional methods.

The results suggest that English language programs should integrate communicative tasks into classroom instruction to create more engaging and effective learning environments. Future research may explore the long-term impact of CLT on overall language proficiency and academic achievement.

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