

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS

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Abstract: *The development of speaking skills is one of the most important goals in English language teaching. However, many learners experience difficulties in oral communication due to limited opportunities for meaningful interaction in the classroom. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has emerged as an effective approach that emphasizes communication, interaction, and real-life language use. This study investigates the effectiveness of CLT in developing students' speaking skills. A quantitative research design was employed involving 60 undergraduate students learning English as a foreign language. The participants were divided into an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group received instruction through CLT activities, while the control group was taught using traditional grammar-based methods. Pre-test and post-test speaking assessments were administered to evaluate students' progress. The findings revealed that students exposed to CLT demonstrated significantly higher improvement in fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, and communicative competence. The study concludes that Communicative Language Teaching is an effective method for enhancing speaking skills and recommends its wider implementation in English language classrooms.*

Keywords: *Communicative Language Teaching, speaking skills, English language teaching, communicative competence, language learning.*

Introduction

English has become an international language used in education, business, science, and intercultural communication. As a result, developing effective speaking skills has become a primary objective of English language education. Speaking is often considered the most challenging skill for learners because it requires the simultaneous use of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and communication strategies.

Traditional language teaching methods have often focused on grammatical accuracy and memorization rather than communicative competence. Consequently, students may possess knowledge of grammar rules but struggle to communicate effectively in real-life situations. In response to these challenges, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was introduced as a learner-centered approach that prioritizes meaningful communication and interaction.

CLT encourages students to use language for authentic purposes through activities such as role plays, group discussions, problem-solving tasks, and information-gap exercises. These activities create opportunities for learners to practice speaking in realistic contexts and develop confidence in using the target language.

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The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching in improving students' speaking skills. The research aims to answer the following question:

How effective is Communicative Language Teaching in developing English speaking skills among EFL learners?

Methods

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative experimental research design. The objective was to compare the speaking performance of students taught through Communicative Language Teaching with those taught through traditional methods.

Participants

The participants consisted of 60 first-year university students enrolled in an English language course. Their ages ranged from 18 to 21 years. The students were randomly assigned to two groups:

Experimental Group (30 students)

Control Group (30 students)

Both groups had similar levels of English proficiency at the beginning of the study.

Instruments

Several research instruments were used:

Speaking pre-test

Speaking post-test

Assessment rubric measuring:

Fluency

Pronunciation

Vocabulary

Grammatical accuracy

Communicative effectiveness

The tests required students to participate in interviews, discussions, and short presentations.

Procedure

The study lasted for twelve weeks.

The experimental group received instruction through Communicative Language Teaching techniques, including:

Pair work

Group discussions

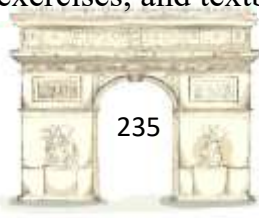
Role plays

Information-gap activities

Problem-solving tasks

Interactive presentations

The control group followed a traditional teacher-centered approach focused on grammar explanations, translation exercises, and textbook drills.



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Both groups completed a speaking pre-test before the treatment and a post-test after the twelve-week period.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Mean scores from the pre-test and post-test were compared to evaluate improvements in speaking performance.

Results and Discussion

Results

The results demonstrated noticeable differences between the two groups.

Table 1. Mean Speaking Scores

Group	Pre-test	Post-test	Improvement
Experimental Group	61.4	82.7	+21.3
Control Group	60.9	69.5	+8.6

The experimental group showed significantly greater improvement compared to the control group. Students participating in CLT activities demonstrated enhanced fluency, richer vocabulary use, and increased confidence during speaking tasks.

The greatest improvement was observed in communicative competence and fluency. Students became more comfortable expressing their ideas and engaging in spontaneous conversations.

Discussion

The findings support the view that Communicative Language Teaching positively influences speaking skill development. The interactive nature of CLT allows learners to actively participate in communication rather than passively receive information.

One reason for the effectiveness of CLT is the increased amount of speaking practice. Unlike traditional methods, CLT creates opportunities for students to use language meaningfully in realistic situations. Frequent interaction helps learners develop automaticity and confidence.

The results are consistent with previous studies that have emphasized the importance of communicative activities in language learning. Through pair and group work, students negotiate meaning, receive immediate feedback, and develop strategic competence. These factors contribute significantly to speaking proficiency.

Another important finding is the positive effect of CLT on learner motivation. Students in the experimental group reported higher levels of engagement and enjoyment during classroom activities. Motivation plays a crucial role in language acquisition because motivated learners are more willing to participate and take communicative risks.

Despite these positive outcomes, several challenges were observed. Some students initially felt uncomfortable speaking in front of others. Additionally, CLT requires careful lesson planning and effective classroom management. Teachers must possess sufficient training to implement communicative activities successfully.

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Nevertheless, the benefits of CLT outweigh its limitations. The findings indicate that communicative approaches create a supportive learning environment that promotes active language use and speaking development.

Conclusion

This study examined the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching in developing speaking skills among university students learning English as a foreign language. The results revealed that students taught through CLT achieved significantly higher speaking scores than those taught through traditional methods.

The findings demonstrate that CLT enhances fluency, vocabulary usage, pronunciation, communicative competence, and learner confidence. The use of interactive activities such as role plays, discussions, and problem-solving tasks provides meaningful opportunities for authentic language practice.

Based on the results, English language teachers are encouraged to incorporate communicative activities into their lessons to improve students' speaking abilities. Educational institutions should also provide professional development opportunities to help teachers effectively implement CLT methodologies.

Future research may investigate the long-term impact of CLT on speaking proficiency and explore its effectiveness across different age groups and educational contexts.

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