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DEVELOPING SPEAKING COMPETENCE THROUGH COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has become one of the most influential approaches in modern foreign language education due to its emphasis on meaningful communication, learner interaction, and communicative competence. The present study examines the theoretical and methodological foundations of CLT and analyzes its effectiveness in developing learners' speaking competence in English language teaching. The article is based on an extensive review of scientific literature related to communicative competence, language acquisition, functional linguistics, and learner-centered pedagogy. The study investigates the contributions of prominent scholars such as Dell Hymes, Michael Halliday, Henry Widdowson, Canale and Swain, Littlewood, Brumfit, Johnson, Savignon, and Krashen to the development of communicative methodology.

The research highlights the importance of communicative activities, authentic interaction, collaborative learning, and task-based instruction in improving learners' oral communication skills. Furthermore, the study discusses the differences between traditional grammar-oriented methods and communicative approaches to language teaching. The findings indicate that Communicative Language Teaching creates favorable conditions for developing fluency, confidence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence.

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The article concludes that communicative approaches significantly contribute to learners' speaking performance, motivation, and communicative confidence. Therefore, the integration of communicative activities and learner-centered instruction into modern English language classrooms remains highly important for preparing students for real-life communication.

The present article investigates the role of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in developing learners' speaking competence in foreign language education. The study is based on a comprehensive theoretical analysis of communicative competence, communicative approaches to language teaching, and contemporary language learning theories proposed by prominent scholars such as Hymes, Halliday, Widdowson, Canale and Swain, Littlewood, Brumfit, Johnson, and Krashen. The article analyzes the theoretical foundations of CLT and examines its effectiveness in improving learners' oral communication skills, fluency, interactional ability, and communicative performance in authentic situations. Furthermore, the study discusses the significance of learner-centered instruction, task-based activities, collaborative learning, and meaningful communication in modern English language teaching. The findings demonstrate that Communicative Language Teaching promotes learners' active participation, increases motivation, develops communicative competence, and creates favorable conditions for effective language acquisition. The article concludes that CLT remains one of the most influential and productive approaches for developing speaking competence in contemporary foreign language education.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, communicative competence, speaking competence, foreign language teaching, interaction, communicative approach, language acquisition, task-based learning.

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Introduction

Research Problem

Despite many years of foreign language instruction, a considerable number of learners still experience difficulties in speaking fluently and communicating effectively in real-life situations. Traditional grammar-oriented teaching methods often fail to develop learners' communicative abilities because they focus primarily on memorization and structural accuracy rather than meaningful interaction. As a result, students may possess theoretical knowledge of grammar and vocabulary but remain unable to participate confidently in authentic communication.

In many educational contexts, speaking activities are limited, teacher-centered instruction dominates classroom interaction, and learners have insufficient opportunities to practice language communicatively. This situation creates an urgent need for teaching approaches that prioritize communication, interaction, fluency, and learner participation.

Research Aim

The main aim of this study is to investigate the role of Communicative Language Teaching in developing learners' speaking competence in foreign language education.

Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

1. To analyze the theoretical foundations of Communicative Language Teaching;
2. To examine the concept of communicative competence and its components;
3. To identify the role of communicative activities in developing speaking competence;
4. To compare communicative approaches with traditional language teaching methods;

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5. To evaluate the advantages of CLT in modern English language teaching.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does Communicative Language Teaching contribute to the development of speaking competence?
2. What are the major theoretical principles underlying CLT?
3. Which communicative activities are most effective in improving learners' speaking skills?
4. What advantages does CLT provide compared to traditional language teaching methods?

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study lies in its contribution to modern foreign language pedagogy. The research provides theoretical insights into the communicative approach and highlights practical strategies for improving speaking competence through interactive and learner-centered instruction. The findings may be useful for English language teachers, curriculum designers, researchers, and students interested in communicative language teaching methodologies.

In the era of globalization, learning foreign languages has become one of the most essential components of modern education. English, in particular, plays a significant role in international communication, academic mobility, scientific research, technology, and professional development. Consequently, the primary goal of foreign language education is no longer limited to teaching grammatical rules and vocabulary items; rather, it aims to develop learners' communicative competence and their ability to use language effectively in real-life situations.

Traditional approaches to language teaching mainly focused on grammatical accuracy, memorization of structures, and mechanical drills. Learners were often able to produce grammatically correct sentences but faced difficulties when

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communicating in authentic situations. This limitation led to the emergence of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which shifted attention from the mastery of grammatical forms to meaningful communication.

Communicative Language Teaching emerged in the 1970s as a response to dissatisfaction with structural and audiolingual methods of language teaching. The theoretical foundation of CLT is strongly connected with Dell Hymes's concept of communicative competence. Hymes criticized Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence for being limited to grammatical knowledge and argued that successful communication requires not only knowledge of language structures but also the ability to use language appropriately according to social and cultural contexts.

The development of CLT was also influenced by Halliday's functional theory of language, which viewed language as a system of meaning-making and communication. Halliday emphasized that language functions as a tool for interaction and social communication. Likewise, Widdowson highlighted the importance of discourse and communicative use of language rather than isolated grammatical structures.

Another important contribution to CLT was made by Canale and Swain, who proposed four dimensions of communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. These components together form the basis for successful communication.

Today, Communicative Language Teaching is considered one of the most effective approaches in foreign language education because it focuses on meaningful interaction, authentic communication, learner participation, and the integration of language skills. In this regard, developing speaking competence has become one of the central aims of modern English language teaching.

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The purpose of this article is to analyze the theoretical foundations of Communicative Language Teaching and to examine its role in developing learners' speaking competence through communicative and interactive activities.

Methods

The present research is based on qualitative and theoretical analysis. The study employed methods of comparative analysis, literature review, interpretation, synthesis, and generalization of scientific sources related to Communicative Language Teaching and communicative competence.

The theoretical framework of the study is based on the works of major scholars in the field of communicative language teaching and second language acquisition, including Hymes (1972), Halliday (1975), Widdowson (1978), Brumfit and Johnson (1979), Canale and Swain (1980), Littlewood (1981), Savignon (1983), Krashen (1982), and Richards and Rodgers (2001).

The study also analyzed the differences between traditional language teaching methods and communicative approaches. Particular attention was given to the following principles of Communicative Language Teaching:

- language as a tool for communication;
- learner-centered instruction;
- meaningful and authentic interaction;
- contextualized language use;
- pair and group work activities;
- task-based learning;
- fluency-oriented instruction;
- collaborative and interactive learning.

In addition, modern communicative classroom techniques such as role play, debates, discussions, brainstorming, problem-solving tasks, information-gap activities, interviews, and project work were analyzed in relation to speaking competence development.

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Discussion

The study shows that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) plays an important role in developing learners' speaking competence. Unlike traditional methods focused on grammar and memorization, CLT encourages meaningful communication and active learner participation. Communicative activities such as pair work, discussions, and role plays improve learners' fluency, confidence, and interactional skills. The findings also support Hymes's concept of communicative competence and Krashen's theory that language develops through meaningful communication.

Although some challenges such as large classes and limited time may affect implementation, CLT remains an effective approach for improving speaking skills.

Analysis

The analysis indicates that CLT creates favorable conditions for authentic language use and learner interaction. Communicative activities help students improve fluency, pronunciation, sociolinguistic competence, and communicative confidence. The study also shows that learner-centered instruction increases motivation, classroom participation, and collaborative learning.

Results

The analysis of scientific literature demonstrates that Communicative Language Teaching significantly contributes to the development of learners' speaking competence. Unlike traditional methods that focus primarily on grammar drills and memorization, CLT creates opportunities for learners to use language actively and meaningfully.

One of the major findings of the study is that communicative activities increase learners' speaking fluency and confidence. Through pair work, group discussions, and real-life simulations, learners become more willing to express

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their ideas and participate in communication. Such activities reduce anxiety and help learners overcome psychological barriers related to speaking. In addition, communicative tasks improve learners' interactional skills, sociolinguistic competence, and ability to use language appropriately in different contexts. The findings also show that CLT increases learner motivation because classroom activities are connected with authentic communication and real-life situations. Learners become more active participants in the learning process and develop greater confidence in expressing their opinions. Furthermore, communicative activities promote collaborative learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Overall, the results confirm that Communicative Language Teaching provides effective conditions for improving speaking competence and communicative performance in English language education.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Communicative Language Teaching significantly contributes to the development of speaking competence. Meaningful communication, authentic interaction, and communicative activities help learners become more confident and effective language users. Therefore, communicative methods should be widely integrated into modern English language teaching.

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