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## Necessity of Communicative Language Teaching in India

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**Introduction** - CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) is considered as the latest process of teaching in the field of Second language learning. CLT was actually a sharp reaction against audio-lingualism during the late 1960s when the whole theoretical philosophical basis of audiolingualism was questioned. The students of high level were unable to communicate through audiolingualism and the experience of studying through audiolingual procedures seems to be boring and unsatisfying. Naturally, the whole audiolingual paradigm was called into question: pattern practice, drilling and memorization. So it created a crisis in the American language circles and it was the main reason of the emergence of CLT.

In his book *Syntactic Structure* (1975) American Linguist Noam Chomsky described that the current standard structural theories of language were incapable of accounting for the fundamental characteristic of language-the functional and communicative potential of language. They saw the need of “communicative competence” rather than “linguistic competence.” “Communicative Competence” means to apply not only grammatical rules of a language in order to form grammatically correct sentences but also communicative proficiency that one can use the sentences in appropriate places. Scholars who advocated this view of language are Christopher Candlin and Henry Widdowson. They drew on the work of British Functional Linguists (John Firth, M.A.K. Halliday), American work on sociolinguists (e.g., Dell Hymes, John Gumperz and William Labov) , as well as work in philosophy (e.g., John Austin and John Searle).

Besides another approach of foreign language teaching came in Europe with the increasing independence of European countries that needed the great efforts to teach the adults the major languages of the European Common Market. The Council of Europe, a regional organization for cultural educational co-operation, examined the problem. It sponsored international conferences on language teaching and published books on language teaching and was very active in promoting the formation of International Association of Applied Linguistics.

**Features of CLT-** The basic features of CLT are -

- 1) In communicative language teaching, meaning is paramount.
- 2) Dialogues, if used, for centre around communicative functions are not normally memorized.
- 3) Contextualization is a basic premise. Language learning is learning to communicate.
- 4) Effective communication is sought.
- 5) Drilling may occur, but peripherally.
- 6) Comprehensible pronunciation is sought.
- 7) Any device that helps the learners is acceptable- varying according to their age and interest.
- 8) Attempts to communicate may be encouraged from the very beginning.
- 9) Judicious use of native language is accepted where feasible.
- 10) Translation may be used where students need or benefit from it.
- 11) Reading or writing can start from the first day, if desired.
- 12) The target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling.
- 13) Communicative competence is the goal (i.e., the ability to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately).
- 14) Linguistic variation is a central concept in materials and methodology.
- 15) Sequencing is determined by any consideration of content, function or meaning that maintains interest.
- 16) Language is created by the individual often through trial and error.
- 17) Fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal. Accuracy is judged not in abstract but in context.
- 18) Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in what is being communicated by the language.
- 19) Students are expected to interact with other people, either in flesh, through pair and group work, or in their writing.
- 20) The teacher cannot know exactly what language the students will use.

One of the North American proponents, Savignon (1983), for example, offers as a precedent to CLT which is a commentary by Montaigne on his learning of Latin through conversation rather than through the customary method of formal analysis and translation. Montaigne rightly says, "Without methods, without a book, without grammar or rules, without a whip and without tears, I had learned a Latin as proper as that of my schoolmaster" (Savignon 1983:47). This anti structural view can be held to represent the language learning version of a more general learning perspective usually referred to as "learning by doing" or "the experience approach" (Hilgard and Bower 1966). The notion of direct communicative act is central to the most CLT interpretations.

The focus on communicative and contextual factors in language use has an antecedent in the work of the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski and his colleague, the linguist John Firth. British applied linguists credit Firth for focusing attention on discourse as subject and context for language analysis. Firth also stressed that language needed to be studied in the broader sociocultural context of its use, which included participants, their behaviour and beliefs, the object of linguistic discussion, and word choice. Michael Halliday and Dell Hymes, two linguists frequently cited by advocates of Communicative Language Teaching, acknowledge primary debts to Malinowski and Firth.

Common to all versions of Communicative Language Teaching, is a theory of language teaching that starts from a communicative model of language and language use, and that seeks to translate this into a design for an instructional system, for materials, for teacher and learner - roles and behaviour, and for classroom activities and techniques.

We should know that the Power of communication is not dependent on learner's intelligentsia, it totally depends on the constant practice and the circumstances or the milieu in which a learner grows up. It is seen that a learner who even is not acquainted with the alphabets like a, b, c and d of English language but remains a long time with the touch of English-spoken persons, he can speak fluently and easily. It does not matter what his mother tongue or father tongue is. The matter is that the people around him speak in which language. If an Indian remains forty or fifty years either in USA or UK, he or she will be able to speak in English fluently even when he or she will come back in India. In most of the cases, it is seen that a student after the completion of B.A. and M.A. in English cannot speak in English fluently because he or she is not habituated to speak in English due to lack of milieu or circumstances.

### **Language for Communication**

Teachers have to create such kind of atmosphere in the classroom so that the students get no permission to speak even a single sentence in a vernacular language. Henceforth, they have to teach English for communication.

### **Language through Communication**

Teachers have to ask common day-to-days questions to the learners. The teachers should use very easy and comprehensive language and use them very slowly, so that the learners can learn language through communication.

### **Language Teaching Through Authentic Materials**

Teachers have to use authentic materials like playing cards, postcards, catalogue, national flag and newspaper etc. in the classroom. For example, if a playing card painted with various colours and beautiful pictures is presented before a child and asked questions by a teacher, the child being enchanted by the colour and picture naturally will give the answer of the question unconsciously. Thus the child will learn English as a language of communication.

### **Situation of Classroom**

ICSE and CBSE Board have emphasized on the Communicative Language Teaching. But it is our duty to justify that how far it is succeed in India. If we go through the “foreword” section of the book of class VI of any English medium board, we can see as usual the course-book has been made learner-centred and proactive. Grammatical and structural- both items have covered elementarily in the primary course that has been taken up in this book for further reinforcement and elaboration. Learning competencies are mentioned lesson wise for proper focusing of curriculum transaction.

At the end of the “foreword” section it is written by the agencies of West Bengal Board that “we hope the revised course book will facilitate learning English by the students as a continuum from primary classes.” “We also hope that the teachers will design analogous and diverse exercises for extensive practice by the students.” “Feedback from teachers, students, guardians, academicians and persons who are interested in education are welcomed for further improvement of this endeavour.” “We are grateful to the subject experts and all concerned for developing this course material”-all these written forms give intention on the development and improvement of the course of Learning English class-VI, but how far it is applied for the improvement of the spoken form of the learners.

In a state like W.B.B.S.E.(the regional board) introduces the learning English series from class VI onwards since 1984. Here the book for class VI has been prepared on the basis of the recommendations of the education commission (Dr Ashoke Mitra Commission) appointed by the Govt. of West Bengal. The book for class VI has been revised and redesigned for the learners to pick up the communication skills in English Language. The revision and redesigned has been made as a continuum of the course books “Ingreji Sekha” for class III-V. A good amount of reading texts have been included to give the learners practice in reading and at the same time to prepare them for narrative texts at the next stage. The exercises (tasks) given in the book will help the learners to develop the four skills of language learning viz., listening, speaking, reading and writing. The lessons are

language function based. They would enable the learners to follow and give simple directions or instructions.

As recommended by the Education Commission, grammar portion has been included in the exercises to give practice in the language structures. The rules of grammar are given for the teacher to help the learners to easily understand how language structures operate. These rules of grammar are not meant to be tested or examined. If felt necessary, mother-tongue may be used to explain the rules or to simplify instructions. But what is the purpose for all these rules is to teach the learners to communicate in English appropriately and properly outside their houses. But the purpose for all these rules is to teach the learners to communicate in English appropriately and properly outside the classroom and outside their houses.

But in spite of all these endeavours, only twenty per cent people of India can communicate in English and in some cases even not twenty per cent, only ten per cent. The main reason of this situation is the systematic error. Keeping in view the goals of English teaching in a decolonized set-up, the system provides the learners alternative materials and methods. The existing methods have almost made the learner to believe that learning is cramming and memorizing and following the process, the learners get the desirable marks even in the college and university level. So, there is no need of learning anything and they cannot get the scope of interaction or group discussion. So, in case of communication with a foreigner, the learners stumble down.

But if we go through the syllabus of any English medium board, if we discuss the syllabus of even class VI of ICSE board, we see that in the preface of the book *Foundations in English*, it is declared that this book addresses the need of young learners to acquire fluency in a language which is not their mother-tongue. In today's world, there is a multi-lingual diversity in the global villages, so the importance of the communication in English language cannot be underestimated. In this syllabus, the focus is on the linguistic form and function provides holistic language learning.

### **Merits of CLT**

When a person will be able to communicate in English, he will get a great facility inside the country and outside the country. If he goes abroad he will be able to express the feelings of his mind very easily to a Foreigner. Inside the country, he can get job in a multi-national or international company which needs a fluent English speaker.

### **CLT As An Approach Rather Than A Method**

CLT is best considered as an approach rather than a method. Thus although a reasonable degree of theoretical consistency can be discerned at the levels of language and learning theory, at the level of design and procedure there is much greater room for individual interpretation and variation than most methods permit. It can be that one version among the various proposals and

classroom activities may gain wider approval in the future, giving Communicative Language Teaching a status similar to their teaching methods. On the other hand divergent interpretations might lead to homogeneous subgroups.

Communicative Language Teaching appeared at a time when British Language Teaching was ready for a paradigm shift. Situational Language was no longer felt to reflect a methodology appropriate for seventies and beyond. CLT applauds to those who sought a more humanistic approach to teaching, one in which the interactive processes of communication received priority. The rapid adoption and implementation of communicative approach also resulted from the fact that it quickly assumed the status of orthodoxy in British language teaching circles, it receives the sanction and support of leading British applied linguists, language specialists, publishers, as well as institutions, such as the British Council. (Richards 1985).

The adoption of a communicative approach raises important issues for teacher training, materials development, and testing and evaluation. There are so many questions like whether a communication approach can be applied at all levels in a language program, whether it is equally suited to ESL and EFL situations, whether it requires existing grammar based syllabus to be abandoned or merely revised, how much an approach can be evaluated, how suitable it is for non-native teachers, and how it can be adopted in situations where students must continue to take grammar-based tests. These kinds of questions will doubtlessly require attention if the communicative movement in a language teaching continues to gain momentum in the future.

### **Conclusion**

So the competent teachers or teachers well conversant with the system are required so that they can teach in a pragmatic way to enhance and nurture the learners' competency in English inside and outside the classroom. Teachers are not adequately trained even after so many years of training in West Bengal. No pre- service training have even been introduced as a part of the university curriculum to prepare prospective case of English. Even the teachers in-service should get the opportunity of training after long years of service. This causes deterioration in teaching. The teachers should be well-trained so that they can motivate the learners in all respects of this matter and they should remind in the mind that Education is an important essential need for any person. After immediate appointment of new teachers, a short-term indoors training, e.g. - one or two months, by the senior teachers of the same institutions may be arranged to make the new teachers aware about the basic knowledge of teaching.

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