GCCR
Global Conference on Contemporary Research

GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH



CONFERENCE THEME:

SUSTAINABLE FUTURES:
INNOVATION, DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND GLOBAL COLLABORATION THROUGH CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH

INNOVATION | DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION | GLOBAL COLLABORATION | SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

JOURNAL

PEER-REVIEWED PROCEEDINGS

NOVEMBER 2026

TORONTO, CANADA

gccr.academy

COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN EFL CLASSROOMS: PRINCIPLES, CLASSROOM TECHNIQUES, AND CHALLENGES

Khudaybergenova Nodira Rustamovna

Teacher of English (the highest qualification category),

The secondary public school №1, Sirdaryo region,

Sirdaryo district, Uzbekistan.

Email: *nodirahudaybergenova45@gmail.com*

https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.24138636

Abstract: This paper examines Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as one of the most influential approaches in contemporary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) methodology. The study aims to outline the theoretical foundations of CLT, describe its core classroom techniques, and analyse the main challenges teachers face when applying it in non-English-speaking contexts. A qualitative review of the existing scholarly literature was used as the research method. The analysis shows that CLT improves learners' fluency, motivation, and communicative competence when it is supported by meaningful tasks, balanced attention to form, and flexible teacher roles. At the same time, large classes, exam-oriented curricula, limited exposure to authentic English, and insufficient teacher training reduce its effectiveness. The paper concludes that a context-sensitive, blended version of CLT, combining communicative tasks with focused grammar instruction and digital resources, is the most productive solution for EFL classrooms.

Keywords: communicative language teaching; EFL; communicative competence; task-based learning; learner-centred instruction; language teaching methodology

The methodology of teaching English has changed considerably over the last century. Early methods such as Grammar-Translation prioritised the memorisation of rules and the translation of written texts, while the Audio-Lingual Method relied on repetition and habit formation (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Both approaches produced learners who could often analyse language but struggled to use it spontaneously in real situations. This gap between

knowing about a language and being able to communicate in it led, in the 1970s and 1980s, to the development of Communicative Language Teaching. Today English functions as a global lingua franca in education, science, business, and technology. As a result, learners and employers expect graduates to speak and write English effectively, not merely to pass grammar tests. In many countries where English is taught as a foreign language, including those in Central Asia, educational reforms have therefore encouraged communicative and learner-centred methods. However, the transition from traditional teaching to communicative practice is not simple, and teachers often report a gap between policy and classroom reality.The purpose of this paper is to answer three questions: (1) What theoretical principles underlie CLT? (2) Which techniques are most effective in the EFL classroom? (3) What obstacles limit its implementation, and how can they be reduced?

The concept of communicative competence was introduced by Hymes (1972), who argued that knowing a language involves more than knowing its grammatical rules; speakers must also know what is appropriate in a given social situation. Canale and Swain (1980) later developed this idea into a model comprising grammatical, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence, and Canale (1983) added discourse competence. This multi-component view moved the goal of language teaching from accuracy alone to the ability to use language appropriately and effectively.

Several theories of second language acquisition support communicative practice. Krashen (1982) emphasised the importance of comprehensible input, while Swain (1985) argued that learners also need opportunities for pushed output in order to notice gaps in their knowledge. Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis suggests that negotiation of meaning during conversation makes input more comprehensible and promotes acquisition. From a sociocultural perspective, Vygotsky (1978) viewed learning as a socially mediated process in which collaboration and scaffolding help learners perform beyond their individual level. Together these ideas justify the central CLT principle that language is learned most effectively through meaningful interaction.

According to Littlewood (1981) and Savignon (2002), CLT is best understood as an approach rather than a fixed method. Its main principles can be summarised as follows:

- Communication is both the goal and the means of learning.
- Activities should involve a real purpose, such as exchanging information or solving a problem.
- Fluency and accuracy are complementary aims.
- Learners' needs, interests, and prior experience shape the content of lessons.
- The teacher acts as a facilitator, organiser, and guide rather than the sole source of knowledge.

Classroom Techniques in CLT

1. Information-gap and opinion-gap activities

In an information-gap activity, each learner holds information that the partner lacks, so they must communicate to complete the task. Typical examples include describing and drawing pictures, completing a timetable, or finding differences between two images. Opinion-gap activities, such as debates and ranking tasks, require learners to justify personal views. Both types create authentic motivation to speak, because the outcome depends on real exchange of meaning (Harmer, 2015).

2. Task-Based Language Teaching

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a strong form of CLT in which lessons are organised around tasks with a clear non-linguistic outcome (Ellis, 2003; Nunan, 2004). A common framework includes three phases: a pre-task stage that introduces the topic, a task cycle in which learners complete and report the task, and a post-task stage in which the teacher focuses on language form. This sequence allows learners to use their own resources first and to receive targeted feedback afterwards.

3. Role-play, simulation, and project work

Role-plays and simulations place learners in realistic situations, such as booking a

hotel room, attending a job interview, or negotiating a business deal. Project work extends this idea over several lessons, for example by asking learners to prepare a class magazine or a short presentation about their city. These techniques integrate all four skills and develop cooperation, creativity, and strategic competence (Brown, 2007).

4. Pair work, group work, and the teacher's role

Pair and group work substantially increase each learner's speaking time compared with teacher-led lessons. In such lessons, the teacher monitors, provides support, notes common errors for later feedback, and avoids unnecessary interruption of fluency work. Clear instructions, defined time limits, and a visible final product help keep learners on task (Harmer, 2015).

5. Technology-supported communication

Digital tools extend communicative opportunities beyond the classroom. Video conferencing, collaborative documents, discussion forums, and language-learning applications allow learners to interact with peers and authentic materials. When technology is linked to a clear communicative purpose, it increases exposure and learner autonomy; when used merely as a replacement for textbook drills, it adds little pedagogical value.

Although CLT is widely endorsed, research and teachers' reports identify several recurring difficulties in EFL contexts.

Large classes and limited resources. Classes of 25 to 35 students make pair monitoring and individual feedback difficult, and classroom layouts are often not suitable for group work.

Examination-driven curricula. When assessment focuses on grammar, vocabulary, and reading, teachers and students may regard communicative activities as less important for success.

Limited exposure to English. Outside the classroom, learners in EFL settings rarely use English, which reduces opportunities for authentic practice.

Teacher preparation. Many teachers have been trained in traditional methods and may

lack confidence in designing communicative tasks or in managing the "noise" and unpredictability of interactive lessons.

Cultural expectations. In some educational cultures, learners expect the teacher to be the authority and may feel uncomfortable with open discussion or peer correction.

Risk of neglecting accuracy. Overemphasis on fluency without systematic attention to form can lead to fossilised errors, which is why contemporary scholars recommend focus on form within communicative contexts (Ellis, 2003; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

The reviewed literature suggests that the most successful classrooms do not apply CLT in its extreme form. Instead, teachers adapt communicative principles to local conditions. Several practical strategies emerge:

1. **Balance fluency and accuracy.** Use short, explicit grammar instruction after communicative tasks, based on the errors observed during the activity.
2. **Adapt activities to class size.** Use structured pair work, "think-pair-share" routines, and rotating group roles to manage large groups.
3. **Align assessment with instruction.** Include speaking and writing tasks, performance-based rubrics, and portfolios in evaluation.
4. **Increase exposure.** Use authentic audio and video, online exchanges, and extensive reading to compensate for limited out-of-class contact with English.
5. **Invest in teacher development.** Workshops, peer observation, and reflective practice help teachers gain confidence in communicative methodology.

This flexible orientation is consistent with the view of Brown (2007) that effective teaching is principled and eclectic: it draws on several techniques but is guided by consistent beliefs about how languages are learned.

Conclusion: Communicative Language Teaching has reshaped English language teaching by redefining its aim as communicative competence rather than mastery of linguistic forms. Its theoretical basis in interaction, meaningful input and output, and social learning is well supported by second language acquisition research, and techniques such as

information-gap tasks, TBLT, role-plays, and project work provide practical ways to put these principles into action. Nevertheless, institutional constraints, assessment traditions, limited exposure, and varying teacher preparation can hinder its success in EFL contexts. The most promising path is a balanced and context-sensitive approach that combines communicative tasks with focused attention to language form, supported by technology, aligned assessment, and continuous teacher training. Future research should investigate how such blended models perform in specific national and institutional settings through classroom-based empirical studies.

References:

1. Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th ed.). Pearson Longman.
2. Canale, M. (1983). From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In J. C. Richards & R. W. Schmidt (Eds.), *Language and communication* (pp. 2–27). Longman.
3. Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, *1*(1), 1–47.
4. Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford University Press.
5. Harmer, J. (2015). *The practice of English language teaching* (5th ed.). Pearson Education.
6. Hymes, D. H. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics* (pp. 269–293). Penguin.
7. Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Pergamon Press.
8. Littlewood, W. (1981). *Communicative language teaching: An introduction*. Cambridge University Press.

9. Long, M. H. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W. C. Ritchie & T. K. Bhatia (Eds.), *Handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 413–468). Academic Press.
10. Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
11. Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
12. Savignon, S. J. (2002). *Interpreting communicative language teaching: Contexts and concerns in teacher education*. Yale University Press.
13. Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Gass & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition*
(pp. 235–253). Newbury House.
14. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.