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THE FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN PRIMARY CLASSES

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Abstract. This article traces how Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) took shape and developed, and asks what it means for English lessons in primary school. CLT appeared in the 1970s because structural and audio-lingual methods were not producing learners who could actually use the language, and it answered by putting communicative competence ahead of grammatical accuracy. Drawing on the main theoretical works and on recent research with young learners, the article follows how CLT principles changed over time and considers how well they suit children aged 6 to 12. The evidence reviewed suggests that communicative activities matched to children's cognitive, social and emotional needs support motivation, speaking skills and longer-lasting learning. Three persistent obstacles, namely teacher preparation, large classes and assessment, are also discussed, and some practical suggestions for classroom use are offered.

Keywords: communicative language teaching, primary education, young learners, communicative competence, English language teaching, methodological development

Introduction

Over the past fifty years the way English is taught to children as a foreign or second language has changed a great deal. For a long time lessons centred on memorizing grammar rules and word lists, yet pupils taught this way often could not

manage a simple exchange outside the classroom.[81] The Communicative Approach, usually called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), grew out of that dissatisfaction. Its starting point is simple: language exists mainly so that people can communicate, so teaching should help learners express and understand meaning in situations that resemble real life.

This matters even more for primary-school pupils. Their thinking and social skills are still developing, and they tend to pick up a language through interaction, play and activities that have a point, not through explanations of abstract rules.[82] Anyone who teaches English to young children therefore needs to know where CLT came from and how its ideas have been adjusted for younger learners.

The article has two aims: to give a connected account of how the communicative approach formed and developed, and to examine what it implies for primary English classes. Three questions guide the discussion. Which theoretical and social factors led to CLT? How has it changed since the 1970s? And how can its main principles be put into practice with young learners?

Methods

The study is a qualitative literature review. I examined key theoretical works, historical surveys and empirical studies on CLT and on teaching English to children. Sources were chosen on three grounds: they were foundational for communicative theory, they dealt explicitly with young learners or primary schooling, and they were recent and well regarded. The analysis is both chronological and thematic. It first reconstructs the history of CLT and then pulls together what is known about its use in primary classrooms.

The primary sources are the writings of Hymes, Canale and Swain and Wilkins, together with later overviews by Richards and Rodgers and by Savignon.[83] For young learners I relied on work by Cameron, Pinter and Moon, as well as more recent edited volumes on early foreign-language education.[84] Studies from post-Soviet educational settings were included as well, to widen the geographical coverage.[85]

Results

Before the 1970s, foreign-language teaching was shaped mostly by the Grammar-Translation Method and the Audio-Lingual Method. Both saw language as a structural system and tried to secure accuracy through drills and repetition.[86] Learners could often produce correct forms on demand but froze when they needed to speak spontaneously. Dissatisfaction with this result, along with new social needs

[81]Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
[82]Cameron, L. (2001). *Teaching languages to young learners*. Cambridge University Press.
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created by growing international mobility in Europe, prepared the ground for a change of direction.

An important theoretical push came from Dell Hymes. He argued that Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence left out too much: speakers also need to know when, how and to whom it is appropriate to say something in a particular social setting.[87] Attention shifted from abstract grammatical knowledge to what language does in social life.

At about the same time the Council of Europe brought together specialists who wanted to build syllabuses around what learners need to do with the language instead of around lists of grammar points. Wilkins's notional-functional syllabus grouped content by meanings such as time, quantity and location, and by functions such as requesting, apologizing and inviting.[88] This gave the new thinking a practical form, and it soon became known as Communicative Language Teaching.

In 1980 Canale and Swain set out a model of communicative competence with four parts: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence.[89] For teachers and syllabus designers this offered a clear set of goals that went well beyond mastering separate language forms.

CLT spread quickly through education systems in the 1980s and 1990s. The early versions favoured fluency over accuracy and relied on pair and group work, role-plays and information-gap tasks. Over the years the approach took in ideas from second-language acquisition research, above all Krashen's Input Hypothesis and the interactionist work of Long and others.[90] Task-based language teaching became one of the best-known ways of applying communicative principles; lessons are built around meaningful tasks in which learners must use the language to reach a goal that is not itself linguistic.[91]

By the early twenty-first century CLT was less a fixed method than a flexible set of principles that could be fitted to different cultural and institutional settings. Critics pointed out that wholly communicative classrooms sometimes paid too little attention to form, and later refinements called for a balance between meaning and accuracy, often described as form-focused instruction within a communicative framework.[92] Current practice also draws on digital tools, content-and-language integrated learning (CLIL) and intercultural competence, which reflects the demands of an increasingly global education.

Adapting CLT for primary classrooms starts from what is distinctive about young learners. Children between 6 and 12 generally find abstract reasoning difficult, concentrate for short periods and prefer concrete, hands-on learning. They learn a language best when it is tied to meaningful activity, interaction with others

[87]Hymes (1972); full reference in note 3.
[88]Wilkins, D. A. (1976). *Notional syllabuses*. Oxford University Press.
[89]Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics, 1*(1), 1–47. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/I.1.1
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and emotional involvement.[93] Vygotsky's sociocultural theory adds that children develop through interaction with more capable peers and adults within the zone of proximal development.[94]

Good primary CLT therefore leans on talk, storytelling, songs, games, role-play and simple tasks that give children a real reason to speak. Grammar is met inductively and practised in context, not through isolated drills. Pictures, gestures and Total Physical Response techniques help children follow what is said and feel less anxious.[95] Studies repeatedly report that such methods raise motivation, build confidence and lead to more lasting learning than traditional form-focused teaching.[96]

Large international studies, including the longitudinal ELLiE project, show that early language programmes built on communicative principles bring positive linguistic and affective results, provided teachers are well prepared and materials suit the age group.[97] Even so, difficulties are widespread. Classes are large, many teachers have limited proficiency, there is too little lesson time, and assessment systems still reward discrete-point tests more than communicative performance.[98]

Discussion

Looking back over the history of CLT, one sees the idea of language competence growing from structural accuracy into a multi-sided communicative ability. This has been especially productive in primary education, because children's natural liking for interaction and play fits well with what the communicative approach asks of lessons.[99]

Still, CLT does not transfer to the primary classroom automatically. Teachers have to adjust techniques to their pupils' developmental stage and keep activities within reach and emotionally supportive. If free communication is encouraged without enough scaffolding, errors can become fixed and children can become frustrated. The opposite mistake, concentrating too heavily on form, risks bringing back the very problems CLT set out to solve.[100]

What works best is a balance: plenty of rich input and chances for meaningful output, together with timely and sensitive attention to form. Teacher education has a central part to play here, since future teachers need both theory and a practical repertoire. Curricula and assessment should also change so that they reward communicative achievement and not merely grammatical correctness.[101]

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[93]Cameron (2001); full reference in note 2.

[94]Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.

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In many education systems, including those now being reformed, the communicative approach remains a sturdy framework for early English teaching. Its success depends, however, on adaptation to local conditions, continuing professional development and institutional support for the idea that real communication is the main purpose of learning a language.[102]

Conclusion

The communicative approach began in the 1970s as a theoretically grounded and socially motivated alternative to structural methods. Through the work of Hymes, Wilkins, Canale and Swain and many later scholars, it has become a flexible, principle-based orientation centred on communicative competence. Carefully adapted to the developmental characteristics of primary-school children, CLT is a strong means of building oral proficiency, motivation and intercultural awareness from the very first years of formal language learning.

Future research should look at the long-term effects of early communicative instruction, at how best to include form-focused episodes, and at what primary English teachers need from professional development when they work under varied institutional constraints. The central insight of CLT, that a language is learned best by using it for a purpose, is still as relevant as ever for primary English teaching around the world.

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TALABALARDA STRESS VA UNING PSIXOLOGIK HOLATIGA TA'SIRI

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Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada bugungi kunda oliy ta'lim muassasalarida tahsil olayotgan talabalarda uchraydigan stress holatlari va ularning psixologik xususiyatlari haqida fikr yuritiladi. Stressning kelib chiqish sabablari, uning inson ruhiyati, hissiyoti, xulq-atvori va bilish jarayonlariga ta'siri tahlil qilinadi. Shuningdek, talabalik davrida yuzaga keladigan psixologik qiyinchiliklar, yangi muhitga moslashish, o'quv yuklamalari, imtihonlar va shaxsiy muammolarning ruhiy holatga ta'siri yoritiladi. Maqolada stressni kamaytirish, hissiy barqarorlikni saqlash va sog'lom psixologik muhitni shakllantirish bo'yicha tavsiyalar beriladi.

Kalit so'zlar: psixologiya, talaba, stress, ruhiy salomatlik, psixologik barqarorlik, hissiyot, motivatsiya, diqqat, xotira, moslashuv, shaxs rivojlanishi.

Inson hayotida psixologik holat juda muhim ahamiyatga ega. Har bir inson kundalik hayotida turli vaziyatlarga duch keladi. Ba'zi vaziyatlar quvonch, xursandchilik va mamnuniyat keltirsa, ayrimlari esa xavotir, qo'rquv, hayajon va ruhiy zo'riqishni yuzaga keltirishi mumkin. Ana shunday holatlardan biri stress hisoblanadi.Bugungi globallashuv va axborot texnologiyalari rivojlangan davrda insonlardan ko'proq bilim, tezkor fikrlash, mustaqil qaror qabul qilish va turli