Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

English for Business

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Some starting points...

- Only quite recently (1970’s??) has CLT become a trend in the recent practice of ELT (English Language Teaching).
- CLT is concerned with not only “forms” but also “meaning.”
- CLT emphasizes that it is not only about knowing a language but also about applying what learners know about the language in order to successfully communicate with people in a variety of settings and situations.
- It is not only about “competence” but also about “performance.”
- It focuses on both processes and goals in classroom learning.
- Central to CLT is how to build learners’ communicative competence.
How CLT Views Language Learning

• Language is learned primarily through being used in communication
• Classroom activities should be directed to produce authentic and meaningful communication
• To communicate well, fluency becomes essential
• All language skills should be integrated
• Learning is about trial and error; it has to be an active and creative process.

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Some Principles of CLT

- Main focus is on **MEANING** not **FORM**
- **Learner-centered**: learners are encouraged to produce ideas, information, and opinions
- Negotiation of meaning
- Information gap or opinion gap

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Communicative Competence

• Communicative Competence consists of 4 sub-competences (plus fluency):
  – Linguistic Competence
  – Sociolinguistic (pragmatic competence)
  – Discourse Competence
  – Strategic Competence

• These sub-competences are interrelated. They cannot be developed or measure in isolation.

• Increase in one competence interacts with other components to produce an increase in overall communicative competence.
Linguistic Competence

• Some also call it grammatical competence
• It has to do with language knowledge (e.g. pronunciation, spelling, vocabulary, sentence structure, word formation, semantics, use of tense)
• Some people may misinterpret CLT to be less concerned with “formal correctness”. In fact, CLT deals with this issue: form and meaning.
Socio-cultural Competence

• It is an understanding of how to use language appropriately in social contexts
• It involves two kinds of ability:
  – Knowing how to use language in order to achieve communicative goals
  – Having adequate social and cultural knowledge
Discourse Competence

- DC is the ability to interpret individual elements of a text in terms of their interconnectedness & relationship to entire text.
- It focuses particularly on COHERENCE and COHESION

- **COHERENT**: make sense
- **COHESIVE**: connected together by linguistic devices

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Strategic Competence

- It is the ability to use coping strategy that help us to communicate effectively, especially in situations where there are communication problems.
- This strategy is usually in the form of changing original intention or by searching for other means of expressions.

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*Fluency*

- It is closely related to the smoothness of producing language.
- It is “the ability to link units of speech together with facility and without strain or inappropriate slowness, or undue hesitation”
Some Important Issues

- The use of realistic and authentic materials is highly recommended
- Activities in the classroom are usually task-based and student-oriented
- The improvement of teachers’ knowledge, competence and confidence