EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT) IN GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION

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Annotation. Grammar has traditionally been taught through explicit explanation of rules and repetitive written exercises, a method, which often results in learners' passive knowledge and limited ability to use grammatical structures in real communication. Recent pedagogical perspectives advocate for Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), where grammar is acquired through meaningful interaction and contextualized language use. This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of communicative approaches in grammar instruction in comparison to rule-based, teacher-centered methods. The study concludes that integrating communicative techniques into grammar teaching can enhance learners' practical language competence and better prepare them for authentic communication, recommending a blended approach to maximize both fluency and accuracy.

Key words: CLT (Communicative Language Teaching), grammar instruction, TBL (Task-based Learning), Traditional teaching methods

Introduction

Grammar is a fundamental component of language competence, as it provides the structural framework necessary for constructing meaningful communication. For decades, grammar instruction in many educational contexts has been dominated by traditional approaches in which teachers explain grammatical rules and learners practice them through controlled written exercises. While such approaches may support accuracy in form, they often fail to equip learners with the ability to use

grammar effectively and spontaneously in real-life communication. As a result, many learners develop what is known as passive grammatical knowledge: they can recognize correct forms on paper but struggle to apply them in spoken interaction.

In contrast, **Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)** emphasizes the role of communication and learner participation in language development. Within this approach, grammar is not presented as a set of isolated rules but as a resource that learners use to express meaning in authentic situations. Communicative grammar instruction integrates grammatical practice into meaningful tasks such as *discussions, role-plays, problem-solving activities, and collaborative dialogues.*

Previous researches suggest that when language learners actively use grammatical structures while negotiating meaning, they are more likely to retain and internalize them, leading to improved fluency and communicative competence. However, despite the recognized benefits of CLT, many educators continue to rely on traditional grammar teaching due to institutional expectations, large classroom sizes, limited training, or the belief that communicative methods may lead to inaccuracies. This situation highlights a pedagogical gap between theoretical understanding and practical classroom application.

"In many educational contexts, including Uzbekistan, there is a noticeable gap between learners' grammatical knowledge and their communicative abilities. While students often excel in standardized tests and can explain complex rules, they frequently struggle to apply this knowledge in spontaneous speech. This suggests that traditional methods create 'static' knowledge that does not translate into active fluency. From my perspective, grammar should not be viewed as an end in itself, but as a functional tool that must be activated through constant meaningful interaction."Therefore, it becomes necessary to examine how communicative grammar instruction performs in comparison to traditional rule-based methods in actual teaching contexts.

The present study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of communicative grammar teaching by comparing two instructional approaches: explicit rule-based instruction and communicative, task-based grammar practice. The research investigates not only

learners' grammatical accuracy but also their fluency, participation, confidence, and overall engagement.

CLT Approach and Methods

The Communicative Language Teaching primarily aims at preparing the non-native language learners to engage in negotiating meaning, therefore, the language instructors do not deal strictly with the errors of the learners. Moreover, the range of activities and exercises is very wide and the learner is the centre of all of these activities performed in the language classroom (Al-Mutawa and Kailani, 1989). However, this does not mean that the role of the teacher can be negated or ignored in this approach. In other words, a proficient, skilful and reflective language instructor remains a strong basis for the effective achievement of the objectives using CLT. [1]

"Based on my observations, in a CLT framework, the teacher's role should extend beyond being just a 'facilitator.' Particularly in low-level proficiency groups, the instructor must actively manage and direct communication. Without this structured guidance, students are highly likely to revert to their native language, which hinders the immersion process.

According to Krashen and Terrell (1983) the different methods used in the communicative teaching cover structured input, task-based instruction, immersion and The Natural Approach. The teaching of grammar, in communicative language teaching, CLT is one of the main issues and has been long debated, which has been discussed in detail in this paper. There have been many lists for the activities in the CLT classroom. Nunan (1991) has listed the general characteristics and principles applied in CLT which are:

1. An emphasis given to learning for communication through target language interaction,
2. Authentic texts introduction into the situation where learning takes place,
3. Providing opportunities to concentrate on language as well as management of language learning processes,
4. Improvement of the learner's learning experiences as important elements to learning,

5. To link classroom activities for language learning with language performance outside.

The Communicative Language Teaching instructors claim that Nunan's (1991) list of features highlights that the main focus in the CLT classroom is the needs and desires of the learners. Similarly, it also describes the strong connection between the language practice in the classroom and language performance outside the classroom. This list makes it easy for the practitioners to decide that any teaching practice that develops communicative competence of the learners in are all learning context is an authentic form of language teaching [2]

The goal of CLT

According to Richards (2006) is to enable the learner communicative competence prior to achieving grammatical competence. A learner is said to be communicatively competent if s/he can use a specific language according to appropriate context keeping in view the setting, the purpose of the communication and the participants. Furthermore, a communicatively competent learner can use multifarious communicative strategies when needed. One of the hall marks of CLT is achieving communicative competence rather than grammatical competence because sometimes language users know grammatical rules but cannot express themselves in certain situations particularly when involved in meaningful communication. [4] The use of authentic texts can best fulfil the basic communicative purpose of communicative language teaching and learning the rules and memorization of structures come as a result of communication and discussion and are never taught directly and explicitly.

In their lesson Larsen Freeman and Anderson have used sports columns of a newspaper from which they teach different forms of language for one function. These different forms are based on real life communication, which implies that CLT focuses on preparing the language learners for real life meaningful communication. It further implies that though the communicative competence is the primary focus of this approach, however, this communicative competence could not be realized without learning the form and mastering the linguistic aspects of the language. Therefore, it can

be easily said that communication and interaction with others to develop learners' communicative competence in L2 is the fundamental goal of CLT

Traditional Techniques

Grammar-Translation Method is a conventional learning method which focuses on L2 grammar and uses the mother tongue as the medium of instruction. The use of mother tongue in teaching grammar makes it easier for students to comprehend the rules of grammar for early and middle level foreign language learners as it involves giving grammatical examples of bilingual sentences, phrases, and vocabulary as the first step of grammar learning. [3]

"In my view, GTM should not be entirely dismissed as an outdated model. When explaining complex structures such as 'Conditionals' or 'Passive Voice,' direct comparison with the learners' native language through translation can more effectively clarify confusion. It provides a familiar linguistic anchor that helps students grasp abstract rules faster than purely inductive methods.

One of the most well-known traditional methods is the Grammar-Translation Method, which focuses on translating texts and memorizing grammar rules. This method often treats grammar as a set of isolated rules to be learned without much connection to practical language use. Despite criticisms about its lack of communicative value, some studies argue that it helps learners understand complex grammatical structures and build a strong foundation in grammar. [5]

Conclusion

Grammar instruction remains a central component of language learning; however, its effectiveness depends greatly on the methods through which it is taught. Traditional approaches, particularly the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), have long been valued for their clarity in presenting rules and supporting grammatical accuracy. Yet, this method alone often results in learners who can understand grammatical structures but struggle to apply them in real communication. In contrast, Task-Based Learning (TBL), which is rooted in Communicative Language Teaching, encourages learners to use language purposefully through meaningful activities, promoting fluency, interaction, and practical language use.

This study emphasizes that rather than viewing GTM and TBL as opposing pedagogical models, they can be effectively integrated to produce a balanced and comprehensive approach to grammar instruction. GTM provides the necessary foundation of form, structure, and accuracy, while TBL enables learners to internalize these structures by applying them in authentic communicative contexts. Such integration not only strengthens grammatical competence but also enhances learner motivation, confidence, and engagement.

The overall conclusion suggests that grammar teaching should not rely exclusively on rule-focused instruction nor solely on communicative tasks. A blended approach that incorporates brief, clear explanation of form followed by purposeful communicative practice is more likely to support both accuracy and fluency.

"As a practical recommendation, I suggest that the first 15 minutes of a standard lesson be dedicated to explicit grammar explanation, while the remaining 30 minutes should focus on games or communicative activities (CLT) that require the use of that specific rule. This structured timing ensures that students receive both systematic linguistic knowledge and the opportunity to develop oral fluency."

Language educators are encouraged to design lessons where grammar rules are introduced explicitly, but practiced through tasks that require interaction, meaning negotiation, and real language use. This balance ensures that learners develop both the knowledge about grammar and the ability to use grammar effectively in communication.

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