

New Approaches to CLT in the rural Ambience: Language Counseling Approach

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English is most preferred language of communication. The importance of English language all over the world is an accepted fact today. English is a felt need. It is reported that "At present one in seven in this world speaks English either as a native language or as a second language."¹ Globalization is an evitable reality in which the destiny of a large number of people to a great extent is determined and controlled by English Language. English is a platform for better career, knowledge and 'lingua-franca' of globalization.

English in India Today

English is the hegemonic language of communication and associate official language in India. In the World of Information Communication Technology (ICT) English is bound to expand its domains of use everywhere. Over one billion people speak English in India. Presently India is the second largest English speaking population. India is expected to be the largest English Speaking population in the world by 2010. India is known for its IT enabled services like BPO, KPO, LPO etc. Presently English is enormously used in business, industry government and education, etc.

Seeds of CLT

The Seeds of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can be traced in the fifteenth century. During the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries Erasmus, Martin Luther King and others emphasized communicative approach to language. Erasmus opined "Good and Understandable oral communication was the important thing to master, next in importance was reading and writing comes at last."² He gave importance to learning the language for communication and conversation. This is the

foundations tone for Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

Education in Rural Ambience

Most of the Indian population olives in the rural set up. Rural living population basically face acute problems of poverty, hygiene and education. They are deprived of basic needs. Speaking academically, lack of infrastructure and heterogeneity of classes are the challenges to rural English teachers/facilitators. In this context preparing a rural student to the challenges of globalization and teaching of English language is a marathon task but not an impossible one. The student of rural area has to be prepared to face the growing competition due to globalization. The learners/students of English language in rural area need to meet the demands of international standards on a par with their urban counterparts.

The present paper focuses on the significance of CLT, Objectives of CLT, CLT Paradigm, CLT vs Teaching of Grammar, Essential of CLT, Iceberg Dynamics, role of Facilitator, Role of Learners, Language Counseling Approach (LCA), Role of Counselor during Language Counseling Approach (LCA) and CLT Classroom.

Significance of CLT

In the era of globalization where competition and perfection are the basic principles, CLT becomes a prerequisite. It focuses on teaching as an act of learning for communication. Till recently, teaching of English was the domain of literature. Due to the emergence of globalization, English for communication gained a very high demand. Employment opportunities in the corporate sector, career opportunities, attractive salary, social status and quality of life all set to touch

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the psyche of the learner. Pressing demand for communication and high expectations of society from every individual intensified the need of communicative language teaching. China and Japan realized the dominance of English all over the world and initiated an action plan.

CLT Paradigm

Inherently language is used for various purposes in a social context, viz. greeting, inviting, declining, requesting, etc. Hence communication is context – bound. CLT is basically preparing a learner to use language in a speech community. It is a part of sociolinguistics and applied linguistics. “Sociolinguistics is the study of the characteristics of language varieties, the characteristics of their functions and the characteristics of their speakers as these three constantly interact, change and change one another in their speech community.” It also deals with the individual’s communicative activity which is known as ‘ethnography of speaking’.

Buffet’s fluency based model of language teaching emphasized the communicative language teaching. The objective of this model is to enable learners to use the target language they have acquired for any purposes they wish and to be able to extend as far as they wish. In this model the focus is on the capacity to perform. It tries to enable the student to be fluent and effective in the communication. Communication based activities need to be introduced in the CLT Class room.

During 1970s great happenings were taking place in English language teaching. But of these happenings CLT germinated at the Council of Europe. Keith Morrow lists the principles of CLT as follows:

1. Know what you are doing;
2. The whole is more than the sum of its parts;
3. The Processes are as important as their forms;
4. To learn it, do it; and
5. Mistakes are not always mistakes.

1. *Know what you are doing:* It is learning

to do something. The focus is on the purpose/relevance. It lays emphasis on clear communication.

2. *The whole is more than the sum of its parts:* It is known as Synthetic procedure. It tries to look at the completeness rather than the chunks. The whole is more than the sum of its parts.
3. *The processes are as important as their forms:* The process refers to communication, the transaction/process of teaching learning must be practiced effectively in the CLT classroom.
4. *To learn it, do it:* Emphasis is laid on the learner. It is learning by doing activity.
5. *Mistakes are not always mistakes:* While learning mistakes are possible but in the process of learning mistakes are not always mistakes.

CLT vs. Teaching of Grammar

CLT questioned the teaching of grammar and form-based teaching. Formal grammar is avoided in CLT class-room. Different opinions are swinging regarding this issue. Some CLT experts views that there is no grammar teaching at all in CLT classrooms. Some others view to teach communication. Among these contentions ‘Incubation-period’ is very important. It is a language-learning process. Keith Morrow gives importance to the ‘process’ than the ‘form’. Hence the grammar of the language through communication would be useful in CLT.

Objectives of CLT

1. To improve the learner’s ability to develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.
2. To develop competency in spoken conversational English.
3. To develop competency of language for social-communication.
4. To prepare the learners for employability.
5. To attain proficiency in the use of English.

Essentials of CLT

1. Understand the need and purpose of communication
2. Understand the position of the learner
3. Attract the attention of the learner
4. Use simple language
5. Use simple vocabulary
6. Use gestures and visuals
7. Transact in English and no use of L₁
8. Avoid L₁ Interference
9. Avoid teacher – fronted Amnesia
10. Less Teachers and more Students syndrome
11. Different Socio economic backgrounds

Iceberg Dynamics & Performance

Most of the abilities and capacities of a rural student are submerged under the sea like an iceberg. Large part of the abilities of the rural learner/student index is hidden.

Factors affecting the performance of rural area learner/student in the acquisition of Communicative Language.

1. Lack of 3As (Awareness, Attitude and Aptitude)
2. Lack of information and motivation
3. Lack of Academic Reforms
4. Lack of Resouces/Books
5. Anglophobia inhabitanace
6. Errorro phobia and Impefectophobia
7. Pace of Learning
8. L₁ Interference
9. Teacher Fronted Amnesia
10. Less Teachers and more students syndrome
11. Different Socio-Economic Backgrounds

Role of Facilitator/Teacher

The role of facilitator is very crucial and unlike using conventional methods of teaching he is influenced by many important factors. These factors have brought many changes in his role and performance. Today the teacher has to be more 'Professional' in his approach, and 'skilled' in using his resources. It is high time to realize the needs of the students in particular and society in general. The role of the teacher is very competitive and need to be upgraded with timely knowledge. The demands on the part of the facilitator in CLT are as follows.

1. Minimise talk and listen
2. Good Communication and Presentation skills
3. Multi-disciplinary skills
4. Perform or perish
5. Understand the learner
6. Leaner – Centric Activities
7. Use of ICT resources
8. Empathetic transanctions
9. Use of ICT resources
10. Empathetic transactions
11. Inspire learners
12. Ask questions and Positive attitude

Each one of these demands needs to be understood and accommodated by the teacher.

Role of Learner

The whole system of education has emerged to cater the needs of learners. All the efforts and experiments in the education system are focused on the learners. Learner is the most powerful person in the teaching – learning context. Learners' intelligence, adaptability, creativity motivation, attitude, aptitude are the important determiners in the process of acquisition of English language. The facilitator needs to treat the learner as an active performer and needs to encourage peer – interaction in the CLT. Following are the requisites of a learner.

1. Proactive Attitude, Aptitude and Awareness
2. Motivated and Creative
3. Co-ordinated efforts
4. Preparation and Sincerity
5. Believe in the Strengths

UNESCO has rightly recommended the comprehensive education system with "learning to be; learning to do; learning to learn; and learning to live". This attitude needs to be inculcated in the learners.

Language Counseling Approach to CLT (LCA to CLT)

CLT is a unique learning experience, fusing information with excitement and stimulation. New approaches and methods are formulated in the present scenario to cope with the challenges of globalization through LCA.

Language Counseling Approach

The word 'counseling' encompasses a very broad frame of reference and can mean anything from informal advice to the most complex interactions that happen between parents and clients. In LCA, learner is treated as a 'client' and facilitator/teacher is treated as a 'counselor'. Facilitator helps the client/learner and manages his/her problems of language acquisition effectively. Acquisition of a language is more of a psychological / clinical/cognitive activity. Inputs from LCA help the learner.

Role of Counselor during LCA

- i) **Information provider:** It is one to one teaching. Language acquisition tips can be given through bits of information and inputs of awareness.
- ii) **Support System:** Lending emotional support and warmth can help learners to acquire the language skills effectively.
- iii) **Promoting Insight:** To enable the learner to discover his self-image in the process of self discovery. Clearer inputs of self-awareness would yield high dividends in CLT.
- iv) **Analysis:** Before you start any course of analysis there need to be an assessment session, and through this identify the problems and make an analysis of the learner.
- v) **Client Respect:** Show positive regard to the client.
- vi) **Empathy:** To perceive the client problems from his perspective.
- vii) **Humanizing the learning process:** Feel the genuineness of the problem.

These learners are our customers/clients and they deserve the best. The facilitator of English need to be trained in the art of LC.

Components of Language Counseling skills (RAIL)

- i) Attending skills
- ii) Listening skills
- iii) Influencing skills
- iv) Responding with empathy
- i) Attending Skills
 - a. Always available to the learners/clients

- b. Always be open to them and to their problems
- c. Make a good eye contact with them
- d. Create a relaxed ambience during interaction
- ii) Listening skills
 - a. Pay attention to learners/clients
 - b. Register the problems in language acquisition
 - c. Encourage the learner/client to speak
 - d. Frank and no road blocks
 - e. Observe their behavior
- iii) Influencing skills
 - a. Responsibility
 - b. Action plan
 - c. Implement the action plan
- iv) Responding with Empathy
 - a. Listen
 - b. Understand

After the Language Counseling, the facilitator initiates his CLT. LCA can be individualistic, (i.e. one to one language counseling) or group. Consider all the inputs from LC and keeping in view develop a module for CLT.

CLT classroom: English English English

- a. Chalk minimum talk
- b. Use only English
- c. Use gestures
- d. Skill oriented content
- e. Spin on effect of English

To attain the effective CLT in the rural ambience, one should adopt learner friendly objective of imparting skills and knowledge components. The ultimate goal of LCA is to overcome the linguistic confusion and conflict.

Notes

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