

What is CLT?

Savignon (2002): “The essence of CLT is the engagement of learners in communication to allow them to develop their communicative competence” (p. 22). In other words, CLT aims at developing learners’ communicative competence through communication.

1. Definitions of communicative competence

Canale and Swain (1980):

- (1) grammatical competence
- (2) sociolinguistic competence
- (3) discourse competence
- (4) strategic competence

Savignon (1997): “Communication is the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning; and communicative competence is always context specific, requiring the simultaneous, integrated use of grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence” (p. 225).

2. Definitions of CLT: Brown (2007)

- (1) Classroom goals are focused on all of the components of CC and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.
- (2) Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus but rather aspects of language that enable the learner to accomplish those purposes.
- (3) Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
- (4) In the communicative classroom, students ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts (p. 241).

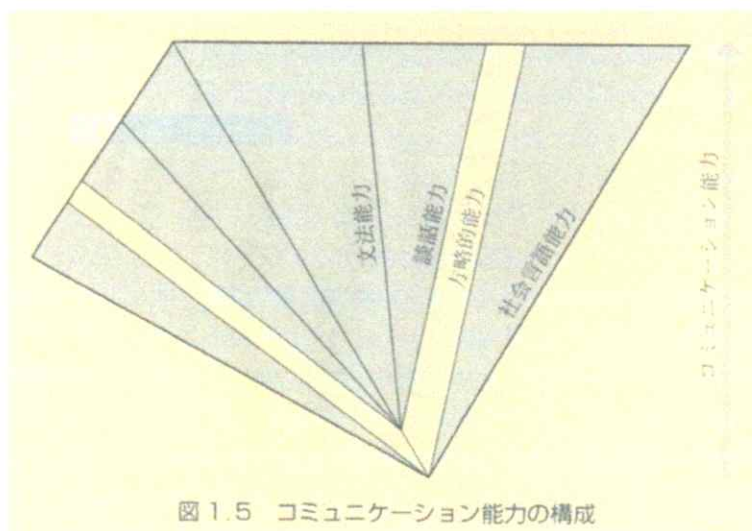
3. Is CLT the best method?

There is no best method (Prabhu, 1990). CLT is not a method but an approach (Brown, 2007; Richards & Rodgers, 1986; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Savignon, 2002).

Savignon (2002): “CLT is properly seen as an approach, grounded in a theory of intercultural communicative competence, that can be used to develop materials and methods appropriate to a given context of learning” (p. 22-23).

References

- Brown, H.D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching (5th ed.)*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1, 1-47.
- Prabhu, N.S. (1990). There is no best method—why? *TESOL Quarterly*, 24, 161-176.
- Sato, K., & Kleinsasser, R.C. (1999). Communicative language teaching (CLT): Practical understandings. *Modern Language Journal* 83 (4), 494-517.
- Savignon, S.J. (1997). *Communicative competence: Theory and classroom practice (2nd ed.)*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Savignon, S.J. (Ed.). (2002). *Interpreting communicative language teaching: Contexts and concerns in teacher education*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- 草野、佐藤、田中 (2016). 「コミュニケーション能力：理論と実践」(増補新版) (Savignon, 1997, *Communicative competence: Theory and classroom practice* の翻訳) 法政大学出版局



3. Audiolingual method v.s. communicative approach

Table 5.1. A Comparison of the Audiolingual Method and Communicative Language Teaching (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983).

Audiolingual Method	Communicative Language Teaching
1. Attends to structure and form more than meaning.	Meaning is paramount.
2. Demands more memorization of structure-based dialogs.	Dialogs, if used, center around communicative functions and are not normally memorized.
3. Language items are not necessarily contextualized.	Contextualization is a basic premise.
4. Language learning is learning structures, sounds, or words.	Language learning is learning to communicate.
5. Mastery or "overlearning" is sought.	Effective communication is sought.
6. Drilling is a central technique.	Drilling may occur, but peripherally.
7. Native-speaker-like pronunciation is sought.	Comprehensible pronunciation is sought.
8. Grammatical explanation is avoided.	Any device which helps the learners is accepted—varying according to their age, interest, etc.
9. Communicative activities only come after a long process of rigid drills and exercises.	Attempts to communicate may be encouraged from the very beginning.
10. The use of the student's native language is forbidden.	Judicious use of native language is accepted where feasible.
11. Translation is forbidden at early levels.	Translation may be used where students need or benefit from it
12. Reading and writing are deferred till speech is mastered.	Reading and writing can start from the first day, if desired.
13. The target linguistic system will be learned through the overt teaching of the patterns of the system.	The target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate.
14. Linguistic competence is the desired goal.	Communicative competence is the desired goal.
15. Varieties of language are recognized but not emphasized.	Linguistic variation is a central concept in materials and methods.
16. The sequence of units is determined solely by principles of linguistic complexity.	Sequencing is determined by any consideration of content function, or meaning which maintains interest.
17. The teacher controls the learners and prevents them from doing anything that conflicts with the theory.	Teachers help learners in any way that motivates them to work with the language.
18. "Language is habit" so error must be prevented at all costs.	Language is created by the individual often through trial and error.
19. Accuracy, in terms of formal correctness, is a primary goal.	Fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal: accuracy is judged not in the abstract but in context.
20. Students are expected to interact with the language system, embodied in machines or controlled materials.	Students are expected to interact with other people, either in the flesh, through pair and group work, or in their writings.
21. The teacher is expected to specify the language that students are to use.	The teacher cannot know exactly what language the students will use.
22. Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in the structure of language.	Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in what is being communicated by the language.