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**Reviewing Communicative Approach**  
(Short Communication)

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**Abstract**

This study presents a brief review of Communicative Approach (CA) or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) used in EFL classrooms. For the past three decades, communicative language teaching approach has continued to become more popular in response to converting the world views on how to use the communicative approach and the systems that underlie it. According to Richard and Rodgers (1986) globalization has prioritized the need for communicative competence, especially in the field of teaching a foreign language. There has been major shift in emphasis concerning what and how to teach English as foreign language using communicative language teaching (CLT), which is expected to develop learners' communicative competence.

**Introduction**

Nowadays, CLT is well tested and recognized as an alternative approach for the traditional way of language teaching. In short, it continues becoming a holistic view that enables learners to be involved in their every day real life communication. Most of the time, learners, in class settings, are passively involved by listening to the teacher, looking at the chalkboard and recording notes. However, communicative active learners can increase practically and dramatically their confidence (Edgar, 2010). In addition to this, the worldwide expansion of the international relationship is increasing the demand to acquire good communication skill in the target language, English. Viewing the fact that English education plays significant role in economic and technological development of a nation, Ethiopia's government has also promoted English education significantly. Teachers are being trained in various courses including English language which they are often trained in basic and sub basic skills of it (EFL) to foster the learners' communicative skills. Therefore, the language teaching and learning for grade nine students should be communicative skill based and learner –centered. In other words, communicative

learning should be interesting, enjoyable, meaningful, and relative to themselves as individuals. so, active communicative activities through which they will learn may have real purpose in their everyday life communication.

In addition, giving learners the opportunity to be involved communicatively in practicing the skill of listening, speaking, reading and writing together with vocabulary and language patterns will possibly be integrated into practice. Students can communicate with others using only English in a variety of ways, e.g. pairs, groups, and whole class. However, its effectiveness should be approved practically and theoretically through academic investigation unless learners are able to express themselves in both academic and social context. Although communicative approach is more empirical in teaching English as foreign language, Ethiopian EFL classrooms still lack proper implementation of CA. Hence, it opens more opportunities of further research in local scenario. As Afgana (1990) pointed out the biggest problem the teachers find is how to bridge the gaps between the artificial use of the language and communicative use. In other words, teachers often fail to create a national environment which would inspire the students to use the target language, English freely and meaningfully rather than mechanically.

### ***Definition of Communicative Language Teaching***

As Brown (2007) offered four interconnected characteristics as a definition of CLT, which are as follows:

- (1). Classroom goals are focused on all of the components of communicative competence 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)

According to Hymes (1972), define “communicative competence” is what a speaker needs to know in order to communicate in a speech community. Moreover, he states that competence should be viewed as “the overall underlying knowledge and ability for language which the speaker-listener possesses and it entails knowledge of the language and the ability to use the knowledge in context.

In the mean while, the another scholar points that language is socially shared system for making meaning, Tedeolcy (1989; p 97) and Savignon,(1987) states that communicative competence in a foreign language seems to be related to teaching (CLT) in having diversity of EFL class.

In addition, Harmer, (1999) mentioned that the concept of communication is the process in which people assign and convey message, meaning and attempt to create shared understanding. Therefore, communication occurs in collaboration and co-operation. In general, it is the articulation of sending message though different media of verbal and non verbal communication. In this case, krashen, (1985) states that acquired language is available for natural communication where as language learning belongs to more artificial environment. In short, as

Richard and Rogers, (2001 pp 155), pointed out that language services as tools to convey the message and meaning which are transmitted through communication between two parts. It is possible to infer that the researcher will investigate how the theoretical principles and practical aspects of CA are integrated in teaching learning in EFL class.

### ***The Theoretical Principles of Communicative Approach in EFL Class Room***

Scholars agree that CLT started from a theory of communicative language use, and was extended into a design for instruction, materials, classroom techniques, teachers, and learners. The goal is to develop learners' communicative competence (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Brown (2007) offered four interconnected characteristics as a definition of CLT, which is assumed in this study. In addition, CLT is elaborated as exploration of technical tools that are operating in the instructional settings of teachers perception of what they do and why they do it in a foreign language accusation class room practice, Savignon (1974), Moreover, in communicative events and self assessment of progress in keeping with second language accusation theory, methodologists advice learners to take communicative risk and focus on development of learning strategies, Mcedo(1988.) The development of needs of language skills through interpretation, expression and negotiation of meaning as interesting CLT growth more in traditional programmes Cannel and Swey(1980.)

In line with this teachers need to participate in the interpretation of finding for the materials and class room practice in the elaboration of appropriate methods for a particular language teaching, Sanrati (1980.) Mean while Chomesky(1965) concerns with the speech communities and the integration of language communication and CLT was not alike force . At the same time communicative

Competence is measured in terms of fluency, comprehensibility, effort and amount of communication in series. On the other hand, CLT can be seen as driven from multi discipliners perspective that includes at list linguistic, psychology, sociology and the educational research, Caroll and savignon (1974.)

In relation to this, communicative competence is appropriated for learners requiring and understanding the socio cultural context use. Furthermore, CLT management is a generalization of the degree of the learners' participation, initiatives and negotiation. Similarly, communicative experience can be provided in the class room till the settings of class room teachers talk opportunities for the learners self express, Cleverer (1989.) Methodology of language teaching, communicative language teaching (CLT) developed 1970S'.

According to Richard (2006), CLT was developed to provide learners with the ability to use the target language. In addition, Liceratures,(2006), Language is used effectively in natural way of communication and in real world. Therefore, it can be inferred that CLT tries to lead the learners to the goal of language learning . In other words CLT class in tells teaching learning about social function but is does not focus on linguistic structure and form, Larson,(2003), in addition , it was discussed that CLT class aims to teach communicative competence away ever a wide variety of syllabus designs is noticeable in different CLT classes, Likhon (1984). On the other hand Richard mentioned that CLT focuses on of communicative competence. Thus enabling the learners to use the language in communicative situation that satisfies their needs in real life communication.

As Dalces (1995) the investigation of teachers' attitude serves as the starting point to identified the possible contradicts between teachers' believe and CLT principles . In the mean

while it is also substantiated by Litylewud,(1981) that the idea of communicative approach may conflict with EFL teachers existing roles in teaching methods. Furthermore, Carless,(2003) suggests that the government as to put pricier on schools and teachers implement CLT in order to develop learners communicative competence . Concerning this, the Ethiopian ministry of Education in 2001 proclaimed in the curriculum that it was considered to contribute to the society and national development.

### **The Advantage of Communicative Approach in EFL Class**

As Richard, (2006) mentioned that CLT focuses and aims at communicative competence which enables the learner to use the language in communicative situation that satisfies their needs in real life communication, is priority in CLT. These, while teaching a language, teachers are suppose to select learning activities in such ways in meaningful and authentic language use, Richard and Rogers,(1986). Supporting these, Alintuba and Clomy, (1989) described that its' active participation instead of passive reception which distinguishes communicative learning from traditional lecturing.

In addition Richard and Rogers, (1986) indicated that classes in communicative approach, are students oriented. Furthermore, they claimed that it is an approach rather than a model since methods are considered to be fixed teaching systems with prescribed techniques were as approaches are held to be teaching philosophy that can be implemented in various ways in the class room. In other words, Widuson, (1994). Views both the usage and the use of the language include active students' participation, knowledge construction, individual and collective discovery and problem solving.

Moreover, Johnson and Smith, (1991) stated that CLT class room, group learning activities which are organized so that learning depends on socially structured exchange of information between learners and groups in which each learner responsible for his own learning and motivated to enhance his learning. As its indicated by Decymes, (1971), language uses for communication and its primary goal is for learners to develop communicative competence. On the other hand, functional communication activities required the learners to use their language resources to overcome the information gaps, Richard, (2006 pp 18.)

As English is considered the international language all over the world and people use it for their different purposes like industry and scientific purposes or business, the importance of English learning and teaching has been increased significantly. Additionally, using internet has increased the importance of English, Littlewoods (2007). As Wils, ( 2004) pointing out that learners use the language creatively while interacting with their peers. Apart from this, Salkon, (1972) suggested that learners move from different stages of development and they developed underlining the language systems which develops in the sequence, does not always reflect the sequence of what was taught in curriculum.

### ***Problems Regarding the Implementation of CLT in EFL Class Room***

According to Richard and Rogers, 2001 pp 247), half pointed that a few methods unlikely to be widely adopted because they are difficult to understand the news like clear practical application requires specially training the necessary major changes teachers of practice and beliefs. Apart

from this, Howood, (1984) stress that the importance of providing the learners with opportunities to use their English with communicative purposes characteristically attempt to integrate such activities to wider language program of language teaching. In addition, Elies, (1996) and Cales, (1999), argue that CLT is in appropriate in terms of cultural aspects in Asia context. Beside the materials used such as the text book, claim to have notional functional syllabus but in fact they are based on weak version of CLT. Furthermore criticized this view, Estern, (1992) pointed out that CLT has become more successful in English as the second language settings, but fails to make class room interaction as competence possible in class room communicative in EFL context.

Moreover, recently Backs, (2003 pp 286) emphasized that the significant local needs and conditions particularly in EFL context by suggesting good teachers everywhere are paid attention in the context; good training course pay attention to context. Finally, he found that teachers reverse the attention of the context in CLT was secondary even the worst, the experienced teachers were seen to act against the context. Considering this problem, Aptiken, (2002 pp 97) claimed that this model was based on standardized native speakers' and he therefore found it realistic the constraining respect to the current law of English as global lingual when Ael, (1986) spoke about EFL learners express their in ability and sometimes acknowledge their failure in speaking a foreign language. This learners may be good at learning other skills but, when they come to learning to speak English, they claim to have mental block/ against it. Currently Johnson, (2007 pp 212) has stated that unwillingness of the learners to discuss in English when they are given paired works and group activities in speaking due to the fear of making mistakes. On the other hand, Savignon (1991) linguistic theory and class room practice are constrained by the structural syllabus that rigidly controls the introduction and sequences of grammatical features when past tenses have been introduced severely constrained communication. Though the communication approach is implemented in many countries across the world, one must admit that in practice there is a lot of resistance to go unchanged (Widdowson, 1978). In line with this, Backs, (2003) launched that in developing world, resources are more scarce and more scarce, change cannot be taken guarantee. Therefore ways and means must be found to be improved. Moreover, Karl's, (2003 pp 45-46) wrote about the innovation in language teaching in many countries of Asia have been un successful in introducing communicative language teaching (CLT) and he adds that the mismatch between the governmental mandate and what actually is implemented in school.

### ***The Conceptual Framework of Implementing CA in EFL Classroom***

According to Handerson (1993), it is indicated that teachers have some problems in implementing CLT in CL context such as teachers' problems with the size of classes which are too large to practice CLT and most of the teachers' are eager to take the form and best examination. In addition, as Barkuyzu from South Africa, (1998) investigated that the importance of class room implementation of teachers and students, are interested in language learning context. On the contrary some teachers believe in some old methods: grammar translation, audio lingual methods seem effective for their pedagogical purposes. Nevertheless Kon and Tailers (1994) stated that by lingual English teachers have special eagerness about the CLT principles and they are to implement in their classes. Furthermore, having conducted investigation Mord, (2003) found teachers' cognition such as knowledge their perception beliefs

and way of thinking has typical role in their teaching career according to the principle of CLT, students are motivated to communicate with each other in the classroom. Nevertheless, researchers have mentioned that teachers face different problems while working with students from different cultures and languages.

On the other hand, it was supposed by Kravans-Dalkas, (1995) the reason for the mismatch between CLT theories and practice may be teachers' attitudes. Besides this, Littlewood, (1981) suggested that the perspective of CA may conflict with EFL teachers' beliefs and CLT principles. Regarding attitudes, Fishman and Ajibeson, (1975) proposed a conceptual framework of attitudes which consists of four categories: cognition, affection, conviction and behavior. In the framework, attitudes are belief. However, the relationship between attitudes and behavior depends on the particular condition.

Different from this, Gardner, Lambert and Ismail (1979) suggested that second language learners need to be psychologically prepared to acquire EFL and it is the part of the different ethnic linguistic community and second language learner is required to expose elements of other cultures on one's own life. In addition, Anderson, (1993), showed that teachers and students were not motivated to shift from structural to CLT. For a number of reasons, high demands on teachers and untrained teachers, reluctant students in classes, fear of committing mistakes. Moreover, Seidman and Clisener (1999) pointed out that in consistency between teachers' perception of CLT and their classes' actual behavior, and Anderson, (1993) additionally reported that both teachers and resistance for the difficulty of implementing communicative competence based on the program, including teachers' lack of competence in English and lack of preparation. In general, multiple excessive demands are placed on the teachers.

In case of this, Nunan, (1993) suggested that the mismatch between the teaching preference of the teachers and the learning preference of the learners may be the source of difficulty for the implementation of CLT. Moreover, Pargenwood, (2006 p. 244) believes that this method does not fully prepare the students for the exam. And he adds that students and parents require teachers to help them pass the exam. Furthermore, Gosege, (2004 p. 286) has just pointed out that parents and students know speaking skills are not tested on the exam but the government puts pressure on the teachers to implement CA. Finally, Harmer, (2001) offered that administrators and teachers have the device of methods to the users involved and interested. These include: motivating students to speak English for filling school CA.

### ***Textbook Evaluation to Maximize Opportunities of CA Implementation***

What is necessary for book evaluation?

Need analysis needs to be used in the language program. According to Rechar, (2002), teachers need textbooks, they do not need them, and they select them and supplement some other materials to perfect them. No textbook is perfect. Therefore, teachers should have the option of assigning supplementary materials based on their own specific needs in their own specific teaching situation.

The arguments for using a textbook are: a textbook is a framework which regulates and times the programs, in the eyes of learners, no textbook means no purpose.....it is offered that most current global or local textbooks are developed for commercial purposes, but are not based on the principles of language acquisition and development, so textbooks are in fact leading the learners to failure instead of making them positively develop in English language acquisition.

As salts sago (2002) stated that the most vital aspects were given emphasis on the textbook in good field for the teachers, students and curriculum all of which are important as educators seek to use materials and method appropriately to their particular context. As Rechereshin chancellor,(1977),the systemic approach was more flexible and practicable comparison with human being work. However, it suffers from its weak point that the approach was too dependent on the learners' perception of their rather than their actual real world need. On the contrary, Hutchson and Woter (1997)believed that human being must pay much attention to language needs.

Therefore more attention must be given to how learners learn. Intact, Calpes, (2008) suggested that it is necessary to identify learners' needs through more critical analysis.....including all cultural societal and probably national factors be for planning the course because teachers,students and books are considered the three elements in the process of education .Based on this view ,Caily (2009),argues that evaluation tries to assure the quality assurance and enhancement of learning opportunities. As Endria Jeab,(2013),it's indicated that throughout the world, textbooks play vital role since they are considered the means of required materials and knowledge between teachers and students. On the other hand, Flibs,(1992), Seemed to be worried about the complex relationship between the language of the text and the target.

## **Conclusion**

CLT is now considerably being used at wide range of educational settings. CLT is also viewed the most effective and widely used teaching approach that helps the learners to be engaged in meaningful communication in the target language, English. In addition, most modern language teaching methods and techniques can be scaled out from the perspective of communicative language teaching approach. Furthermore, the traditional way of language teaching has been formulated as grammar approach which is being presented by the teacher in his/her contextual manner. However CLT can be extremely effective way of teaching EFL since it is rapidly increasing to meet the global needs of information. In other words, English is becoming hegemony language in the international business as well as in the political forums.

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