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English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics MA

The Role of the Teacher in CLT

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WHAT IS CLT

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a meaning based, learner-centered approach to language teaching. In the CLT classroom language is contextualised, effective communication is sought after & the primary goal is to help learners acquire communicative competence.

CLT wants the learner to go beyond just knowing the language by knowing how to use the language.

CLT has no single text or authority, nor any single universally accepted model (Richards & Rogers 2001: 153).

Teacher Roles

- Planner/Manager
- Monitor/Observer
- Materials developer
- Facilitator
- Guide
- Diagnostician
- Needs Analyst
- Language Resource
- Assessor
- Rapport Builder

Spratt, Pulverness & Williams (2001)

Communicative Competence: the ability to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately (Richards & Rogers 2001:156)

For this reason, it has been widely misunderstood & misapplied (Scrivener 2011:31-32).

WHY TEACH IN A COMMUNICATIVE WAY

- The purpose of language learning is to be able to communicate and exchange information, hence that should be the goal of teaching and learning. (Scrivener 2011: 29)
- Gives learners the opportunity and experience of practicing meaningful communication
- Mastering language systems is futile if you cannot use/produce them in the real world
- The collaborative creation of meaning, and engaging in meaningful and purposeful interactions are the most effective ways to learn a language (Richards 2006: 4)

THE CLT TEACHER

The key role of the CLT teacher is to facilitate, guide & monitor language learning.

Role: a set of norms and expectations applied to the incumbents of a particular position (Widdowson 1987:86).

The teacher is no longer a model for correct speech and writing, heavily focusing on ensuring students produce error-free sentences. Now the teacher must develop a different view of learners' errors and of their role in facilitating language learning (Richards 2006: 5).

The teacher is concerned with fluency over accuracy, errors are an essential part of learning.



The teacher creates a classroom climate conducive to language learning and provides opportunities for learners to use and practice the language and to reflect on language use and language learning (Richards 2006: 23).

The teacher must be resourceful. Able to create or adopt learning material to ensure that learning activities fulfill a communicative purpose and meet learners' needs.

The teacher is a co-learner, willing to try out different things. It is not about knowing a formula but rather knowing effective methods.

References

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