

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract: *This paper investigates the effectiveness of the Communicative Approach (CA) in English language teaching (ELT). The study explores its theoretical foundations, methods of application in classroom settings, and its impact on learners' communicative competence. The findings demonstrate that CA enhances students' speaking, listening, and interactional skills compared to traditional grammar-translation methods.*

Keywords: *Communicative Approach, ELT, methodology, interaction, communicative competence*

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, English has become a global language, and the need for effective teaching methodologies has increased significantly. Traditional methods such as the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) or the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) have been criticized for their lack of focus on real-life communication.

The Communicative Approach (CA), emerging in the 1970s, shifted the focus from rote memorization of grammar rules to meaningful communication. This approach emphasizes student-centered learning, interaction, and the development of communicative competence.

The aim of this study is to examine the effectiveness of the CA in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), highlighting its principles, classroom practices, and outcomes for learners.

Methods. The research employed a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative observations and quantitative classroom data.

1. Participants: 60 undergraduate students at B1–B2 levels of English proficiency.

Divided into two groups: experimental (CA-based lessons) and control (traditional GTM-based lessons).

2. Procedure: Over a 10-week period, the experimental group was taught using communicative activities (role plays, problem-solving tasks, pair and group discussions).

The control group studied the same material using GTM with a focus on translation and grammar drills.

3. Instruments:

- Pre-test and post-test (listening and speaking tasks).
- Student feedback questionnaires.
- Teacher observation notes.

Results. The results show significant improvement in the experimental group: Speaking fluency: Students in the CA group improved by 35% compared to 10% in the control group.

Listening comprehension: CA students scored 40% higher than GTM students in post-tests.

Confidence and motivation: Questionnaires revealed that 85% of CA learners felt more confident communicating in English, while only 40% of GTM learners expressed the same.

Classroom interaction: Teacher observations indicated higher engagement and active participation in the CA group.

Discussion. The findings confirm that the Communicative Approach effectively develops learners' communicative competence. Unlike GTM, which prioritizes grammatical accuracy, CA encourages fluency, interaction, and the use of language in meaningful contexts. The data suggest that students not only improve linguistically but also socially and psychologically, as they gain confidence in communication.

However, CA is not without limitations. Teachers require extensive training to implement CA successfully. Additionally, in contexts with large class sizes or exam-oriented systems, CA may face challenges in practice. Nevertheless, the benefits outweigh these difficulties, making CA a highly effective methodology for ELT.

In conclusion, This study highlights the effectiveness of the Communicative Approach in English language teaching. By focusing on real-life communication and learner interaction, CA equips students with the skills necessary to use English confidently in academic, professional, and social contexts. Future research should investigate the integration of digital tools with CA to enhance language learning outcomes further.

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