

# COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING APPROACH IN LECTURE PRESENTATION

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**Abstract:** *During the past few decades, the focus of classroom instruction and the practice of language teaching has shifted from teacher centered to student centered approach. Lecture presentation is one of the challenges in TEFL university education. The Communicative language teaching (CLT) approach, which involves interactive and research-based techniques, can be used in lecture presentations, because it can help students process the content of lecture more deeply and efficiently, especially in the conditions when class time learning is reduced to a minimum. This approach which promotes active learning, stimulates interest and helps to maintain attention, can help students develop the management of material, give feedback to the teacher and the student and increase the material acquisition. Its techniques can develop the student's mind which is one of the central objectives of university education.*

**Key words:** *lecture presentation, approach, communicative language teaching, material acquisition, techniques, attention, habits of mind, interaction.*

Today in the era of globalization when people move and communicate more than ever before communicative language teaching is becoming a central method in the formation of English language teachers. At present when the classroom language teaching is reduced to a minimum, the university TEFL teachers are facing more challenges, since lectures take a good part of class time in most of the subjects in the university education of Moldova, making practical language teaching more complicated. So,

teachers are doing their best to use any opportunity, including lecture presentations for developing the communicative competence of EFL students. More and more scientists lay stress on interactive teaching of lectures which are closely connected with the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach.

If we try to analyze the traditional picture of lecture teaching we shall all agree that it is time to substitute the passive perception of information which a traditional lecture is offering, when there is no or little contact of the teacher with students, where the latter is free to think or even daydream, without hearing what the teacher tries to convey. We shall all agree, that the modern student, who is exposed to so many interactive ways of communication, needs a variety of forms of material presentation. Newble D. and Cannon R., believe that interactive teaching (which is central in CLT approach) can promote active learning, heighten attention and motivation, give feedback to the teacher and the student, and increase the material acquisition (Newble, Cannon 1994:17).

Speaking about teaching lectures using CLT approach, we can observe that it offers several types of interaction in class, which are beneficial both for the lecture presentation and material assimilation, on the one hand, and on the other hand, for the development of CLT competence of students. So, what interactions take place in a CLT lecture? Firstly, CLT involves a two-way interaction between the teacher and the students. Secondly, it refers to increased number of discussions among the students (group work activities, dialogues, etc), which promotes the development of communicative competence of students. Thirdly, it refers to students' involvement with the material or the content of a lecture. Each of these interactions are present in CLT. Let's have a look at this process in more details and notice the benefits of CLT approach in lecture presentation.

First of all, CLT methods used in lectures can increase the students' engagement. Foley & Smilansky point out: "Energy shifts if students' attention remains focused. By changing pace and incorporating a variety of CLT techniques that arouse attention, the teacher can stimulate interest and help to maintain attention. This includes the analysis and synthesis of material, application to other situations and evaluation of the material presented" (Foley & Smilansky 1998:117). Robert Marzano mentions, that in highly interactive lectures, which include a variety of techniques, that

capture students' attention and keep them actively engaged, students show 30% higher performances than the students in usual teacher centered lectures. Attention span studies show that students' interest and attention in the traditional lecture diminishes significantly after the first 20 minutes (Marzano 2007).

Secondly, the CLT methods help students to develop management skills which are crucial in university education. Lectures carry much information which has to be managed by the student. One of the tasks of CLT is to help students organize what they learn according to some patterns, putting individual pieces of information together, for creating an integrated whole of knowledge. Many students do not know how to take notes, what to emphasize or how to organize their notes, that is why many prefer to get the material dictated and chose to think about nothing more. CLT methods involve research-based techniques which can help students process content more deeply and get more meaning from it. The students in traditional lectures are overwhelmed with the amount of new material to be learned which usually scares them and blocks their perception. While CLT lectures allow the teacher to develop the information management skills of students, using a battery of techniques, such as: graphic organizers, mind maps, T-graphics, star explosion, discussions, etc.

Thirdly, the essential issue in a lecture does not deal with whether the teacher has covered the material or not, but rather with how well students understood it and can use it. Looking at lectures from psychological point of view, it is worth thinking about the students' mind, how it behaves in a lecture in order to understand how to improve the lecture teaching methods. Lecturing is not only providing students with an amount of information but it should develop students' habits of mind, such as: listening with understanding and empathy, thinking flexibly, applying past knowledge to new situations, thinking and communicating with clarity and precision, gathering data through all senses, responding creatively, and thinking independently. An important task of any teacher is to nourish these habits of mind of students. The teacher is to give students the tools they need in order to use their minds well for future success. Such CLT techniques, as: jigsaw activities, punctuated lectures, problem solving, think-pair share, simulations, etc, will help students develop the habits of mind.

*Punctuated Lectures.* A punctuated lecture is a metacognitive strategy that helps students become aware of the behaviors they exhibit during a lecture. These behaviors (fidgeting, daydreaming, distraction) are unconsciously expressed and may impact student learning in the classroom. In becoming self-aware during class, students can begin to take control of their behaviors and be more accountable for their learning. In this strategy, the teacher and students engage in five steps: *Listen, Stop, Reflect, Write and Feedback*. In step one students listen to a lecture, presented with the help of a slide show, or watch a video clip. Step two implies stopping the material delivery after a time period for giving the students time to reflect on their actions and thoughts during the lecture. They are prompted to think about what they were doing and analyze whether those behaviors helped or hindered their understanding of the topic in step three. Step four gives time to the students to write down their insights. The information is processed and students determine how they can use the information to modify or change existing behaviors. In the end students give feedback to the teacher about what they have learned about themselves - their ways of learning. Such a lecture can contribute greatly to the development of management skills of students, teaching them how to learn.

*Think-pair-share* provides the students with opportunities to discover the truths on their own. They are asked to think about a question for a minute and then join into pairs to discuss their views with a partner. The instructor can ask the pairs to try to reach a consensus or to discuss their thoughts. At the end of a certain period of time the teacher asks the pairs to share with the class what they've discussed in pairs. Why questions, problem solving tasks can be used here. Such techniques require only five to ten minutes of class time; they can be used in classes of any size and any seating arrangement; they accustom students to collaborative activities, stimulate the students to think and share their opinions with others, in such a way contributing to the development of the communicative competence during lectures and excluding boredom and passive behavior of students.

*Simulations and role plays* allow students to try out a real life situation in a 'safe setting' and receive feedback on their experiences. Adams D. defines simulation as "a controlled detailed mode intended to reflect a situation found in the real world. It is a dramatic view of life existing for the serious purpose of learning about real experiences" (Adams

1993:48). Simulations in lectures engage students in material assimilation by offering three ways of interaction: student -student interaction, teacher-student and student-material interaction which promote student's complete involvement in learning. During simulations students transfer knowledge to new problems and situations, understanding and refining their own thinking processes, thus developing the habits of mind. In a simulation each student is allocated a specific part to perform. They recreate situations that they might find in the real world.

Communicative language teaching is a learner- centered approach in which the learners are given importance, all activities are student-centered and involve students in the learning process, making learning active and motivating.

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