

# Communicative Language Teaching for Education 5.0: A New Horizon for English Language Instruction

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**Abstract:** The paper examines how Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can adapt its features to fulfill the demands of Education 5.0 in terms of the integration of technology, collaboration, and real-life skills in English language teaching. A narrative literature review on relevant research related to CLT was carried out, along with an analysis with regard to the agreement of principles with Education 5.0. While interaction and learner's autonomy remain some of the key concerns of CLT, its modifications in forms of infusion of the digital tool along with culturally responsive strategies have become necessary. These are identified at the heart of most barriers to full integration: teacher training, access to technology, and curriculum development. The framework, on the other hand, proposes ongoing professional development, improvement in access to the digital resources, and a focus on a learner-centered environment. The paper underlines the potential of CLT in shaping the future of teaching English and further calls for more empirical studies assessing its effectiveness as a theory in contemporary educational contexts.

**Keyword:** *CLT, digital literacy, education 5.0, EFL, language instruction*

## INTRODUCTION

CLT has been the most famous approach in language education since the late 1970s; interaction, communicative competence, and real-life use were its priorities rather than the mechanical memorization of grammar rules. As there is an inclusion of advanced technologies with a human-centered approach in Education 5.0, a discussion on the role of CLT needs to be done. The extension now, Education 5.0, from Education 4.0, prescribes that learning should be holistic, covering emotional, ethical, and social dimensions while equipping learners with critical skills for the 21st century, including collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking (Rane 2024). The moot question would then be how CLT could move toward this emerging educational paradigm.

Education 5.0 introduces technologies such as AI, machine learning, and virtual reality into the classroom, thus offering new possibilities regarding language learning. With the use of digital tools, CLT can further enhance the learners' communicative competence through immersive, real-life language practices, immediate feedback, and global collaboration. On the contrary, Education 5.0 focuses on human aspects such as emotional intelligence and social responsibility, and therefore, the CLT approach should also adopt those values. Language learning in this context should prepare students not only for linguistic correctness but also for effective communication in social and professional spheres of life.

While those traditional practices of CLT like role-playing, group work, and problem-solving activities are in tune with the collaborative and interdisciplinary emphasis of Education 5.0, in order to fall in line with the demands placed by the modern world, language educators need to extend them further. These would involve the integration of digital tools, interdisciplinarity, development of skills like critical thinking and creativity, and a teacher who is more facilitator than instructor. Students become agents in learning, solving real-life problems, and building solutions together.

This paper adopts a critical outlook on the convergence of CLT and Education 5.0 with the aim of discussing a conceptual framework that would situate CLT within the scope of this new educational framework. It discusses how CLT principles can be reframed toward the broader aims of Education 5.0

and how communicative competence can be developed through digital technologies. Finally, it discusses how language instructors can integrate the 21st-century skills into their teaching practices to prepare students for a globalized, digital world.

The body of literature is immense in regard to digital tools and 21st-century skills within educational contexts; however, little attention has been given to how CLT can be transformed into fitting within the framework of Education 5.0. This paper fills that gap by offering practical advice for language instructors, policymakers, and educational institutions on how to develop learners' communicative, digital, and social skills in the 21st century. The following conceptual framework shall, therefore, guide educators in the adaptation of CLT to suit modern educational demands by adequately preparing the students to sail through a fast-changing world.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Various linguistic, psychological, and educational theories beleaguer Communicative Language Teaching. The principles of CLT are not only practical but well-founded in academic research that delves deep into the thought of communicative competence, functional language use, and social interaction. One of the most underlying theories related to CLT is the communicative competence developed by Dell Hymes. (Hymes 2020) believed that a language was not merely acquired through the mastery of grammatical structures but also in terms of how such a language was effectively and appropriately used in social life. This latter view of communicative competence, therefore, extends beyond mere linguistic ability into pragmatic competence-meaning learners must understand the social rules that determine when and how to use language features depending on context, participants, and intentions (Moore 2020).

Hymes' theory was a response to the previous linguistic emphasis on grammar-focused competence, such as Chomsky's view, which views competence as the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences in isolation. This view was further extended by (Hymes 2020), who argued that effective communication is not a question of merely structural correctness but also interpretive competence entailing knowledge of social appropriateness, such as when to use formal and informal speech, showing politeness, and what to say or do in a social exchange. This coincides with the CLT emphasis on the pragmatic skills: a learner is not only to speak correctly but also communicate meaningfully and appropriately in real-life interactions.

According to (Halliday and Hasan 1980), language is not restricted to structures but a tool serving various functions in human life. They identified a set of central functions of language, each corresponding to a distinct communicative purpose of CLT. For instance, the regulatory function of language allows us to give orders, ask for an action, or otherwise influence other people's actions; this function consequently plays an important role in maintaining social interaction. In task-based learning, for instance-a widespread CLT methodology-learners might give instructions to their classmates or prepare a plan of action, thereby reproducing authentic communicative behavior.

For them, the other essential function of language is the interactional function, which enables participants to establish social contacts. This feature of language use is very central to the CLT focus on communication in authentic contexts. In the CLT classroom, learners can often be seen engaging in activities like role-plays, discussions, or groupwork which mirror natural social life. These activities not only provide learners with an opportunity to practice linguistic forms but also develop in them the ability to communicate naturally and fluently in social situations.

Another important concept by Halliday & Hasan that is central to CLT is that of the heuristic function of language. The heuristic function of language refers to the use of language as a tool for learning and discovery. In the communicative classroom, language is used to explore new ideas, solve problems, and seek information. Learners are stimulated to ask questions, discuss, and carry out inquiry-based activities that allow them to develop further their knowledge about both language and the world.

The heuristic function supports CLT in its goal of enhancing learners' critical thinking and problem-solving skills as means for viable communication in real-life situations.

In addition, Halliday and Hasan's imaginative function of language, which denotes using language for creative expression and storytelling, parallels the emphasis in CLT on encouraging creativity. Learners could well tell stories, enact drama, or do some creative writing that serves to develop their skills not only in linguistic forms but also in imaginative uses of language. Such activities enable students to range beyond the functionality of language to more subtle and culturally expressive ways of communicating.

While Halliday and Hasan's functional approach focuses on what language does in communication, Lev Vygotsky's theory of social interaction and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) further supports CLT's interactive nature. This Russian psychologist asserts that one learns through social interaction-especially when a less experienced learner is working with more knowledgeable peers. This scaffold, within language learning, aids in the language acquisition process. ZPD suggests the difference between what learners can do alone and what they can do with guidance (S. Lavin 2019). Again, this follows directly in CLT through its emphasis on collaborative learning. In the CLT classroom, learners are often engaged either in pairs or groups to accomplish communicative tasks, with more proficient learners or the teacher themselves providing guidance and feedback. Such an interaction enables the learners to stretch their linguistic capabilities within a supportive communicative environment.

What needs to be added is the fact that Vygotsky's appeal for social nature in learning corresponds with CLT principles, where interaction becomes a significant ingredient for language acquisition to take place. In this regard, through communicative activities with peers, the students are not just practicing the forms of language but also negating meaning and resolving problems together, hence authenticating the use of language. In this sense, CLT espouses Vygotsky's concept that learning is best done socially and interactively to take the learner from what they can do to what they could do with others.

The integration of these theories-Hymes' communicative competence, Halliday & Hasan's functional approach, and Vygotsky's social interaction-provides a sound theoretical basis for CLT. In this case, each theory contributes to the other in that each is a step closer to how language is learned and used in social contexts. For instance, (Hymes 2020) focuses on the aspect of social appropriateness of use, Halliday & Hasan focus on the functions of language, and Vygotsky focuses on interaction for the facilitation of learning. Put together, these three theories orient CLT in the teaching of language in a way that meaningful communication, social interaction, and functional use of language are paramount.

These theoretical considerations find their application in concrete teaching strategies in the CLT classroom: the teacher should create activities that simulate real-life communication, provide opportunities for meaningful interaction, and focus on the use of language for real purposes. For example, learners can be engaged in a role-play where, through negotiation of meaning, they interact with their peers over a set of problem-solving and decision-making tasks. Activities like these allow learners to practice both their linguistic and pragmatic skills in a supportive and interactive environment.

In a nutshell, respective theories underlying CLT, from communicative competence to functional language use and interaction, provide comprehensive insights into the dynamics of language learning as a social process. That is, CLT does not restrict itself to teaching language as a set of rules but rather equips the learners to effectively use their hard-earned language resources in realistic situations. Based on these theoretical underpinnings, CLT provides a robust yet flexible framework for the teaching of languages that readies learners to communicate meaningfully and with confidence across diverse social contexts.

## **METHOD**

The conceptual framework for CLT in teaching English within the framework of Education 5.0 is reviewed through the use of literature. This research is a literature review-based study that synthesizes past literature with current academic research and theoretical standpoints on the background of the origin, conceptual underpinnings, implementation, and challenges facing the adoption of CLT within the auspices of this new paradigm of education.

Relevant academic literature was identified through thorough searching of peer-reviewed journals, scholarly books, conference papers, and respected educational databases such as ERIC, JSTOR, and Google Scholar. Some major key terms used for the search for these studies and theoretical contributions within the literature included "Communicative Language Teaching," "CLT in Education 5.0," "English language pedagogy," and "Education 5.0 language learning." The review was only limited to works of the last 10 years to ensure the view is most up-to-date, especially those dealing with integrating technology and learner-centered approaches in line with Education 5.0 (Mosa 2023).

This written review draws on selected literature that focuses on research that has to contextualize CLT within the current educational paradigm, more specifically Education 4.0 and Education 5.0. A source was included if it involved a detailed analysis of the theoretical background and history, advantages, challenges, and practical application of CLT in teaching English. Particular attention was paid to publications that covered the adaptation of CLT to current educational trends, including the integration of technology in teaching practices and learner-centered methodologies. Moreover, only sources published within the last two decades were considered and those which are peer-reviewed academic sources.

In this regard, resources that did not address the subject of CLT or its alternatives in teaching languages were excluded from this review. Older publications were, of course, excluded, particularly those dated back to before 2000, unless they offered some kind of pre-historical background knowledge for the concept of CLT. Non-academic articles were also eliminated, including any non-peer-reviewed studies, to keep the integrity of the data intact.

The finding and discussion section of the paper discusses the key aspects of the paper: definition and brief history of CLT, theoretical underpinning, strengths, shortcomings, and implications for use in Education 5.0. Through thematic analysis, the researchers are able to establish patterns, gaps, and trends that might be taking shape in the literature on how CLT can adapt to the technological advancement and personalized learning environments occurring in Education 5.0. Limitations of this review are the scope of available literature and reliance on secondary data. Some of these emergent practices within Education 5.0 may not be as fully developed or articulated yet in the literature; hence, equally limited insight into the latest innovations in CLT application would not be allowable.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***CLT in Education 5.0 Era***

CLT emerged in the 1960s and 1970s as a response to the limitations of such traditional language teaching methods as the Grammar-Translation and Audio-Lingual (Nandihally n.d.) The latter approaches were more traditionally focused on rote memorization and grammatical rules without much relation to actual communication. On the contrary, CLT was about communicative competence that Dell Hymes wrote of as appropriate use of language in varying social situations (Richards 2006). (Canale and Swain 1980) argued that foreign language instruction should be directed at the practical and dynamic aspects of using language, not the abstract grammaticalities in isolation.

CLT also drew on the Notional-Functional Syllabus developed by the Council of Europe, which moved the focus away from the teaching of linguistic structures in isolation to language as it is used in

life (McCabe 2022; Wright 2022). This approach allowed learners to practice such functions as requesting, apologizing, or giving advice, which better prepared them for practical communication. Eventually, CLT came to encompass all four language skills-listening, speaking, reading, and writing-while still maintaining the focus on student interaction, authentic materials and tasks such as role plays and problem-solving activities.

### ***Integration of Technology in CLT***

The integration of technology into CLT provisionally enhanced it, especially for Education 5.0, as technology balanced the human-centered learning with benefits ensuing from digital development. MALL, VLEs, and AI-powered tools have made more personalized and autonomous learning possible (Walsh 2021). These tools offer on-demand language practice and opportunities for authentic interaction, emulating real-life situations that improve communicative competence (Shevelova and Harkusha 2023).

Other key innovations in the space include gamification and virtual reality; these provide interactive and engaging modes of learning (Desyatova and Andrianova 2023; Kaplan-Rakowski and Gruber 2023). Gamified environments help students practice the language skills through playful, interactive tasks, while virtual reality enables learners to practice communication in realistic simulations, such as navigating a foreign city or participating in a business meeting (Legault et al. 2019).

TBLT is another variety emanating from CLT, focusing on real-life-like tasks (Bryfonski and McKay 2019). TBLT develops collaboration, problem-solving, and critical thinking, all in line with 21st-century skills as propagated in Education 5.0 (Artama, Budasi, and Ratminingsih 2023). The application of the flipped classroom model, whereby students study the new content at home, has been implemented in CLT to create time for communicative activities within the four walls of the classroom (Petersen, Townsend, and Onaka 2020; Shahnama, Ghonsooly, and Shirvan 2021). The model raises students' motivation and involvement in learning because the application of language ability is transferred to more interactive and collaborative situations.

### ***Learning Objectives and Competencies***

The eventual objective of CLT is to develop the learners' ability to use language effectively in life situations. Communicative competence encompasses linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic competencies. The linguistic competency refers to the knowledge about the structure of the language, such as syntax, phonetics, and vocabulary. Sociolinguistic competence is proficiently using language appropriately in social situations, enveloping knowledge of the effects of cultural and social contexts on human communication. Pragmatic competence means to comprehend and put across meaning effectively, which requires choosing appropriate words and phrases in relation to a situation.

### ***Teacher-Student Collaboration and Autonomous Learning***

CLT, especially in the Education 5.0 setup, has moved teachers away from knowledge providers to facilitators of learning. In such a collaborative mode, both the teacher and the students will share responsibility for learning. Students shall be at liberty to participate actively in setting goals about learning, selecting topics for discussion, and reflection upon the learning progress. This, in turn, enhances learner independence and agency in learning-skills that are deemed important for lifelong learning.

This collaboration has been further facilitated by digital tools such as AI-powered learning platforms and adaptive learning systems, where feedback may even be given in real time, allowing students to co-design learning activities. These tools offer opportunities for learners to rehearse language in authentic, interactive settings that support the CLT emphasis on communicative speaking.

### ***Technology-Mediated Assessment in CLT***

One of the most important developments within CLT has been the better use of technology-driven assessment as it is more in line with the communicative emphasis of the approach. Traditional written tests usually do not capture important competencies of speaking and listening that are at the heart of communicative competence. On digital platforms, for instance, assessments can now be done with continuous and adaptive formative assessments. These provide immediate feedback for learners to improve their performance by practicing and reflecting.

AI-powered assessments, for instance, can assess the candidate in real-time, presenting activities of differential difficulty tailored to performance (Magal-Royo et al. 2021). Such a process allows a more individualized approach to testing communicative ability. Video-based assessments-in which students produce recordings of themselves engaging in contextual situations like interviews or group discussions-can easily be developed using Flipgrid and Microsoft Teams. These types of assessments are also assessing linguistic accuracy, as well as fluency, pronunciation and the ability to select language in context (Grin 2021).

Further, virtual environments such as Second Life facilitate interactive simulations that involve learners' cooperation to solve some problem or complete some real-life-like task. Such assessments represent the functional use of language in CLT and at the same time work on developing critical thinking and solving problems.

### ***Strengths and Challenges of CLT***

It is at its most powerful when carried out with activities that imitate real situations, such as role plays and debates, and this in turn enhances the communication skills of the students . Moreover, it helps attain the objective of intercultural understanding due to the usage of authentic materials originating from different cultural contexts. CLT also coincides with 21st-century education imperatives through the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

However, CLT is not without its challenges. Many find the approach to be lacking in explicit grammar and vocabulary instruction, mainly focusing on meaning and communication. This has a consequence of inaccuracies in the use of language (Mohd-Asraf, Hossain, and Eng 2019). Further, large classes and classes of diverse students face the challenge in the management of CLT activities since a lot of supervision has to be accorded by the teacher and the authentic materials should be relevant to every learner.

### ***Future Directions for CLT***

This means that with the development of technology, technology integration with CLT will be even more important in the future. The collaborative tasks conducted on Zoom-like platforms, together with the use of interactive games and simulations, will make this method more effective. Another direction regarding the extension of CLT is the issue of cultural awareness; it helps learners understand social and cultural contexts in which language is used.

Improvement in teacher training, with a focus on selecting more authentic materials relevant for a diverse range of students, will be important for future success with CLT. This will help to ensure that CLT continues to be a flexible, effective method for teaching language in a globalized and interlinked world.

## CONCLUSION

The incorporation of CLT into the framework of Education 5.0 reveals certain challenges and opportunities in the arena of English language teaching. Education 5.0 is especially underscored to become human-centric learning with the use of technology but still enabling creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking among the learners. CLT fits into this paradigm of education due to its event-oriented nature which uses authentic communication, learner-centered activities, and real-world language use.

This means that in the era of Education 5.0, CLT is extended by creative technologies to those using artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and interactive learning platforms, making learning at a personal level more interactive. Their adoption will further enable learners to be exposed to language-rich environments, interact with native speakers from across the globe, and practice their communicative skills across wide contexts. It is the methodology that develops not only linguistic competence but also soft skills needed to succeed in contemporary society: intercultural communication skills and problem-solving skills.

However, as far as effective CLT realization goes in Education 5.0, considerations are directed at preparations on the part of teachers, curriculum design, and the digital divide. Teachers need preparation regarding how they can integrate technology in practice while retaining the same core principles of communicative competence. On the other hand, equity must be promoted so that not just a few, but all learners, may make use of new developments in education.

In other words, CLT is a very promising way of teaching English in the light of Education 5.0. New technologies used side by side with the core meaningful communication will take educators the farthest in preparing learners to function in this 'globalized' and 'digitized' world. Such incorporation of CLT into Education 5.0 opens undreamed vistas for language learning to be dynamic, relevant, and inclusive.

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