

# COMMUNICATIVE GRAMMAR AS ONE OF THE LANGUAGE SYSTEMS

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## Abstract

This article deal with communicative grammar and it's role in teaching English language. Components and strategies used in communicative grammar teaching are given information.

**Keywords:** communicative grammar, contextualization, task-based learning, role-playing and simulations.

## Introduction

Grammar is one of the most important aspects of foreign language teaching, as full communication cannot take place without grammar. There is no doubt that knowledge of grammar rules is necessary for successful language proficiency.

Grammar is the whole system and structures of all languages in general. It can be generally defined as “a knowledge of what words can go where and what form these words should take. Harmer presents some vital factors of grammar that learners of English need to pay attention to which involves sentences and clauses, verbs, nouns and noun phrases, adverbs and adjectives.” In a similar way, Ur explains that grammar is “the way words are put together to make correct sentences”. Meanwhile, Ellis does not directly define grammar but clarify the term grammar teaching which “involves any instructional technique that draws learners' attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either to understand it metalinguistic ally and/or process it in comprehension or production so that they can intern”

According to Burns , there are three main theoretical concepts of grammar that have affected the English teaching practice. First of all, traditional grammar considers language as a set of rules and learners need to identify as well as classify the words or phrases in a sentence into their part of speech. Secondly, formal grammar treats language as a cognitive progression happening in the brain and human beings have predisposition for it at birth. Thirdly, functional grammar is descriptive and this approach are concerned with how people actually use a language to communicate effectively with each other in everyday activities.

Grammar has played an important role in English language teaching with a wide variety of supportive evidence to prove the benefits of grammar teaching. In general, if grammar is taught at the right time, at the right place, and with the right way, it can help students efficiently scaffold their language learning. Grammar needs to be integrated into other languages skills so that grammar knowledge can be developed harmonically with different aspects of language. Moreover, grammar lessons need to be put into purposeful situations instead of separate and



unrelated sentences. This can support students to confidently use grammar rules and structures in their real life contexts.

Teaching Grammar as a skill - an approach that guides learner's attention to grammar at the same time that retains a measure of self-expression and meaning-focus.

Developing grammar skills is supposed to be active, conscious and creative in itself. Students must be interested in gaining not only speaking skills but grammar ones as well, because literacy promotes effective and confident application of English in foreign language written communication.

There are different approaches, methods and principles in teaching grammar. For many years, researchers and teachers have argued over whether we should even teach grammar. Despite the long-standing grammar debate, the fact remains that we do not use language without grammar. Perhaps, then, the problem is not grammar itself, but the ways that grammar has been taught and learned. When talking about the approaches to grammar teaching the question of inductive or deductive grammar teaching methods becomes one of most the crucial ones. Deductive approaches (rule-driven) start with the presentation of a rule and is followed by examples in which the rule is applied. The explanation is always staged in two parts: explanation of the rule of form and explanation of the rule of use Inductive approach (rule discovery) starts with some examples from which a rule is inferred. It is also called experiential learning (based on the concepts of how we learn our first language: through exposure to a massive amount of input the regularities and patterns of the language become evident, independent of conscious study and explicit rule formulation). but only possible in foreign language speaking communities. Early approaches to foreign language instruction, including the Grammar Translation Method often taught grammar separate from the larger contexts in which language is used. While these approaches were often effective for developing a receptive (reading) knowledge of a language, they sometimes failed to provide students with the ability to use language communicatively in speaking and writing. As a result, several approaches to language instruction since Audiolingualism have focused on developing communicative competence. Communicative competence does not mean an absence of grammar instruction but rather grammar instruction that leads to the ability to communicate effectively. Rivers identifies the „major methods of the past“, which are the Grammar Translation Method, the Direct Method, the Reading Method and the Audio-lingual Method. These methods developed from the 19th century through the first half of the 20th century and they had widespread use and strong credibility at the time.

Communicative Language Teaching began in the 1960s and has prospered since the 1970s to adapt to learners' needs in using language. It is often introduced as a replacement for the Grammar-Translation method. According to Wang, Communicative Language Teaching has marked a drastic shift from the traditional language teaching approaches that emphasize the use of language structures and forms to a communicative approach to language learning that focuses on the meaningful use of language in a social context

Communicative grammar teaching is an approach that integrates grammar instruction with communicative language teaching methodologies. Its focus is on teaching grammar in a way that facilitates communication and language use in real-life situations. Here are key components and strategies used in communicative grammar teaching



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**1. Contextualization of Grammar:**

**Real-Life Scenarios:** Integrate grammar lessons into authentic situations to demonstrate how grammar is used in communication.

**Authentic Materials:** Use real-world texts, dialogues, or multimedia to teach grammar within meaningful contexts.

**2. Focus on Communication:**

**Meaningful Interaction:** Emphasize communication over rote grammar drills, encouraging students to use grammar in conversations and tasks.

**Functional Language Use:** Teach grammar as a tool for effective communication rather than an isolated set of rules.

**3. Task-Based Learning:**

**Practical Application:** Design tasks or activities that necessitate the use of specific grammar structures to complete real-life tasks or achieve communicative goals.

**Problem-Solving Scenarios:** Present situations where learners need to apply grammar to solve problems or achieve objectives.

**4. Use of Authentic Language Input:**

**Listening and Reading Activities:** Provide materials like authentic texts, audio clips, or videos that naturally showcase grammar structures within context.

**Speaking and Writing Tasks:** Engage students in activities requiring the use of grammar in speaking and writing tasks, mirroring real communication situations.

**5. Error Correction within Context:**

**Focused Feedback:** Correct grammar errors within the context of communication rather than solely correcting isolated mistakes.

**Encouragement of Communication:** Prioritize maintaining communication flow over correcting every mistake to encourage fluency.

**6. Role-Playing and Simulations:**

**Role-Playing Scenarios:** Create situations where students use grammar naturally in role-plays, debates, or simulations.


**Interactive Dialogues:** Engage students in structured dialogues to practice and apply grammar in communicative contexts.

Grammatical structures are systematically related to meanings, uses, and situations. In this way, grammar acts as a communicative system in language learning and learners can be expected to improve and extend their range of competence and their use of communication strategies in language. The goal of communicative grammar is to explore and to formulate the relations between the formal events of grammar (words, phrases, sentences, and their categories and structures) and the conditions of their meaning and use.



All communicative approaches have a role for grammar teaching. Grammar can be taught within any communicative approach without interrupting the communicative mood; in fact, grammar can even help to enhance that communicative mood. As Harmer remarks, “at this stage, it is enough to say that grammar teaching –of both the overt and covert kind- has a real and important place in the classroom”.

The following chart summarizes the teaching philosophy of communicative approaches about grammar and which resources they use for doing so.

HOW (COMMUNICATIVE) APPROACHES DEAL WITH GRAMMAR		
Approach or Method	Competence vs. Performance	Techniques and Resources
<i>Traditional Grammar teaching</i>	Knowing about grammar: competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation-practice-production cycle</li> <li>• Continuous drilling for practice</li> <li>• Deductive teaching</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• grammatical structures are dressed up into communicative functions</li> <li>• inductive way of teaching grammar</li> </ul>
<i>Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus on form after providing enough input</li> <li>• through enabling tasks</li> <li>• naturalistic repetition</li> </ul>
<i>Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)</i> <i>Focus-on-Form (FonF)</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reactive/proactive focus-on-form</li> <li>• sequential/integrated sequence</li> <li>• unobtrusive activities</li> <li>• input modifications</li> </ul>
<i>Content-Based Instruction (CBI)</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus on form through activities which are related to the topic in question</li> <li>• grammar taught within context, inductively or deductively</li> <li>• learning by using</li> </ul>

**Figure 1.** How non-communicative and communicative approaches deal with grammar  
 Communicative grammar plays a significant role in supporting learners to acquire language and use it accurately. Although grammar instructions help learners acquire the language more efficiently, they should incorporate grammar teaching and learning into a wider context in which students are taught to use language communicatively. In this study, teachers are advised to teach grammar not with rigid and old-fashioned techniques such as drilling, memorizing, and answering written exercises on grammar rules. Instead, they are advised to teach it communicatively in a real-life context through techniques such as using songs, dialogues, games, charts, objects and role-play such that, rather than feeling they are learning grammatical



rules, students believe they are learning language itself to improve their communicative competence

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