# CLT and TBLT for Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Language Teaching

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## Language Pedagogy in East Asian Contexts

Language pedagogy covers practices and theories linked to teaching foreign, second, or heritage dialects or languages in multiple cultural, institutional, or political contexts. Today, instructional designs and curricular research and developments are mostly centered on task-based language teaching TBLT, community-based language education, content-based language training, and technology-enhanced language education. These seek to enable the acquirement of linguistic knowledge, understanding and awareness of diverse cultural perspectives, and improvement of interpretive, interactional, and presentational skills and approaches for life-long learning.

## Sociocultural Influences on Language Learning

Language learners are influenced by attitudes and outlook towards themselves, their first language, their culture and religion, and ethnicity both inside their schools and outside. The cultural and social experiences they undergo impact their progress in language acquisition as well as their academic and cognitive development. Languages have many teaching methods utilized over the years, some are considered obsolete while others have gained popularity and are widely used. There are some methods that offer quite useful insights but have a relatively small following. For East Asian language pedagogy, three primary views are held: the first is the structural view that sees language as an arrangement of different elements related structurally to shape meaning (e.g., grammar). The functional view views language as a medium to accomplish or express particular functions, like asking for something. Then there is the interactive view, which understands language as a tool for the maintenance and creation of social associations, centering on different patterns of acts, moves, interaction, and negotiation in conversational exchanges. East Asian language pedagogy courses are to be designed and taught with the principle that the essential part of what language learners have to attain is the ability to partake in the cultures of Korea, China, or Japan. Pedagogy aims to not only appreciate the processes and principles of learning Korean, Chinese, or Japanese languages, as they are used in their cultures, respectively, but to utilize that acquaintance to advance the learning process, environment, and curricula. For this purpose, the application of Communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based language teaching TBLT to teach East Asian languages will be analyzed and discussed to see their effectiveness and how they relate to teaching various aspects of studying grammar, writing, listening, and reading, by studying CLT and TBLT techniques and the requirements of learning together. The issues and problems that can arise as a result will also be reflected upon.

# CLT and TBLT as Communicative Alternatives

Communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based language teaching (TBLT) were presented as alternatives to conventional approaches to teaching L2 languages. Since then, CLT and TBLT have increased in acceptance and have been promoted as core components of the syllabi and curriculum in a lot of countries, including the Asia-Pacific region. In several researches, however, it has been observed by academics that TBLT or CLT are not implemented as envisioned, especially in Asian schoolrooms, and a number of constraints and challenges have been identified that are faced by teachers who implement these language pedagogies. For this purpose, various inventive approaches to employing CLT/TBLT in Asian classrooms have been undertaken more recently in order to adapt CLT/TBLT to work, keeping local factors and existing methods in consideration. When implementing CLT/TBLT, contextualization is very important in order to successfully adapt it to different settings (Butler, 2016).

# Principles of Communicative Language Teaching

CLT, or Communicative Language Teaching, is an educational approach for teaching foreign or second languages that stresses interaction to not only be the means but the ultimate aim of learning a new language. It is commonly termed as the “Communicative Approach”. CLT is considered to be an extension or an improvement of the Notional-Functional Syllabus and a response to the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM). A more contemporary of the CLT is Task-based language learning, which has also gained significant popularity. Early theories centered around situational language teaching and audio-lingual methods were highly criticized in the 1960s. The linguist Noam Chomsky, for example, criticized the structuralist view of language and showed a distinct difference between competence and performance (Cook, 2007). Learning, according to the communicative approach, must emphasize the importance of communication, tasks, and meaning. Communication involves activities where actual conversation is used to promote learning. Tasks are activities in which meaningful tasks are carried out to assist learning progression. Meaning involves teaching language in an authentic and meaningful way that boosts the learner’s ability to grasp meaning. CLT has many advantages, one of which is that it is a more holistic approach that does not only focus on a conventionally structured syllabus but considers the language’s communicative dimension, thereby providing motivation and vitality inside the classroom. It is a learner-centric approach because it basically profits from the interests and wants of the learner. CLT today can play a vital role in language education, where information technology-based communication has broken all barriers.

# Principles of Task-Based Language Teaching

Task-based language teaching (TBLT), or task-based instruction (TBI), is a form of CLT that teaches communication by letting students perform meaningful tasks using the target language. Common

tasks could include conducting an interview, visiting a doctor, or seeking assistance from customer service for some tasks. The task outcome or completion is a primary indicator of student evaluation, rather than focusing too much on the accurate forms of the prescribed language. To enhance student confidence and target language fluency, TBLT has grown to be especially popular. Many institutions have shifted to TBLT to try and make language learning in the classroom more communicative rather than based on pseudo-communication syllabi having no direct connection to practical or real-life situations (Betty Lou Leaver, 2004). In TBLT, students' creative and more spontaneous use of language is encouraged through problem-solving, and tasks and real-world activities are used for students to develop a focus. In this method, the conveyance of meaning is a core part, and the task outcome determines the student's assessment, making it a highly student-centered approach (Bilash, 2011). Because the nature of the tasks is familiar to the students, they tend to be more engaged and, therefore, more motivated to learn the language.

# Linguistic Requirements for Chinese Japanese and Korean

To incorporate aspects of TBLT and CLT in teaching East Asian languages, some of the basic requirements and nuances of their languages in terms of reading, writing, grammar, and listening must be understood. Learning how to read, listen, or write Chinese, Japanese, or Korean can either be done through bottom-up processes or top-down processes. Bottom-up processing occurs when language is understood by analyzing grammatical characteristics or individual meanings of the text's fundamental units, and from these, it moves towards attempts to comprehend the whole text. The top-down processing of language occurs when background information is used in order to predict the expected meaning of language that the learner is about to read or listen to. Instead of depending on the actual sounds or words (like in the bottom-up method), the learner develops expectations based on what they will read or hear and reject or confirm as they continue to read or listen. In language reading ability, the Schema of an individual or preceding knowledge about a text, topic, or experience also has a role to play. When teaching reading skills for East Asian languages, the technique principles used must be intrinsically motivating, and the choice of texts must balance readability and authenticity. The development of different reading strategies must be encouraged, including both bottom-up and top-down techniques. The SQ3R survey, question, read, recite, and review sequence is a good plan to follow. Pre-reading, during-reading, and after-reading phases must be planned, and the techniques used must build an assessment plan in them.

# Teaching Listening Comprehension

The teachers of Chinese, Japanese, or Korean when teaching listening comprehension should understand the linguistic nature of spoken language itself. How does spoken language involve cognitive processing, and how can we provide ways to help students become better listeners? A lack

of vocabulary, an irregular spelling system of the target L2, or phonological changes may make listening problematic for a student. A longer processing time or unfamiliarity with the topic, the type of chosen texts, errors, or cultural accessibility can also make it difficult. Therefore, the listening course must involve a needs analysis, in which a diagnostic testing inventory of learning styles and preferred strategies is conducted. The listening materials must be selected according to the level, relevance, and appropriateness, as well as a natural sound and speed geared towards accomplishing the specific strategy. The given tasks must be relatively simple and develop a high tolerance for ambiguity. Listeners use different cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies to enable understanding and effective learning. Metacognitive strategies are significant because they regulate, oversee, or direct the process of language learning. Cognitive strategies are used to apply a specific technique to a listening task or manipulate the learning material. The techniques listening learners use in order to collaborate with others, to lower anxiety, or to verify an understanding are part of the socio-affective strategies for listening pedagogy. The outcomes of decisions made during a listening task must be appraised by the students. The students can also be asked to assess the effectiveness of the strategies they use, through which self-evaluation and reflection can be encouraged by the teacher. To stimulate reflection and worthwhile evaluation, group discussions on the approach can be undertaken by different students (Vandergrift, 2004).

# Teaching Grammar Through Explicit and Implicit Methods

The pedagogy of teaching grammar to East Asian language learners can involve a few different approaches, such as the explicit and implicit presentation of forms, which include the deductive and inductive approaches. In the deductive approach to teaching grammar, the rule is presented before the language is formed based on the rule. On the other hand, the inductive approach lets the teacher give students a means to determine and notice the grammar rules themselves. Both approaches carry their own disadvantages and advantages. The deductive approach saves time for the teacher and is suitable for younger grammar learners, whereas those with basic knowledge of the language can benefit more from the inductive approach. As students develop a grip on the grammatical structure, they should be able to use the new language fluently and accurately, for which they have to enter the practice phase. The process moves from mechanical to meaningful to production, i.e., from a controlled practice to a lesser controlled practice and finally towards a free practice. This can be done by using techniques such as charts, objects, drawings, maps, dialogues, and written texts (Ellis, 1998).

# Teaching Second-Language Writing

The writing pedagogical approach has different characteristics in L2 writing than in L1 writing. For the learner, it is usually more difficult to organize generated materials, and often are less fluent and less

accurate. It is characterized by a distinct stylistic approach and seems simpler in structure, marked by less variety and word sophistication (Silva, 1993). In some aspects, adult L2 writing learners, like native-speaking children trying to acquire proficiency in the same writing system, are similar in that they both need effort and time to develop their writing skills. However, L2 learners' knowledge of some other literary system plays a role in how they learn a new system. The L2 learning process is also affected by different phonology. It has often been observed that Western readers, when, for example, learning Chinese, use the hanzi's (Chinese characters) phonetic element to learn new hanzi characters, but Japanese-origin learners Chinese do not take such an approach. English-speaking students, when learning Japanese, are more likely to prefer the use of the syllabic kana, which they can decode phonologically, rather than the L2 (morphemic) kanji (VJ Cook, 2005). Important points to consider when designing writing tasks are as follows: clearly mention the pedagogical purposes of the given task. It must reflect sound pedagogical practices that the students are able to complete successfully using the sub-skills they have learned. The tasks should have a meaningful learning result, in which the learners actually acquire something they can practically use in order to communicate in plausible L2 situations or to support another skill area (Abrams, 2010).

# Communicative Interaction and Meaningful Exchange

The CLT or TBLT communicative approach in pedagogy bases itself on the pretext that acquiring a new language skill is the best possible way to use meaningful exchanges via the target language. The accuracy of the meaning is more emphasized compared to the accuracy of grammar and pronunciation. To teach Chinese, Korean, or Japanese languages reading, listening, writing, and grammar using the communicative approach requires that the design of the lessons focus on teaching students what will be more meaningful and helpful to them in practical situations. A task that could occur in a day-to-day situation is the communicative goal that the teacher must ensure his learners accomplish. That task could occur in an everyday situation, such as debating accommodation preferences with a property broker or ordering food at a restaurant. The students are provided with the necessary tools in the lesson in order to carry out the task. The students, therefore, learn concepts that can be practiced even after they leave the classroom. The CLT method will, therefore, be taught by the teacher, who acts as an architect and designs activities and exercises in such a way that it provides sufficient opportunities for students to interpret and engage in real-life communication. The teacher plays the role of the architect, whereas the students perform the role of the workers performing the task. They are no longer passive recipients of the teacher's instruction but rather become active participants learning to apply the language themselves. CLT methods for teaching Asian languages do not just rely on letting students communicate, input also has a role because without it knowledge acquisition cannot transpire. The input in CLT is not simply classroom instruction; it is a more complex process that makes the structure or form of the message more accessible for the L2 learner while resembling real-life conversation as much as possible (JF Lee, 2003).

# Task Design and Learner-Centred Activities

Task-based activities TBLT are central to the communicative approach. These activities cover three principles. Firstly, they are centered around the L2 learner, secondly a meaningful information exchange is focused upon and thirdly, the completion of a communicate goal and the steps needed to perform them. The pedagogy is to design activities in a way that student-to-student interaction increases in order to complete a task. One way is to use the information gap method. In this way, learners are provided with complementary but different sets of information that must be used together in order to achieve the Task's outcome. The exchange of communication also has a meaningful purpose in the form of a follow-up activity. So, the activity does not just involve a communicative task or its outcome but also what can be achieved as a result of it. For example, the learner is informed of an activity that has to be completed by the end of the week. The activities designed will help achieve that outcome, and grammar, vocabulary, or cultural instructions are part of the designed activities that will help achieve the outcome. The amount of grammar or vocabulary taught is essential enough to serve the completion of the function. The student is not crammed with too much information that could distract her or him from the communicative task (Ballman, 2001).

# Cultural Competence in Language Instruction

Another important part of teaching Chinese, Japanese, and Korean through the communicative approach is the use of cultural training. During language training, many aspects of cultural references can be picked up, but they usually relate them to their own L1 cultural concepts. It is therefore important not only to introduce culture to the learners but also to demonstrate its role in communication. It involves teaching them an appreciation for Chinese, Korean, or Japanese culture and society and learning their rituals and customs in everyday life through different role-playing activities. This not only develops an interest in understanding cultures but also cultivates a desire to practice what they have learned.

# Teaching Reading in East Asian Languages

The basis of language learning is reading, which remains the basis of instruction. Reading is important in Asian languages and particularly important in learning the Chinese language because it uses different tones. The homophones are, therefore, only distinguishable by the Hanzi characters. In Chinese, the pronounced word in Pinyin /Xiang/ may represent □ (want), □ (looks), □ (box), □ (elephant), □ (direction), and many other forms. Chinese reading is not easy, but the individual components and symbols contained within the characters and their repetition can be taught to make it easier for the learner. Technology can also be incorporated into the classroom to facilitate reading, especially in the case of words like Xiang, which can actually take many forms and mean different things altogether.

# Purpose-Driven Reading and Listening

In CLT/TBLT forms, reading and listening can both be purpose-driven. Based on the reading, specific tasks or purposes can be assigned to the learners that will require them to interpret the material. To do this, some specific tasks or questions can be listed to let the students focus on important parts or listen from a specific point of view. Then, a pre-reading or a pre-listening phase is conducted to introduce important cultural information, grammar, or vocabulary while discussing some related topics regarding the text, according to the student's background knowledge. Pre-reading discussion increases comprehension substantially. Workshop-like activities can also be used, for example, literature circles, competition games for checking comprehension, or role-playing activities (Poole, 2015).

# Challenges and Limitations of CLT and TBLT

Though CLT or TBLT have numerous benefits, these approaches can often become challenging for some teachers or students from different cultures. Some common difficulties that may arise with this approach are, firstly, classroom management, where teachers sometimes fear losing control of, especially larger classes. Organizational skills to participate in group activities may be insufficient, or students' lower language proficiency may direct them into using the L1 language or a mixture of languages instead of trying to fulfill the task using the L2 Asian language alone. The teacher's own language skills are put under question, as a more holistic form of interaction is required rather than a formal learning progression from a conventional syllabus. Sometimes, perceptions about the teacher's role as a transmitter of knowledge rather than an architect or a facilitator may also influence results. Students may be used to conventional pen-and-paper exams instead of communicative-based task outcomes, or their parents may feel that their exam results are suffering as a result of the approach, which may also become a challenge.

# Conclusion on Communicative Language Pedagogy

In the 1970s, when CLT approaches were first developed and introduced, they were seen as a good alternative to previous conventional approaches and their shortcomings in fulfilling the needs of the modern world. These techniques were exported the world over but received mixed results. Today, the widespread view is that CLT and TBLT-based approaches need to be adapted to suit specific contexts and not just have fixed characteristics but rather be a flexible approach where communicative competence is developed through meaningful task-based learning experiences. Keeping this view under consideration, principles should be developed by teachers where they use communication-oriented language teaching to suit their particular contexts and requirements (Brandl, 2008). Integrating modern CLT/TBLT approaches in Chinese, Korean, and Japanese language pedagogy, when adapted to specific contexts and settings, can be a very useful tool in effective L2 language

learning.

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