Course: Teaching Methodology

"Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching"

Author: Diana Larsen-Freeman

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Resource Person: *Tazanfal Tehseem*

Department of English

University of Sargodha

Sargodha

Language Teaching: CLT

The Communicative Language Teaching
UNIT 9

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This is a British Approach that followed Oral Approach or Situational Language Teaching (simultaneous with Direct Method).

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The decline of SLT – similar to Direct Method – was due to Chomsky's influence.In Britain functional and communicative aspects gained prominence.

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While in the U.S. innateness and Generativity of language were important (under Chomsky's influence), in Britain communication was important

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Many methods claim to be communicative.

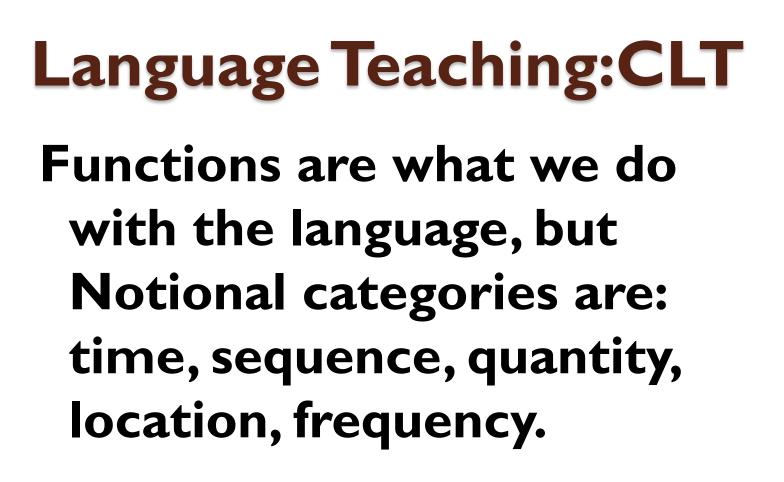**They also say that structure and vocabulary are important.**

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Communicative Approach:these are good but not enough. We can not get ready for communication if just vocabulary and structure are worked on.

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Communication includes functions. Functions are what we do with the language: arguing, persuading, promising, rejection or accepting an invitation, …

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All these functions happen inside a social context. Wilkin's Functional Notional Approach formed the basis of Communicative Approach.

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Functions are what we do with the language, but Notional categories are: time, sequence, quantity, location, frequency.

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Communicative Approach, Communicative Language Teaching, functional Approach and Notional Functional Approach have almost the same goals.
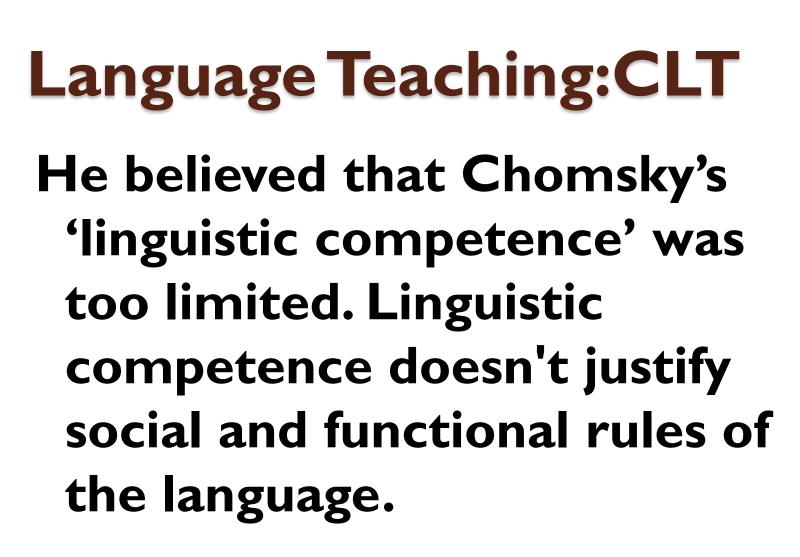
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Knowledge of forms, meanings and functions can be positive if they help the learner in the process of <u>meaning exchange</u> .

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There are two versions of Communicative Approach:

1. Weak Version (standard): the goal is to provide chances to use English for communication.

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This is called 'learning to use' or 'language for communication'.

2. Strong Version: language as communication – using language to learn.

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The linguistic theory behind Communicative Approach is Dell Hymes' communicative competence (1972).

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He believed that Chomsky's 'linguistic competence' was too limited. Linguistic competence doesn't justify social and functional rules of the language.

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Hymes' competence deals with both knowledge (*usage*) and *use*.

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Principles:

1. **Authentic language in real context:sports columns from a recent newspaper**

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2. Ability to figure out someone's intentions:communicative competence

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3.Language: a vehicle for communication, not the object of study (language for communication).

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4. One function in different linguistic forms (the goal is to convey meaning with a ny possible and suitable form).

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5. Language use at higher levels (supra sentential, text or discourse level).

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Note: Discourse or communication has three elements: 1. Real communication (information gap), 2. Task based activities, 3. Meaningfulness (authenticity).

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In discourse analysis: cohesion (physical connectedness) and coherence (connectedness in meaning)

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6. The importance of games as real communication (task based activities)

Note: Immediate feedback ensures the learner of the result.

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7. Opportunities for self expression

8. Errors as natural outcome of development of communication skills.

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9. Establishment of situations to promote communication (strip story).

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10. **Cooperation and team work as a chance to negotiate meaning.**

11. **Role play as an example of social context (language for communication)**

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12. Language forms with respect to social communicative norms (talking to your boss vs. talking to your colleague)

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13. The teacher as an advisor giving guidelines to groups

14. A choice about what to say (linguistic competence) and how to say (communicative one).

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15. Grammar and vocabulary from functions, situational context and roles.

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16. Listening to authentic language as homework.

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What is the goal of the teacher?

To develop communicative competence in the learners. Form, meaning and function are all critical.

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What are the roles of the teacher?

1. Facilitator of learning process, 2. Manager of classroom activities, 3. Advisor, 4. Co-communicator
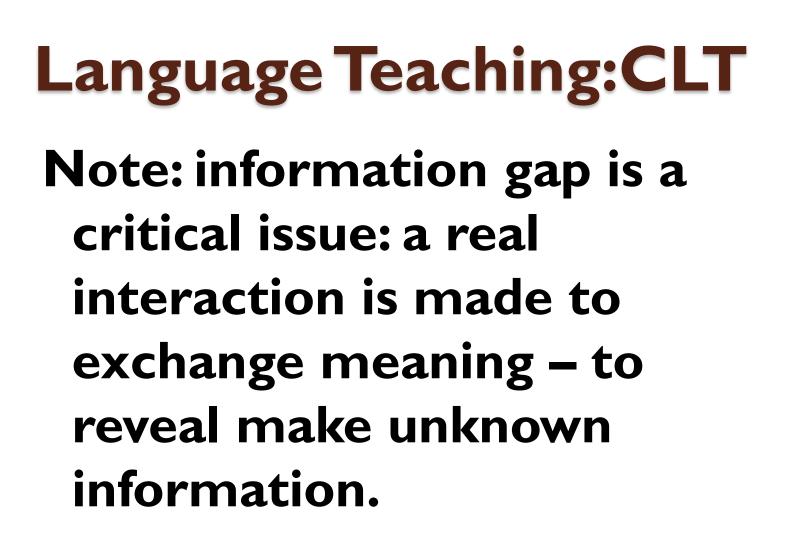
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What is the role of the student?

The learner is a communicator, actively engaged in transferring meaning and a responsible manager of the social activities.

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Characteristics of the process?

Usage and use are both important. Activities – role play, problem solving tasks, games – are communication oriented.

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Note: information gap is a critical issue: a real interaction is made to exchange meaning – to reveal make unknown information.

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The nature of student-teacher interaction?

The teacher is the initiator of activities. The interaction is basically student-student.
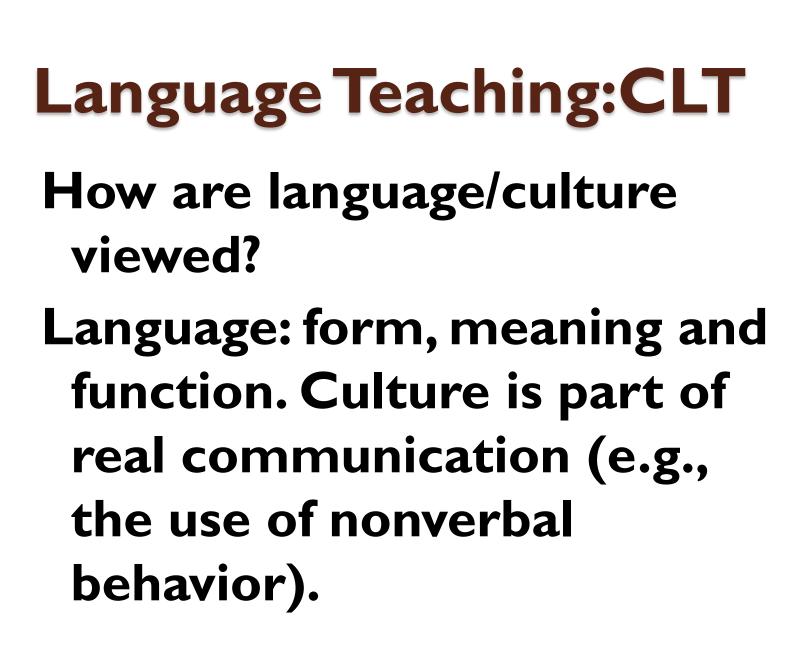
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How about the student's feelings?

The students are more motivated if they do something real and purposeful with the language.

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Note: Team work and cooperation also fosters the feeling of security. They integrate L2 with their personality.

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How are language/culture viewed?

Language: form, meaning and function. Culture is part of real communication (e.g., the use of nonverbal behavior).
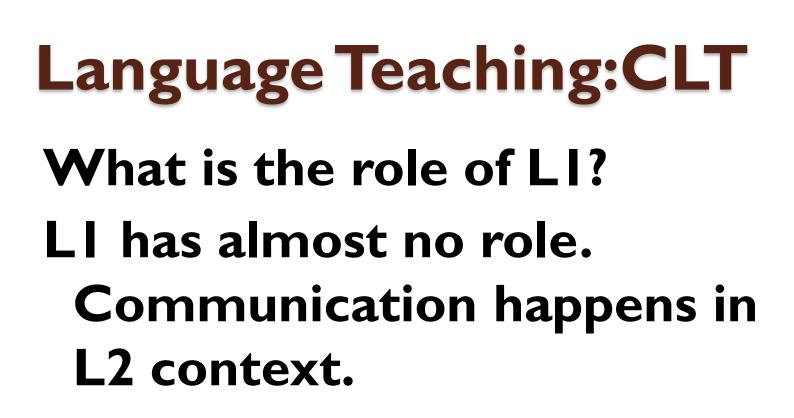
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The important areas of language?

Functions over forms. The syllabus is functional and a variety of form are introduced in each function.

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Note: at first easier functions are used to introduce easier forms. In general function determines form not the other way round.

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Note: the students learn about cohesion and coherence in real communication, not in an explicit way (by scrambling and unscrambling the text).

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What is the role of L1?

L1 has almost no role. Communication happens in L2 context.
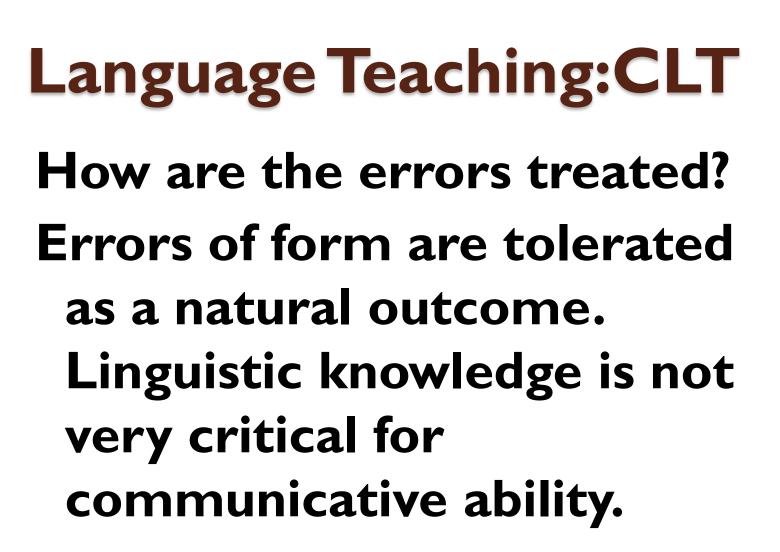
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How is evaluation accomplished?

Both accuracy and fluency are evaluated. The ideal learner is a the best communicator. The use of forms is not valuable by itself.

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Note: Evaluation here is informal and happens in the process of acting communicatively. But the test is a communicative test which deals with functions.

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Note: the tests are integrative such as writing a letter to a friend which is a function and conveys meaning. It is also a social activity.

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How are the errors treated?

Errors of form are tolerated as a natural outcome. Linguistic knowledge is not very critical for communicative ability.

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Techniques and materials:

1. **Authentic materials (real world)**

2, **scrambled sentences (cohesion and coherence)**

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3. **Language games (information gap, choice and feedback)**

4. **Picture strip story (information gap, team work, problem solving and negotiating meaning)**

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5. Role play (different social contexts lead to different roles and each role uses certain forms for each function).

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The goals of the teacher?

To accelerate the process of learning for communication. The learner's mental powers must be trapped by dessuggesting.

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The role of the teacher?

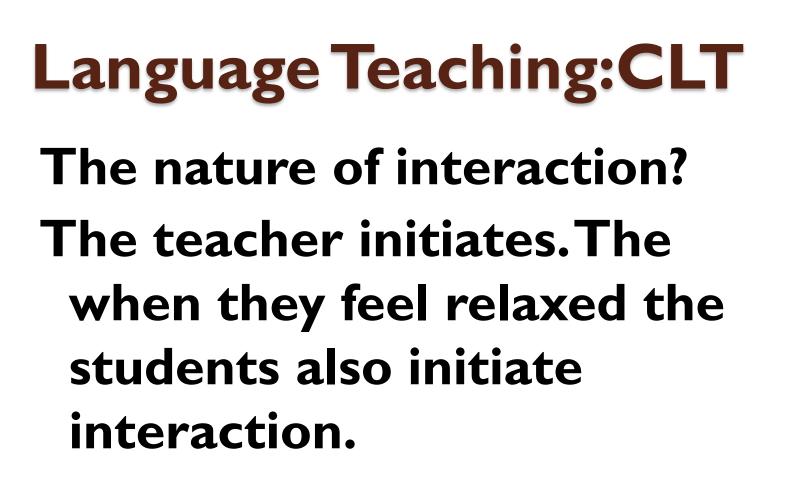**He is the authority. He should be trusted and respected (placebo effect).**

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Features of teaching/learning?

A. Students are comfortable. Furniture and decoration are important. Music accompanies.

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B. Posters displaying grammatical information are on the wall (peripheral learning). New names and biographies (new identities)
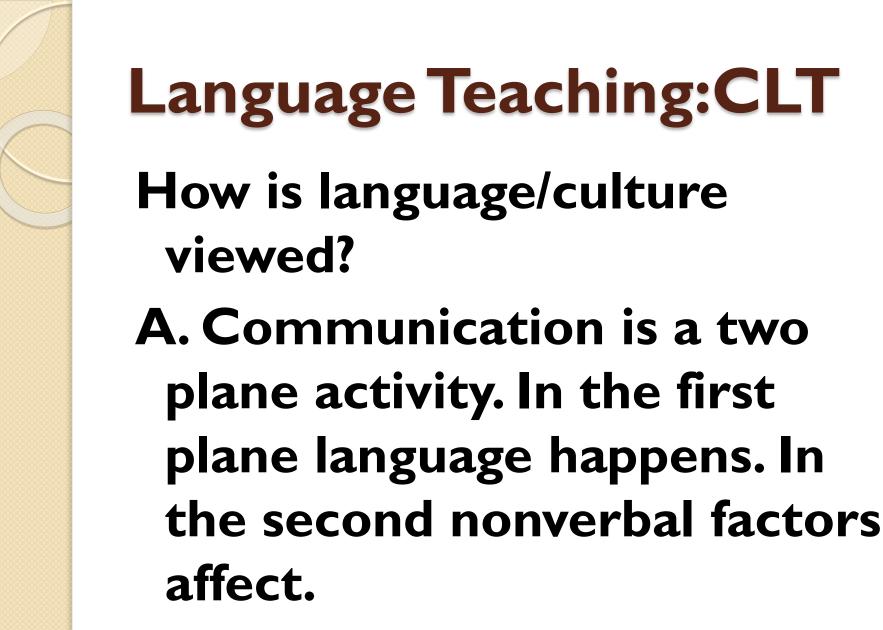
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C. lengthy dialogs in L2 with L1 translation and notes on vocabulary and grammar. In the first major phase (receptive) the teacher reads the dialog along the music.

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D. Now the whole brain (left and right) is involved (similar to TPR). The students also see he translation.

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In the second major phase (activation) the students engage in various activities: dramatization, games, songs, question and answer exercises.

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The nature of interaction?

The teacher initiates. The when they feel relaxed the students also initiate interaction.

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How are the feelings dealt with?

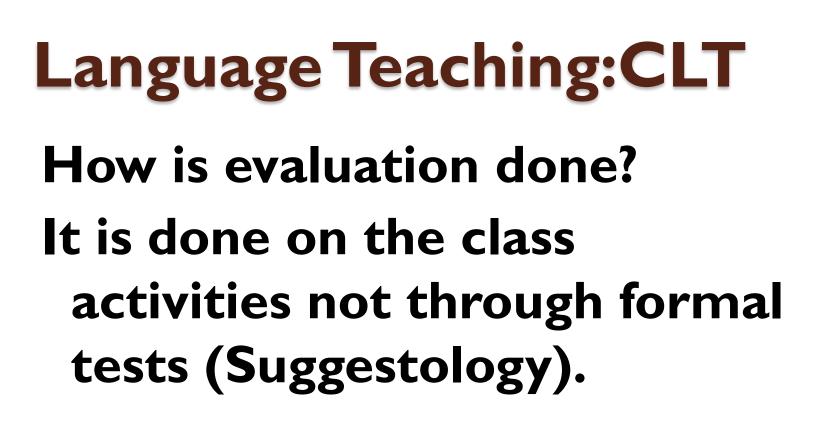**They have to be relaxed and confident. Learning comes naturally not by force (suggestion and desuggestion).**

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How is language/culture viewed?

A. Communication is a two plane activity. In the first plane language happens. In the second nonverbal factors affect.

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B. culture includes the life of L2 speakers and the fine arts.
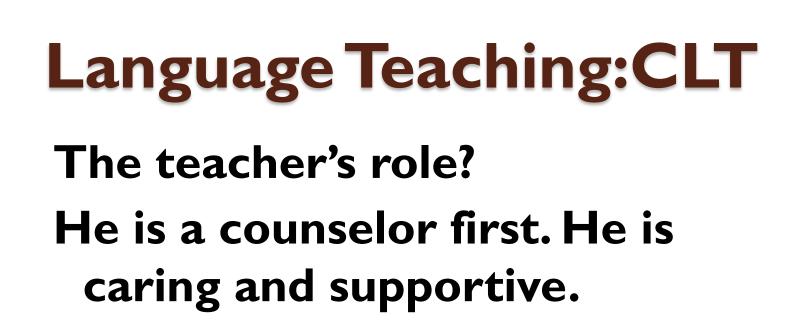
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What areas/skills are emphasized?

Vocabulary is emphasized. Grammar is dealt with explicitly (conscious attention) but minimally. Speaking is valued.

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The role of L1?

L1 makes the dialog clear and easy so the students get relaxed.

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How is evaluation done?

It is done on the class activities not through formal tests (Suggestology).

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How are the errors treated?

At the early stages no direct correction happens. Later they receive indirect correction on form.

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The goals of the teacher?

Natural communication, learning about their own learning and taking responsibility for it, acting nondefensively:as whole persons.
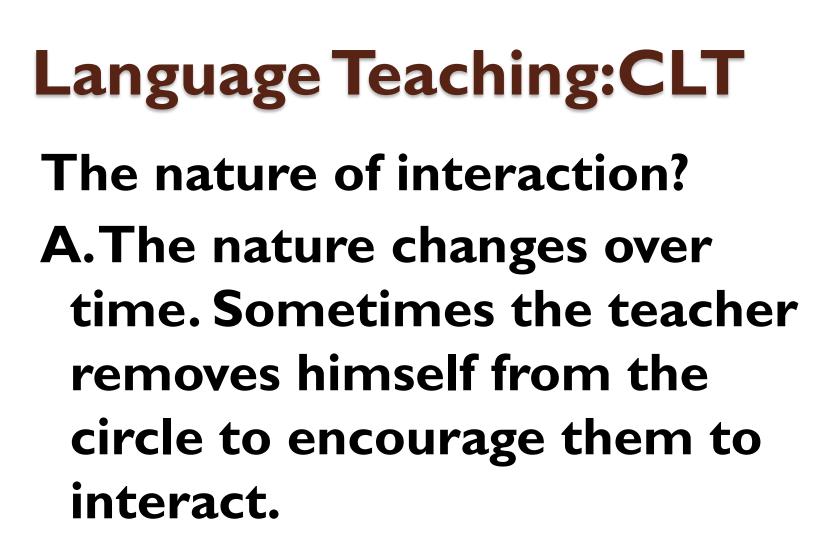
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The teacher's role?

He is a counselor first. He is caring and supportive.

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The student's role?

At first they are totally dependent like a client to a counselor. Five stages to move from dependence to independence.
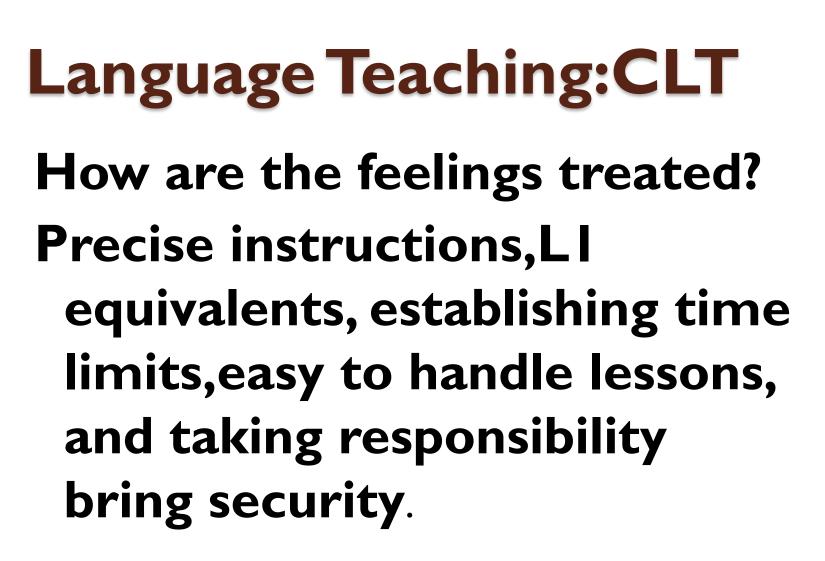
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Features of teaching and learning?

A. At first they speak in L1 and the teacher gives L2 translation in chunks.

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B. Later a transcript is made of the dialog and L1 words are written under that. Activities follow: grammar points, making new sentences, pronunciation.

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The nature of interaction?

A. The nature changes over time. Sometimes the teacher removes himself from the circle to encourage them to interact.

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B. Sometimes he gives L1 translation. At later time students take more responsibility. Both are decision makers (student-teacher centeredness).

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How are the feelings treated?

Precise instructions,L1 equivalents, establishing time limits,easy to handle lessons, and taking responsibility bring security.

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How is language/culture viewed?

Language is for communication. Culture is integrated with language.

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What areas are emphasized?

In early stages the students design the syllabus. The most important skills are understanding and speaking the language.

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What is the role of L1?

Security is initially enhanced by having L1 equivalents.

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How is evaluation accomplished?

There is no particular mode of evaluation. But teacher made integrative tests is more common than discrete point tests.

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How are the errors responded?

Without calling everyone's attention to error, the teacher corrects it indirectly.