# COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN AZERBAIJAN: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

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## Introduction

Fifteen years ago, when Azerbaijan was one of the former Soviet Union republics, foreign languages in general and the English language in particular did not enjoy much popularity (Isakhanly, 1995, Abdinov, 1996). We were virtually single-mindedly concentrated on mastering the Russian language which was "merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication" (Isakhanly 1995: 5). There was a decreased role not only of foreign languages but our native, Azeri language too. The need for English was very small and hence, the goal of communicative competence was distant to societal needs. Although, English was taught beginning with the fourth grade, it was taught with an aim to produce people with all-around developed personality rather than as a means of communication.

English has taken on a special significance since 1991, when Azerbaijan gained its independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The need for English has tremendously increased. This need stemmed primarily from American and British interests in the Caspian Oil. In addition, the world communication and education as well as international trade had their own impacts on the spread of English in the country.

At present, English occupies an important place in Azerbaijani education as the main foreign language (FL) which is taught in the majority of Azerbaijani educational institutions beginning at the primary school level. In addition, there are a number of private schools where English is the medium of instruction.

The broader our international relations are becoming, the more obvious is the lack of competent English language users. The first thing that educationalists start questioning is the effectiveness of

teaching methodology. But, if we look over the current methodology and communicative principles underlying it, we realize that what should be challenged first is whether the methodology is properly utilized. And if it is not, what are the reasons? These questions arouse my interest to investigate teaching techniques used by English language teachers of Azerbaijan University of Languages. More specifically, my concern was to find out if those techniques were underpinned by the methodological theory, and if there was a gap between the theory and the practice, what accounted for that gap.

## Literature Review

Communicative language teaching marked a new phase in second/foreign language teaching. For the first time the methodology to language teaching begins from what the language does and not from what it is. Richards & Rodgers (1989) believe that this the major argument supporting CLT.

In contrast to the grammar-based methodology in which primary emphasis is on mastering grammatical rules, the main concern of the communicative approach is how to use those grammatical rules to produce a meaningful language (Brumfit 1984, Allwright 1979, Savignon 1983, Candlin 1981). Put simply, communicative competence is on target.

This shift in a focus from form to function has brought a lot of changes in language classroom instruction. In the classroom where the set goal is to develop learners' abilities to monitor the language, opportunities are provided to engage students in using real communication. That is to say, communicative activities are promoted.

Unlike activities in traditional setting, communicative activities are meaningful, motivating and purposeful (Tailor 1987, Richards & Rodgers 1986, Nunan 1991, Harmer 1991). They incorporate many features of authentic communication, such as information gap, choice and feedback (Johnson & Morrow 1081). They enable learners to negotiate the meaning, to nominate a topic and to follow up (Pica

1986, Long 1987, Nunan 1987) as opposed to mechanical drills which allow learners little more than responding.

Group work and pair work are maintained to maximize students' involvement in practicing genuine communication as well as to increase student-talk time (Long & Porter1985, Pica & Daughty 1985, Long 1977, Ur 1996).

In communicative language classroom, the learner is more than a passive recipient: s/he is an active participant (Nunan 1989). The communicative teacher, in turn is an initiator of situations which engage learners in language production; a facilitator of the process of communication as well as its participant (Littlewood 1984, Larsen & Freeman1986, Richards & Rodgers 1986).

The new roles for teachers and students consequently create a new classroom atmosphere drastically distinguished from that existing in the traditional setting. CLT promotes a co-operative learning environment where teachers and learners support each other, accept each other, and work together (Savignong 1983). In this environment students have no fear of failure and they feel free to communicate. This also means that errors in communicative language classroom are treated differently. The traditional way of correcting learners' every single error immediately doesn't really let them understand their mistakes. Moreover, it surpresses learners' motivation to speak out. On the other hand, error correction in the communicative language instruction facilitates language acquisition by taking the form of clarifications and confirmations (Ellis 1988, Murphy 1986, Chaudron 1977, Hendricosn 1987).

The communicative approach primarily focuses on the main function that the language serves – communication. All the principles of CLT aim at the development of the communicative ability of the learners rather than the ability to construct sentences. Therefore, many educational contexts have introduced CLT partially or fully. However, not al the attempts to foster a communicative approach have been fruitful. A number of studies (Kennedy&Kennedy 1996, Karavas-Doukas 1995, Plamer 1993, Fullan&Stiegelbauer 1991, Stoller 1984, Marquee 1995, White 1993, Stephenson 1994, Nolasko&Arthur 1986, Li 1997) have highlighted the following principle problems in

implementing CLT: lack of proper teacher training, teachers traditional perceptions of the English language teaching, lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials as well as teaching equipment, grammar-based exams and syllabus, lack of teacher' contributions to designing an innovation, learners' resistance to new methodologies, teachers' low English proficiency, large classes, needs for the English language.

## The Study

The present research used a case study approach to inquire into the implementation of the communicative approach in Azerbaijan University of Languages.

## Background: ELT in Azerbaijan State University of Languages

This research is a case study centered around the Azerbaijan University of Languages earlier known as Institute of Foreign Languages. This university, which was established in 1973, is one of the significant pedagogical higher-education institutions, providing mainly pre-service teacher training for foreign language education (English, German, French, and Spanish), and interpreter/translator training. During the last few years, new departments such as international relationships, european studies, western studies, have also emerged.

On average 3068 students are enrolled in this university. Although the great majority of students are from Baku-capital city and different districts of Azerbaijan, there are also students with diverse cultural backgrounds such as east-European, European, and middle-eastern. About 1206 full-time and adjunct faculty body are employed there. Many of the lecturers teaching at this university are renowned scholars and experts in the field of language education, teacher education, linguistics, psychology and etc.

The academic year is divided into two semesters: the fall semester, which runs from the beginning of September to the middle of January, and the spring semester, which runs from the beginning of February till the beginning of July. Students attend the university six days a week, from Monday to Saturday.

## Teacher Training Course in English as A Foreign Language

As most training programs for teachers of English as a foreign language, the teacher training course in Azerbaijan University of Languages consists of four component parts: methodology/pedagogical, linguistic, literature and language improvement. Methodological component aims at developing the trainees' theoretical and practical awareness of different methods and techniques for teaching English. The linguistic component is directed at the developing students' theoretical knowledge on how the language operates. The literature component intends to increase learners' knowledge and appreciation of the 'classical' English literature. Finally, the language improvement component is geared towards the improving the general language proficiency of the trainees. How language instruction is delivered to trainees is the subject of this paper.

## Language Improvement in Teacher Training: General Aims and Guidelines, Teaching Materials

A point should be made here concerning the methodology literature, which has been used for the present research study. Today, Azerbaijan is a sovereign country that has already started elaborating its own education programs. However, due to the lack of sufficient expertise and knowledge in Western Education as well as lack of finances, Soviet-era materials are still in use. More specifically, Soviet time textbooks are still in use at the University of Languages, consequently the methodological principles underlying those textbooks are still applicable.

The main goal of the language improvement program as stated by Borodulina et al. (1982) is to develop students' ability to use the target language. This is intended to be achieved by developing students' linguistic, pragmatic and socio-linguistic competencies.

The methodology of teaching foreign languages, including English, at higher language education institutions as well as is declared as communicative and advocates the following main principles (Borodulina, M et al., 1982):

1. teaching for communicative purposes
2. integration of four language skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing)
3. promotion of meaningful and real-life activities
4. contextualised language learning
5. use of authentic materials
6. sequence of activities: from controlled to free
7. group and pair work strongly encouraged
8. creating an atmosphere in which students feel free to communicate
9. stress upon the cultural background of the target language

The syllabus is presented in terms of the main course book "Practical Course of English" (or "A coursbook of English language for universities and foreign language departments") comprised of four levels. Unlike the methodology emphasizing the need for building oral competence, the coursebook appears to be very traditional with little variety and few meaningful and communicative activities (Yadigar 1995). Much of the language in the coursebook, which is mainly based on texts from classical literatures, is archaic and hence, distant from real-life English. The ideological content of the textbook does not mirror such an important principle of methodology as motivation (ibid.).

Students receive four years of instruction in English language improvement. The following are the hours taught at the English classes that are limited to 10-12 students per group:

**Table 1: Timetable for English**
**(The teaching hours for English over the four years of instruction)**

| Years | Hours/week | Semester | |
|-------|------------|----------|----------|
|       |            | 1st | 2nd |
| 1 | 8 | 168 | 144 |
| 2 | 8 (10in the 2nd term) | 152 | 180 |
| 3 | 8 | 152 | 112 |
| 4 | 8 | 120 | 104 |

During the years students' progress is evaluated by spelling tests, dictation, and reproductions. There are also final examinations at the end of the academic year. The final exam is comprised of two parts: written (dictation and reproduction) and oral (exam papers). Exam papers are traditional in the way that they test students' declarative knowledge in non-authentic situation. The following four questions are compiled for the oral exam:

1.  read, retell and put questions to the unknown text
2.  retell the topic
3.  translate the sentences into English
4.  explain the given words, idioms and word phrases; use them in situations

During the last two years, a new testing system has been introduced starting from level 1. However, a new way of evaluation does not differ significantly from the previous one. The new means of testing is written and it consists of 5 parts. The first three sections of the test are on the studied grammar material. The other two sections are on vocabulary and readings that students have done during the semester.

To what extent does the theory conform to the classroom practice? Do teachers really aim at having their students communicatively competent? Only through classroom practice

evaluation can it be verified whether the methodological principles have been implemented or not.

I made a point of researching into a language program incorporated into EFL teacher training program on a couple of grounds. Firstly, it is an instance of language instruction that can be evaluated in order to determine the consistency of the classroom practice and the methodology. Secondly, prioritizing the research into language programs for pre-service EFL trainees will help enhance the language instruction widely. Today's trainees are perspective EFL teachers who will end up educating thousands of others and who will very unlikely instruct different from what they had been instructed.

**Design**

The evaluation methods included classroom observations, questionnaires and literature/documentation review.

In order to investigate the degree, to which features of Communicative Language Teaching were present in language classroom, six English language lessons were observed tape-recorded, transcribed and analyzed. Despite this method is very laborious and time-consuming, it is "very fine-grained and objective in nature" (Weir &Roberts 1996:151). Although the lessons were observed and notes were taken, the analysis is based on the transcripts. In order to limit the distortion, permission was given to observe and record only 45 minutes or the first half of each lesson. The classes observed and recorded were from all four levels. The teachers who taught in these classes were also among those who completed questionnaires.

Questionnaires were completed by 15 teachers of Azerbaijan State University of Languages whose experience in teaching English varied from 5 to 35 years. Although interviews are greatly favored for such features as "adaptability", "rich information", and "personal contact" (Weir & Roberts 1994), questionnaires have also a number of advantages. Questionnaires are good way for collecting information quickly (Bell 1993, Cohen&Manion 1989, Nunan 1992, Weir&Roberts 1994); they allow wider sampling (Bell 1993,

Weir&Roberts 1994); they give more time to respondents to think about the answers (Weir&roberts1994); they provide anonymity (Bell 1993, Cohen&Manion 1989, Weir&Roberts 1994). All the questions except one were close-ended for they are easier to respond to (Cohen&Manion 1989, Bell 1993, Blaxter, Hughes&Tight 1996, Merriam 1988, Weir&Roberts 1994). The questions were followed by comments, which were analyzed using qualitative methodology to insure that participants were given voice. The purpose of qualitative analysis was to promote understanding and bring to light participants' perspectives about ELT while numerical responses were analyzed using quantitative methodology in order to facilitate the making of comparisons.

**Limitation of the Study**

The case study provided me with sufficient data for my research. However, it presents some constraints in relation to the issues of reliability and validity. One of the main limitations was in terms of questionnaires. Firstly, questionnaires did not allow much flexibility. Secondly, having teachers answer close-ended questions appeared to have restricting effect on their responses. In addition, there were some instances of collusion between the respondents.

Another limitation was an "observer effect" (Weir&Roberts 1994). My presence in the class caused initial diffidence on behalf of teachers as well as learners. However, despite the above mentioned problems I feel that my data has enabled me to answer my research questions.

**Findings:**
**Methodology Practiced in the English Language Classroom**

The English language lesson is a routine, which is a result of teachers' overusing a textbook and thus repeatedly following its set structure and sequence: presentation of the new material, analysis of the new material and reinforcement of the new material, and its check-up.

The new material – speech patterns, words, and word combinations – is usually presented in a text which is mainly a fragment from classical literature, and sometimes a newspaper material. The best way to understand the language presented appeared to be reading and translating the text out loud. Students take it in turns, usually nominated by the teacher

**Extract1**
**New Language Presentation**

S1 (reads in English): Who is calling, he asked?
S2 (translates): Kto zoviot, sprosil on?
S1: Me, came the answer from the other side of the wall;"didn't you hear me?"
S2: Ia razdalsia golos po druguyu storonu steny; "ty ne slyshal?"
S1: I've been looking for you in the gooseberry garden, and I've slipped into the rainwater tank
S2: Ia iskal tebia v iazhevichnom sadu, I emh, emh
T: podskol'znuvshis'
S2: podskol'znuvshis' ia upala v
Ss: v reservuar, rezervuar
S2: rezervuar s vodoi
S1: Luckily there is no water in it, but sides are slippery and I can't get out
S2: K schast'iu zdes' net vody, no emh, emh, iz-za skol'zkikh sten ia ne mogu vybrat'sa
S1: Fetch the little ladder from under the cherry tree
S2: Prinesi lestnitsu emh, emh,
T: under the cherry tree, iz pod chereshnevogo dereva
S2: cherry tree, cherry tree

A good deal of the lesson is spent on text analysis presented through display questions (recalling for factual information from the text) and answers that are transformed into a teacher-student question-answer routine.

**Extract2**
**Text Analysis**

T: One of the main characters of the story is who?
S: Nicholas
T: Nicholas and the second is who?
S: Aunt
T: What kind of a woman was she?
S: She was a woman of ungovernable temper, of fierce likes and dislikes, imperious, immoral, coward, possessing no brains worth speaking of, and a primitive disposition o
T: Did Nicholas have mother?
S: father
T: He didn't have a mother. But who did he have?
S: father
T: He had a father. What did happen to Nicholas? What did he do?
S: He was in disgrace

Bilingual exercises are used extensively to consolidate the new vocabulary and grammar structures. Some of the bilingual exercises are carried out at the lesson but most of them are confined to home assignments that are later checked up in the classroom.

**Extract 3**
**Translation Activity**

T: Forty-four. Translation, yeah? Now, let's begin. (the teacher reads out the sentence in Russian)
S1: It is known that Mona Lisa was listening to the music while Leonard De Vinci drew her portrait.
T: yes. OK. Next. (she reads out the next sentence in Russian)
S2: it is difficult to discuss in the present time
T: No, "sudit'" is to judge, to judge upon
S2: to judge upon Reynolds' pictures, who is a famous English painter, because most of his pictures are cracked and faded.

T: are cracked and faded. Yes. Please, the next one.

Memorizing is also a part of new material consolidation. Students are expected to memorize the passages from the text or the whole text along with the new vocabulary introduced in it. Text retelling is accompanied by teacher checking students' ability to provide equivalents of the English words in the first language and vise versa. Memorizing is assigned to students as a homework either.

**Extract 4**
**Text Retelling and Vocabulary Check-Up**

T: So for today you were given the text about Gainsborough. Who wants to begin? Who wants to be first?
S1: 9raises her hand) Thomas Gainsborough, English portrait and landscape painter was born in Sudbury, Sheffolk. He soon, he soon, evinced a marked inclination for drawing and in 1740 his father sent him to London to study art. Emh, he, he, stayed in London for eight years, working under the rococo portrait-engraver Gravelot, he also become familiar with the Flemish tradition of xxxxx, which was highly praised by London art dealers at that time.
T: OK, that's enough. What is landscape?
S: peizhazh
T: to evince
S: proiavliat'
T: marked inclination
S: iarko vyraznennye sposobnosti
T: dealer
S: diler

Teachers' corrective behavior can be described as intervening and inhibiting, providing few chances for self-correction.

**Extract 5**
**Teacher's Error Correction while Student Is Retelling A Newspaper Article**

T: Ok, xxxx come please, with your current event, bring it to us. What is your article about?
S:xxxx the presidents' women (student pronounces /wuman/)
T: women /wimin/
S: women /wuman/
T: women /wimin/
S: women /wimin/. If the France was
T: What? If the France were, were
S: If the France were the United States, it would have lost its three presidents: Mitterand, Gisberg, Jacques Chirac xxxxxx sex /siks/ scandals
T: sex /seks/ scandals, sex/seks/ scandals
S: sex scandals /seks skandals/
T: even (is reading out the next word in the article to help students to remember)
S: even the president
T: You are not ready. Take your seat.

        The lesson is usually result-oriented and it is the result which is important not the activity which in actuality might be motivating and activating learners.

**Extract 6**
**Teacher constraining student dominated discussion**

T: Would you support people like young Burton?
S3: I don't approve of people like young Burton because such sort of people xxxxx are never of use and they are never perceived useful by other people.
S5: I don't agree with her opinion. Because there is another side of him – he earned money himself. He could have asked his family to

send him money but didn't. He preferred to earn by himself. Do you understand my point?

T: As far as I understand you're implying that card playing is a good side of him

S5: Yes, considering that he couldn't do anything else. Was there anything he could do?

T: He could swim

S5: No, he used to swim but he hasn't been swimming for a long time, has he?

T: Yes

S5: Exactly. That is why, the only thing he could was playing cards. Besides, he couldn't pay his hotel bill and nobody would help him. He was totally ruined. May be the society he belonged to was very bad, the bourgeois society. Don't you think so?

T: But he knew his society. He knew that this society consisted of such people, and that these people made the law. He was just weak willed

S5: He wasn't weak willed. He just didn't have any other choice. Nobody would have employed him. Could you say that someone was willing to help him, to give him a job, and he didn't accept it, he kept playing cards?

T: OK, this will go on and on. Next question, please.

The patterns observed in the classroom fully contradict with the foreign language teaching methodology. The analysis of tapescripts o lessons revealed that although the methodology was proclaimed as communicative, traditional, grammar-translation method of teaching English is still widely practiced by EFL teachers.


## Questionnaires with Teachers

Questionnaire data revealed the following major sources that impeded implementation of CLT in Azerbaijan University of Foreign Languages:
- teachers' educational beliefs
- ineffective teacher training

- exam-oriented educational context
- classroom management problems
- teaching materials
- physical constraints
- centralized system of education
- societal needs for the English language

<u>Teachers' educational beliefs</u>: Teachers themselves appear to have resisted the innovative principles, as they did not apparently change their own teaching theory. On the one hand, they unanimously profess that teaching for communication is the main objective; but on the other, they consider grammar as extremely valuable and as a condition to developing communicative skills of their students. Grammar is regarded as the main key for the language learning (58.3%), as well as a pre-requisite for understanding and being understandable (25%)

> Grammar is the main key for language learning without which it is difficult, even impossible mastering the language

> Grammar is a pre-requisite in order to communicate successfully. Without grammar people won't be able to use words they know.

The majority of instructors (83.3%) claim that teachers should be error-intolerant or else the learners will be constantly making mistakes

> It is necessary to correct learners' all mistakes if we want them to speak in a correct way. Moreover, it is important to correct after the error has occurred so that a learner could understand the source of error.

A small number of teachers (16.2%) kept regarding themselves as a complete authority who possessed all the knowledge, and who was in control of students.

However, non-change of teachers' language learning theories accounted partly for lack of proper training, partly for difficulties caused by educational context.

<u>Ineffective teacher training (83.3%)</u>: Teachers claimed that they persisted in traditional methodology because they did not understand CLT principles enough to use them.

> How could we teach in a communicative way if we were never encouraged to try it out. The only knowledge about the communicative approach was some basic theory.

Both pre-service and in-service training that teachers received were cursory and purely theoretical in treatment of the communicative language teaching. It is plausible that teachers were reluctant to teach according to something they did not understand well and were not encouraged to use.

Grammar-based exams (58.3%): Nevertheless, it is not always teachers who confronted the communicative approach. Virtually every teacher cited the exam-oriented educational context as one of the primary obstacles in applying CLT. Teachers felt compelled to concentrate on structural knowledge because that was what was going to be tested at the end.

> It is the content of the exams that determines the content of the English language lesson.

Despite the fact that teachers were open to the idea of interactive teaching, they considered discussions, group work, and pair work impractical in a given classroom reality, where the teacher was striving to make sure that the students would get good results.

Teaching materials (75%): Teachers reported that communicative skills were not dealt with adequately in the coursebook.

> The number of "communicative activities" (which are not truly communicative) in the textbook is insignificant in comparison with the number of grammar and vocabulary exercises.

They also claimed that "the content of the coursebook was not very encouraging in terms of practicing communication". Teachers experienced difficulties in using CLT with available teaching materials and with little expertise in designing communicative activities.

Management difficulties: Non-change of teachers' attitudes pertained to another factor hampering adoption of the communicative based

approach in Azerbaijan University of Languages – classroom management. Most of the teachers appeared to be open to the idea of group and pair work.

> Group and pair work is very useful because this way students do a lot of work by themselves: they exchange their knowledge of language by communicating to each other, they correct mistakes; they have more opportunities to speak than in the whole-class organization.

At the same time, they indicated a number of obstacles that prevented them from having students to work in groups and pairs: use of the mother tongue (50%), discipline (25%), distraction (12%).

> "Whenever I ask learners to work in groups or pairs, instead of using English they speak in their mother tongue. Moreover, they start chatting".

> "Students get very disorganized when I have them work in groups, particularly first and second year students. So I seldom do it".

Learner resistance (16.2%): Respondents also referred to learners as those who influenced their teaching behavior. Since they were accustomed to traditional teaching methods sometimes students didn't approve of the new techniques used by their teachers.

> I didn't use group and pair work because my students did not like it. They thought I asked them to work in-groups because I wanted to have rest or I was not prepared t the lesson.

Teachers felt hesitant to utilize they new methods when the students were not very supportive of those methods.

Physical constraints (33.3%): The pervasiveness of old teaching practices was also a result of the paucity of educational resources.

> Lack of visual aids and other necessary equipment impede not only communicative language teaching but also language teaching on the whole.

Shortage of audio-visual and other teaching equipment has been a serious barrier for a change.

Centralized system of education (16.2%): According to the majority of teachers, one of the major constraints in fostering CLT was an

overcentralized system of education which did not take into account the initiatives of ultimate-users of an innovation.

> The communicative approach was 'introduced' because it was an order from the 'above', and because The Ministry of Education had to make sure that the new approach existed in the methodology textbooks and that was all.

Everything was defined, planned, and governed by the "authorities". Teachers were indifferent towards the new ideas because they were just executives of orders coming from the 'above'. They did not have any motivation towards something they were not involved in and they did not feel they were in charge.

Societal needs for the English language (16.2%): An interesting comment was made by teachers with respect to needs for the English language and they way those needs affected dissemination of CLT.

> The fact that the whole idea of communicative language teaching was not approached seriously enough accounted for limited opportunities to use the English language while being a part of the USSR.

Teachers believed that there was not a high-priority need for English, consequently there was no high-priority need for communicative competence.

The analysis of teachers' questionnaires demonstrates that although, the official methodology of teaching English presupposes communicative language teaching, teachers possess limited knowledge of the principles of CLT. They seem to be favorably disposed to the idea of communicative instruction but they have little understanding of it. Therefore, they are unlikely to bring about changes. Almost all the teachers reckon lack of adequate teacher training as one of the main obstacles in implementing new techniques. They believe that the communicative based approach would not work well due to the grammar-centered exams, poor teaching materials and lack of the teaching equipment.

**Implications, Recommendations and Conclusions**

10-15 years ago English was not very relevant to the population's needs as people seldom used English in the Former Soviet Union in general, and in Azerbaijan in particular. Today, English language proficiency is virtually an everyday necessity in the country. Unfortunately, the number of people able to convert fluently in English is far from meeting the needs. The reason is the way the English language is taught – overemphasis on grammar and almost no focus on communication.

Curricular planners, administrators and teachers have come to realize that the current approach to teaching English is no longer appropriate for both students' and societal needs. They have become aware of the importance and the benefit of making the EFL lesson more communicative. Therefore, presently the Azerbaijani ELT context is undergoing new changes. However, as the present research manifests there are a number of problems complicating the transformation of the teaching methodology to a more communicative one. Some of the problems relate to teachers and their beliefs of ELT, others related to constraints caused by the educational context. Many of those problems will probably remain and hinder the changes that are taking place and going to take place if necessary measures are not taken to eliminate the sources of difficulties. Some recommendations for making the communicative approach achievable have been derived from the present research.

**Policy Makers**

- A feasibility study on the implementation of communicative language teaching in Azerbaijan should be elaborated, taking into consideration the whole educational culture of the country as well as the long-time traditional nature of English language teaching. Teachers should be actively involved in this research, taking into account the role of responsibility and motivation of the end-users of an innovation (White 1993, Marquee 1995).

- New methodologies for assessment in the English language should be developed. Function-oriented tests would be the best way to stop negative backwash effect of the existing exams on classroom methodology as well as to decentralize the interaction between students and the teacher (Millrood, 1995).
- Syllabus and curriculum should be upgraded and further developed, including the elaboration of teaching and learning materials. Teaching materials and syllabus should correspond to the curriculum plan and methodological principles underlying it (Yadigar 1995).
- Classrooms should be equipped with basic language learning technology such as cassette-recorders, VCR's , OHP's.

## Teachers

- Appropriate methodologies and programs for the training of teachers should be developed. A reasonable supply of Western literature on teaching English should be provided. Training programs should do away with the lecture style delivery of EFL methods courses. Instead, they should enable teachers to get a hands-on experience with new techniques through micro teachings with later peer-reflection and self-reflection on them and adaptation of experimented techniques for a particular coursebook and classroom situation (Millrood 1995, Richards&Lockhart 1994).

## Students

- Students should be adjusted to changes taking into consideration how long they have been taught in a traditional way. Students should understand the rational of new methods that they are going to be taught (Isakhanly 1995).

**Conclusion**

The way to introduce the communicative approach in Azerbaijan has been partially paved. There is a pressing need for the English language. Most of the teachers are willing to improve their teaching, and therefore, are open to novelties. The education system is slowly decentralizing which means that higher institutions have been given a measure of freedom to design their own curricula albeit within the national goals and guidelines. What we need is highly qualified specialists in CLT and innovation planners who will by truly interested in improving the ELT situation in Azerbaijan and will be able to accommodate all the conditions essential to ensure the success of the communicative approach.

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## **Х ц л а с я**

## АЗЯРБАЙЪАНДА КОММУНИКАТИВ ТЯДРИС: НЯЗЯРИЙЙЯДЯН ПРАКТИКАЙА

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Бу эцн инэилис дили ясас бейнялхалг диллярдян бири щесаб олунур. Дейвид Кристалын сюзляри иля десяк: ёИнэилис дили бир дцнйа дилидир вя тядриъян юз йерини мющкямляндиряряк, дцнйа дили оларагъ галаъагё. Бялкя дя еля буна эюрядир ки, сон 20 ил ярзиндя инэилис дилинин тядрисиндя бюйцк дяйишикликляр баш вермишдир; юзцнц доьрултмайан *яняняви* тядрис методу *коммуникатив* методла явяз едилмишдир. ёКоммуникативё сюзцнцн юзцндян айдын олур ки, бунун ясас тяркиб щиссяляриндян бири тялябялярин данышыг габилиййятини инкишаф етдирмякдир. Бу мягсядля, дярслярдя реал щяйатдан эютцрцлмцш мцхтялиф нцмунялярдян чалышма кими истифадя олунур. Коммуникатив инэилис дили дярсляриндя артыг юнямли йери граматика вя граматик ганунлар дейил, онларын реал цнсиййятдя истифадяси тутур. Коммуникатив мцяллим доминант дейил, йардымчы вя апарыъыдыр. Щямчинин коммуникатив тялябя пассив дейил, актив бир иштиракчыдыр. Буна эюря дя, груп чалышмалары коммуникатив дярсин айрылмаз щиссяси щесаб олунур. Бцтцн бу вя диэяр мцсбят ъящятляри нязяря алынараг, артыг коммуникатив метод дцнйанын бир нечя тящсил системляри тяряфиндян бяйянилиб вя гябул едилиб. Лакин бязи тящсил системляриндя бу йенилик уьурсузлугла нятиъялянди. Бунлардан бири дя Азярбайъан тящсил системи сайыла биляр.

Дцнйанын щяр йериндя олдуьу кими, Азярбайъанда да инэилис дили чох ишлядилир. 15 ил бундан яввяля гядяр, Азяпбайъанын ССРИ-нин тяркибиндя олдуьу вахтларда, бу юлкядя, инэилис дили дя дахил олмагла, хариъи дилляр популйар дейилди. О дюврдя рус дили демяк олар ки, бцтцн хариъи дилляри явяз едирди. Яфсуслар олсун ки, тякъя хариъи дилляр дейил, юз милли дилимиз олан Азярбайъан дили беля икинъи планда иди.

Лакин 1991-ъи илдя Совет Иттифагынын даьылмасы вя Азярбайъанын мцстягиллик газанмасыйла, инэилисдилли мцтяхяссисляря олан ещтийаъ щисс олунаъаг дяряъядя артды. Бу ещтийаъ илк олараг, Америка вя инэилис ширкятляринин Хязяр нефт мядянляриндя Азярбайъанла мцштяряк апардыьы ямялиййатларда мейдана чыхды. Буна ялавя олараг, глобаг мигйасда коммуникасийа, тящсил вя тиъарят ялагяляринин сцрятли инкишафы да инэилис дилинин Азярбайъанда йайылмасына эцълц тясир эюстярди. Щал-щазырда инэилис дили Азярбайъан тящсил системиндя хариъи дил олараг чох ваъиб йер тутур вя ибтидаи мяктяблярдян али тящсил оъагларына гядяр щяр йердя тядрис олунур. Бунунла йанашы, бир нечя юзял тящсил институтларында инэилис дили тядрис дили кими гябул едилиб.

Бахамайараг ки, инэилис дилиня олан ещтийаъ бюйцкдцр, бу дили истифадя едя биляnлярин сайы бу ещтийаъы гаршыламыр. Бунун ясас сябябини ися инэилис дилинин тядрисиндя ахтармаг лазымдыр. Азярбайъан Дилляр Университясиндя апарылан арашдырмаларын нятиъяляри эюстярди ки, нязяриййядя коммуникатив методлардан ня гядяр бящс олунса да, щягигятдя щяля дя кющня тяръцмя цсулу иля тядрис методу давам едир. Нювбяти арашдырмалар ися бу нязяриййя вя практика арасында олан фяргин сябяблярини цзя чыхарды: мцяллимлярин юз тядрис инанъларыны дяйишмяйя гаршы чыхмасы; щазырлыьын лазыми сявиййядя олмамасы; синфин идаря олунмасы проблеми; имтащана йюнялдилмиш тящсил системи; йетярли олмайан тядрис васитяляри; малиййя проблемляри; ъямиййятин инэилис дилиня олан ещтийаъы; мяркязляшдирилмиш тящсил системи. Щятта бу эцн дя Азярбайъанда инэилис дилинин тядрисиндя йухарыда садаланан факторларын чоху гцввядя галмагдадыр. Бу сящвлярин бир даща тякрарланмасы коммуникатив методу бир даща уьурсузлуьа дцчар едяъяк. Яэяр биз доьрудан да йениликляри тящсилин сявиййясини галдырмаг цчцн едирикся, онда бу мясяляляря даща ъидди йанашмалыйыг.