

University of Misan

College of Basic Education

Department of English



Exploring Community Language Learning

A Research Paper Submitted to the Council of the College of Basic Education, University of Misan in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in English

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2025/2026

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

أَقْرَأُ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ (1) خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ (2) أَقْرَأُ وَرَبُّكَ
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صدق الله العلي العظيم

العلق (1-5)

Dedication

We dedicate this research paper to our beloved parents, whose endless love, continuous encouragement, and countless sacrifices have been the cornerstone of our success. Their unwavering support and faith in us have served as a constant source of strength and motivation throughout our academic journey and remain an enduring inspiration in our lives.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, all praise and thanks are due to Allah for His guidance, mercy, and blessings that enabled the completion of this work. We would like to express our deepest gratitude and sincere appreciation to our supervisor, Inst. Dr. Mohammed A. Karam, for his invaluable guidance, continuous support, and constructive feedback throughout the course of this research. His insightful comments and encouragement have greatly contributed to shaping and improving this study.

Abstract

This study examines Community Language Learning (CLL) as a humanistic and learner-centered approach to language teaching, emphasizing its theoretical foundations and practical classroom applications. Grounded in Counseling-Learning theory and Carl Rogers' client-centered counseling, CLL conceptualizes language as a social and interpersonal process rather than a purely structural system. The study explores how language learning in CLL involves both cognitive and affective dimensions, highlighting the concept of whole-person learning proposed by Charles A. Curran. It further examines the interactional nature of language, where communication is viewed as a dynamic and reciprocal process shaped by relationships within a learning community. The psychological conditions necessary for effective learning, such as security, attention, reflection, and discrimination, are also discussed as essential components that facilitate meaningful language acquisition.

The study also analyzes the classroom implementation of CLL, focusing on its flexible objectives, emergent syllabus, and interactive learning activities. It highlights the roles of learners as active participants and the teacher as a supportive counselor or "knower," fostering a secure and collaborative learning environment. Activities such as translation, group work, reflection, and free conversation are examined as means of integrating linguistic development with emotional and social growth. The findings suggest that while CLL effectively promotes communicative competence, learner autonomy, and interpersonal development, it presents challenges in terms of assessment and structured language progression. Overall, the study underscores the value of CLL as a holistic approach that integrates language learning with personal development and social interaction.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	I
Abstract	II
Table of Contents	III
Introduction	IV
Chapter One: Theoretical Foundations of Community Language Learning	
1.1 Introductory Remarks	1
1.2 What is Community Language Learning?	1
1.3 Theory of Language	4
1.4 Theory of Learning	6
Chapter Two: Classroom Application of Community Language Learning	
2.1 Introductory Remarks	9
2.2 Objectives	9
2.3 Syllabus Design	11
2.4 Types of Learning and Teaching Activities	12
2.5 Learner Roles	14
2.6 Teacher Roles	15
2.7 Procedures	17
Conclusions	20
References	21

Introduction

Language teaching has evolved significantly over time, moving from traditional, structure-based methods toward more learner-centered and communicative approaches. Among these developments, Community Language Learning (CLL) has emerged as a distinctive method that emphasizes the humanistic dimension of education. Rooted in the principles of Carl Rogers' client-centered therapy, CLL reconceptualizes the language classroom as a supportive community in which learners' emotional and psychological needs are considered essential to the learning process. This shift reflects a broader recognition that effective language learning involves more than the acquisition of linguistic forms.

CLL is grounded in Counseling-Learning theory, developed by Charles A. Curran, which integrates insights from psychology into language pedagogy. Within this framework, the teacher assumes the role of a counselor or "knower," while learners are viewed as clients who gradually develop independence through guided interaction. Language is conceptualized not merely as a system of rules but as a social and interpersonal process that develops through meaningful communication. This perspective highlights the importance of interaction, collaboration, and emotional security in facilitating language acquisition.

This study aims to explore both the theoretical foundations and classroom applications of CLL. It examines its underlying views of language and learning, as well as its practical implementation in terms of objectives, syllabus design, classroom activities, and participant roles. By doing so, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of CLL as a holistic approach that integrates cognitive, affective, and social dimensions of language learning.

Chapter One

Theoretical Foundations of Community Language Learning

1.1 Introductory Remarks

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of Community Language Learning (CLL) as a humanistic approach to language teaching. It begins by defining CLL and explaining its foundations in Counseling-Learning theory and Rogerian counseling principles. The chapter then explores the underlying theory of language, highlighting the concept of language as a social process and its interactional nature. It further examines the theory of learning, emphasizing whole-person learning and the importance of affective factors in language acquisition. Finally, the chapter outlines the key principles and psychological conditions that support effective learning within the CLL framework.

1.2 What is Community Language Learning?

Community Language Learning (CLL) is the name of a method developed by Charles A. Curran and his associates. Curran was a specialist in counseling and a professor of psychology at Loyola University, Chicago. His application of psychological counseling techniques to learning is known as *Counseling-Learning*. CLL represents the use of Counseling-Learning theory in language teaching. As the name indicates, CLL derives its primary insights, and indeed its organizing rationale, from Rogerian counseling. Counseling, as understood by Rogerians, consists of one individual (the counselor) assuming, insofar as possible, the internal frame of reference of the client, perceiving the world as the client sees it, and communicating this empathetic understanding (Rogers, 1951). In simple terms, counseling involves one person providing advice, assistance, and support to

another who has a problem or is in need. CLL draws on this counseling metaphor to redefine the roles of the teacher (the counselor) and the learners (the clients) in the language classroom (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Within the language teaching tradition, CLL is sometimes cited as an example of a *humanistic approach*. The content of the language class is derived from topics learners wish to discuss, and the teacher translates these into an appropriate syllabus (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Connections can also be made between CLL procedures and bilingual education practices, particularly those involving language alternation or code-switching. Because of its humanistic orientation, the basic procedures of CLL can be seen as derived from the counselor–client relationship. For example, a group of learners sits in a circle while the teacher stands outside the circle. A student whispers a message in the native language (L1); the teacher translates it into the target language (L2); the student then repeats the message in L2 into an audio recorder. Students continue composing messages in the target language with the teacher’s assistance and later reflect on their feelings about the experience (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

We can compare the client–counselor relationship in psychological counseling with the learner–knower relationship in CLL:

1. Client and counselor agree to counseling (contract).
→ Learner and knower agree to language learning.
2. Client expresses a problem in the language of affect.
→ Learner presents a message in L1 to the knower.
3. Counselor listens attentively.
→ Knower listens while other learners overhear.

4. Counselor restates the message in cognitive terms.
→ Knower restates the message in L2.
5. Client evaluates the accuracy of the restatement.
→ Learner repeats the L2 message to the intended addressee.
6. Client reflects on the counseling session.
→ Learner replays (from recording or memory) and reflects on the classroom interaction.

The term *humanistic approach* is often associated with Moskowitz (1978). CLL techniques belong to a broader set of language teaching practices that emphasize the integration of learners' feelings, thoughts, and knowledge with language learning. Rather than promoting self-denial, these techniques aim at self-actualization and self-esteem. They help build rapport, cohesion, and a sense of care in the classroom, encouraging students to accept themselves and take pride in their identities while fostering a supportive learning environment.

In sum, humanistic techniques engage the whole person, including emotions (the affective domain), linguistic knowledge, and behavioral skills.

Another tradition linked to CLL is bilingual education, particularly the practice of *language alternation* (Mackey, 1972). In this approach, a lesson is presented first in the native language and then in the second language. Learners understand the L2 message through their prior understanding of the L1 version. In CLL, a learner presents a message in L1, which the knower translates into L2. The learner then repeats the message in L2 to another learner. Students are encouraged to attend to the "overhears" of others, enabling all group members to understand each other's intended meanings (La Forge, 1983).

Given the documented success of language alternation in bilingual education settings (e.g., Lim, 1968; Mackey, 1972), it is possible that this aspect of CLL contributes significantly to its effectiveness, perhaps more than is commonly acknowledged.

1.3 Theory of Language

Curran himself wrote little about his theory of language. His student La Forge (1983) attempted to elaborate more explicitly on this dimension of CLL theory, and his account provides the basis for understanding the language theory underlying the method. La Forge reviews linguistic theory as a prelude to presenting the CLL model of language. He appears to accept that language theory must begin, though not end, with criteria related to sound features, sentence structure, and abstract models of language. According to him, foreign language learners are required “*to apprehend the sound system, assign fundamental meanings, and construct a basic grammar of the foreign language.*” He further notes that “*after several months a small group of students was able to learn the basic sounds and grammatical patterns of German*” (La Forge, 1983, p. 47).

A theory of language based on “*basic sound and grammatical patterns*” does not seem to depart significantly from traditional structuralist views of language. However, proponents of CLL discuss extensively what they describe as an alternative perspective, referred to as *language as a social process*. La Forge (1983) distinguishes this view from language as mere communication, implicitly rejecting the traditional sender–message–receiver model derived from information theory, which conceptualizes communication as a one-way transfer of information.

Instead, the social-process model emphasizes that communication is more than the transmission of messages from speaker to listener. The speaker is simultaneously

both subject and object of the message. Communication, therefore, involves not only the transfer of information but also the formation of the speaking subject in relation to others. It is inherently interactive and incomplete without feedback from the recipient (La Forge, 1983).

The social-process view of language is further elaborated in terms of several interrelated dimensions, including the whole-person process, educational process, interpersonal process, developmental process, communicative process, and cultural process. Although not all of these fall strictly within the domain of language theory, they reflect the holistic orientation of CLL (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

La Forge also emphasizes the interactional nature of language, stating that “*language is people; language is persons in contact; language is persons in response*” (La Forge, 1983, p. 9). Within CLL, interaction occurs in two main forms: learner–learner interaction and learner–knower interaction. Learner–learner interaction is typically unpredictable and often involves the exchange of affective content, such as motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. As the group develops into a cohesive community, these interactions become increasingly intimate, and learners are motivated to keep pace with their peers to avoid social isolation (Tranel, 1968).

Learner–knower interaction, on the other hand, progresses through five stages: dependent, self-assertive, resentful and indignant, tolerant, and independent. These stages reflect not only the development of linguistic competence but also the resolution of affective conflicts (La Forge, 1983). In this sense, the evolution of interaction mirrors broader patterns of human relationships, including interactions between equals (symmetrical) and unequals (asymmetrical) (Munby, 1978).

1.4 Theory of Learning

Curran's counseling experience led him to conclude that counseling techniques could be applied to learning in general, what he termed *Counseling-Learning*, and to language teaching in particular, resulting in Community Language Learning (CLL). The CLL view of learning is contrasted with two other types of learning that Curran considered widespread yet undesirable. The first is a traditional view, long dominant in Western culture, in which learning is seen primarily as a cognitive process focused on intellectual and factual knowledge, often neglecting personal engagement and emotional involvement (Curran, 1972). The second is the behavioral view, which Curran characterizes as "*animal learning*," where learners are passive and their involvement is minimal (Curran, 1976, p. 84).

In contrast, CLL promotes a holistic approach to language learning, emphasizing that genuine human learning is both cognitive and affective. This is referred to as *whole-person learning*. Such learning occurs within a communicative context in which teachers and learners engage in meaningful interaction, allowing both to experience a sense of personal wholeness (Curran, 1972).

Central to this approach is the development of the learner-teacher relationship, which progresses through five stages, analogous to the ontogenetic development of a child. In the first stage, "birth," learners experience feelings of security and belonging. In the second stage, as their abilities develop, learners begin to gain a degree of independence. By the third stage, learners are able to speak independently and may assert their identity, sometimes resisting unsolicited guidance. In the fourth stage, learners become sufficiently secure to accept correction, and in the final stage, they focus on refining style and achieving linguistic appropriateness. At this point, learners can assume the role of the

“knower” for others. Language learning is thus conceptualized as a process of rebirth and personal development, involving the formation of a new linguistic identity.

Accordingly, learning is viewed as a unified personal and social experience, rather than an isolated or competitive activity (Curran, 1972, pp. 11–12). A key concept in this framework is *consensual validation* (or *convalidation*), which refers to the development of mutual warmth, understanding, and positive regard between teacher and learner. This relationship is considered essential for successful learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Curran further outlines the psychological conditions necessary for effective learning through the acronym *SARD* (Curran, 1976):

- **Security (S):** Learners must feel safe and supported to engage fully in the learning process.
- **Attention and Aggression (A):** Sustained attention reflects learner involvement, while “aggression” refers to the learner’s active use of new knowledge to assert competence.
- **Retention and Reflection (R):** Learning is internalized when the whole person is engaged. Reflection provides learners with an opportunity to evaluate their progress and reassess goals (La Forge, 1983).
- **Discrimination (D):** Learners organize and differentiate acquired knowledge, enabling effective communication beyond the classroom (La Forge, 1983).

These aspects of Curran’s learning philosophy focus less on psycholinguistic or cognitive mechanisms and more on the personal and interpersonal conditions that

facilitate language acquisition. Consequently, CLL stands in contrast to approaches grounded primarily in linguistic or psycholinguistic theory, such as Audiolingualism or the Natural Approach.

Chapter Two

Classroom Application of Community Language Learning

2.1 Introductory Remarks

This chapter explores the classroom application of CLL, beginning with its broad and implicit objectives that emphasize communicative competence, affective development, and learner autonomy. It then explains the flexible and emergent nature of the CLL syllabus, which is shaped by learners' communicative needs rather than predetermined structures. The chapter also outlines various learning and teaching activities that integrate cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions of language learning. In addition, it discusses the evolving roles of learners as active community members and teachers as supportive counselors or “knowers.” Finally, it describes typical classroom procedures, highlighting the adaptive and interaction-driven nature of CLL in practice..

2.2 Objectives

In CLL, linguistic or communicative competence is primarily conceptualized in social and interpersonal terms. As a result, explicit linguistic, grammatical, or communicative objectives are not clearly defined in the literature. Unlike more structurally oriented methods, CLL does not specify predetermined language outcomes, graded syllabi, or measurable performance targets. Instead, it emphasizes the development of learners' ability to communicate meaningfully within a supportive social context (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Most of the available literature on CLL describes its implementation in introductory foreign language conversation courses, where the primary goal is to facilitate spontaneous and meaningful communication. The assumption underlying

this approach is that language proficiency develops naturally through interaction, particularly when learners are provided with emotional support and opportunities for self-expression. In this sense, the objectives of CLL are largely implicit, focusing on the gradual development of communicative ability rather than the mastery of discrete linguistic items (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

Furthermore, CLL aims to foster what Curran (1972) refers to as *whole-person learning*, in which both cognitive and affective dimensions of the learner are engaged. Therefore, objectives extend beyond language acquisition to include the development of self-confidence, reduced anxiety, and increased learner autonomy. The method seeks to create a classroom environment in which learners feel secure enough to take risks and actively participate in communication, which is considered essential for effective language learning (Curran, 1976).

Another implicit objective of CLL is the attainment of a high level of proficiency in the target language, often approaching near-native competence. This is based on the assumption that the teacher, acting as a “knower,” can gradually transfer linguistic knowledge and communicative skills to learners through guided interaction and translation techniques. However, this goal is not operationalized in terms of specific benchmarks or assessment criteria, reflecting the method’s flexible and learner-centered orientation (La Forge, 1983).

In addition, CLL promotes social and interpersonal development as key educational outcomes. Learners are encouraged to build meaningful relationships with both the teacher and their peers, fostering a sense of community that enhances motivation and engagement. In this context, successful learning is not measured solely by linguistic achievement but also by the learner’s ability to participate confidently and cooperatively in communicative interactions (Moskowitz, 1978).

In summary, the objectives of CLL are broad, implicit, and holistic, encompassing not only communicative competence but also affective growth, interpersonal development, and learner autonomy. This distinguishes CLL from more traditional methods that prioritize clearly defined linguistic outcomes and standardized measures of achievement.

2.3 Syllabus

CLL is most commonly associated with the development of oral proficiency. However, with appropriate modifications, it can also be applied to other language skills, including writing, as demonstrated by Tranel (1968). Unlike traditional language teaching methods, CLL does not rely on a predetermined or conventional syllabus that specifies grammatical structures, vocabulary items, or language functions in a fixed sequence. Instead, it adopts a highly flexible and learner-centered approach to syllabus design (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In CLL, course progression is primarily *topic-based* and emerges organically from learners' communicative needs. Learners are encouraged to nominate topics they wish to discuss and to express messages they want to communicate to others in the group. The teacher, acting as a “knower,” facilitates this process by translating learners' intentions from the native language (L1) into the target language (L2), ensuring that the output is appropriate to the learners' proficiency level (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). In this way, language content is not imposed externally but co-constructed through interaction.

Although CLL does not explicitly define a syllabus structure, experienced teachers appear to operate with an *implicit syllabus*. That is, they selectively shape and refine learners' contributions in ways that align with pedagogical goals and learners' developmental readiness. Through this process, the teacher filters

learners' intended meanings and reformulates them into linguistically appropriate target-language utterances. Consequently, instruction remains responsive to learners' needs while still maintaining a degree of pedagogical coherence (La Forge, 1983). Furthermore, specific linguistic elements, such as grammatical patterns, lexical items, and discourse structures, may be isolated for focused analysis when they arise naturally during interaction. These elements are not pre-selected but are addressed retrospectively, based on their relevance to learners' communicative attempts. As a result, a CLL syllabus can be described as *retrospective* and *emergent*, rather than pre-planned and linear (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Each CLL course, therefore, develops its own unique syllabus, shaped by the dynamic interplay between learners' communicative intentions and the teacher's linguistic mediation. What is learned in one class may differ significantly from another, reflecting differences in learners' interests, proficiency levels, and group dynamics. This individualized and adaptive nature of the syllabus highlights the fundamentally humanistic and interaction-driven philosophy underlying CLL (Moskowitz, 1978).

2.4 Types of Learning and Teaching Activities

CLL integrates both innovative, humanistic learning tasks and more conventional classroom activities, providing learners with opportunities to develop linguistic competence while engaging affectively and socially. The activities emphasize interaction, reflection, and learner autonomy, and can be summarized as follows (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; La Forge, 1983):

- **Translation:** Learners sit in a small circle, and one student whispers a message or meaning they wish to convey. The teacher, acting as a “knower,” translates the message into the target language (L2), possibly providing interpretive support, and the learner repeats the translation. This activity helps learners internalize the target language through immediate modeling and practice (Curran, 1972).
- **Group Work:** Learners engage in collaborative tasks such as small-group discussions, preparing dialogues, summarizing topics for presentation to another group, or constructing a story to present to the teacher and the class. Group work encourages peer interaction, motivation, and social integration within the learning community (Moskowitz, 1978).
- **Recording:** Students record their conversations or rehearsed messages in the target language. Recordings provide opportunities for self-assessment, repetition, and the development of oral fluency (La Forge, 1983).
- **Transcription:** Learners transcribe recorded conversations or oral messages. This process allows them to focus on linguistic forms, including vocabulary, sentence structure, and grammar, and serves as a bridge between oral and written proficiency (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).
- **Analysis:** Students analyze transcriptions to examine particular lexical items or grammatical patterns. This reflective analysis is typically retrospective, emerging from learners’ authentic communication rather than predetermined exercises, and supports the development of conscious linguistic awareness (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).
- **Reflection and Observation:** Learners reflect on their classroom experiences, either individually, in pairs, or as a whole group. Reflections often include emotional responses, feelings about group dynamics, reactions to silence, and personal strategies for communication. This activity

addresses the affective dimension of learning, which is central to CLL's humanistic orientation (Curran, 1976).

- **Listening:** Students listen to teacher-led monologues that incorporate content they have produced or overheard during class interactions. Listening tasks enhance comprehension skills and reinforce linguistic patterns in context (Tranel, 1968).
- **Free Conversation:** Learners engage in spontaneous conversation with peers or the teacher, discussing not only the content learned but also their experiences and feelings about learning. Free conversation provides authentic practice and fosters confidence, social cohesion, and meaningful communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Through these diverse activities, CLL emphasizes the integration of cognitive, affective, and social dimensions of language learning. Each task is designed not only to develop linguistic competence but also to strengthen interpersonal relationships, foster self-confidence, and promote learner autonomy within a supportive classroom community.

2.5 Learner Roles

In CLL, learners become active members of a classroom community that includes both peers and the teacher, and learning occurs primarily through interaction within this community. Learning is conceived not as an individual achievement but as a collaborative process, in which learners develop language skills while supporting and engaging with one another (La Forge, 1983). Learners are expected to listen attentively to the “knower,” freely express meanings they wish to communicate, repeat target-language utterances confidently, assist fellow learners, and share their inner feelings, frustrations, joys, and successes. Over time, learners

may also assume the role of counselor for other learners, providing guidance and feedback (Curran, 1972).

Typically, CLL learners are organized in circles of six to twelve, with the number of knowers varying from one per group to one per student. In larger classes, special arrangements, such as pairing learners in facing lines, may be implemented to maintain interaction and engagement (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Learner roles in CLL correspond to the five stages of language learning described by La Forge, in which each new role develops organically from the preceding stage. These role changes are not automatic but emerge as learners resolve affective crises associated with each stage: *“When faced with a new cognitive task, the learner must solve an affective crisis. With the solution of the five affective crises, one for each CLL stage, the student progresses from a lower to a higher stage of development”* (La Forge, 1983, p. 44).

Language learning in CLL is thus a whole-person process, encompassing not only cognitive tasks but also the resolution of affective conflicts and the internalization of values associated with learning (La Forge, 1983). The developmental progression of the learner is often compared to the stages of human growth, with language acquisition reflecting both cognitive and emotional maturation.

2.5 Teacher Roles

At its deepest level, the teacher’s role in CLL derives directly from the functions of the counselor in Rogerian psychological counseling (Rogers, 1951). In counseling, clients communicate personal difficulties, often using emotional language, while the counselor responds calmly, nonjudgmentally, and supportively, helping the client understand the problem by applying order and analysis. The counselor’s task is not to paraphrase each element of the client’s statement, but to capture the

essence of the concern in a way that the client affirms: “*Yes, that’s exactly what I meant*” (Curran, 1976, p. 26). In CLL, Curran adapted this model to language learning, where the teacher functions as a counselor, addressing both linguistic and psychological needs of learners. The method even allows for explicit counseling, recognizing that personal learning conflicts, such as anger, anxiety, or frustration, can indicate deep personal investment in learning and require the teacher’s empathetic sensitivity (Rardin, in Curran, 1976).

Specific teacher roles in CLL are aligned with the five developmental stages of learners identified by La Forge (1983). In the early stages, the teacher provides support, offering target-language translations and modeling language for imitation. As learners gain independence, interaction becomes increasingly learner-initiated, with the teacher monitoring utterances and intervening only when requested. In later stages, the teacher may correct errors, offer idiomatic expressions, and provide guidance on grammatical nuances. Initially, the teacher’s role resembles that of a nurturing parent, gradually shifting as learners “grow” in ability, eventually positioning the teacher as a responsive partner whose sense of self-worth derives from learners’ requests for assistance (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

A continuing and central responsibility of the teacher in CLL is to provide a safe and supportive learning environment. Learners who feel secure can focus on communication and language acquisition rather than defensive behaviors. Curran (1976, p. 6) emphasizes that “*as whole persons, we seem to learn best in an atmosphere of personal security. Feeling secure, we are freed to approach the learning situation with the attitude of willing openness. Both the learner’s and the knower’s level of security determine the psychological tone of the entire learning experience.*” Among nontraditional language teaching methods, CLL places

exceptional importance on the creation and maintenance of this secure environment.

Two important caveats concerning security are noted in the literature. First, security is culturally relative: what fosters security in one cultural context may cause anxiety in another. La Forge (1983, p. 66) illustrates this with differences in personal introduction practices, which must be carefully adapted to provide culturally appropriate security for learners. Second, overly secure environments may be counterproductive; some degree of challenge or uncertainty is necessary for learning to occur. As La Forge (1983, p. 65) observes, “the security of the students is never absolute: otherwise no learning would occur.” The literature, however, does not specify the optimal balance of security and challenge for effective language learning in CLL.

2.6 Procedures

Since each CLL course represents a unique learning experience, providing a precise description of typical classroom procedures is inherently challenging. Stevick (1976) distinguishes between “classical” CLL, based directly on Curran’s original model, and personal interpretations of it, as discussed by various advocates such as La Forge (1983). The following outline aims to capture some of the common activities observed in CLL classes.

A typical CLL class begins with learners seated in a circle, facing one another, with one or more knowers (teachers) positioned to facilitate interaction. Initial periods of silence are common, allowing learners to orient themselves to the class routines and to decide what to communicate (La Forge, 1983). Often, the silence becomes uncomfortable enough for a learner to volunteer a comment, which the knower may then use to initiate discussion or stimulate further language

interaction. Learners are encouraged to direct questions to one another or to the knower, and the ensuing questions and responses may be recorded for later review, promoting both linguistic and reflective learning.

Classroom activities typically include short pair conversations, organized in facing lines for brief, focused exchanges, analogous to the practice bouts in judo (La Forge, 1983). Learners may then work in small groups to discuss topics chosen either by the learners or by the teacher. Group summaries are often presented to another group, which attempts to paraphrase or repeat the original presentation, fostering collaborative learning and reinforcing comprehension.

In more advanced classes, learners may engage in paper drama, a project in which groups create and perform stories. Students prepare target-language statements with teacher guidance, create visual aids such as large picture cards, and incorporate additional elements such as music, puppets, or props to enhance the presentation. These activities combine creativity with language practice, providing learners with opportunities for meaningful and contextualized use of the target language (La Forge, 1983).

Reflection is an integral part of every CLL class. Learners are encouraged to reflect individually, in pairs, or as a whole class on their experiences, the language used, interactions with peers and the knower, and their progress and frustrations. Reflection often connects to the concept of “contracts”—agreements between learners and the knower specifying goals and expectations within the course. Such reflective practice helps consolidate both linguistic and affective learning outcomes (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Stevick (1980) provides a protocol of a first-day CLL class that illustrates the sequence of activities:

1. Informal greetings and self-introductions.
2. Teacher presentation of course goals and guidelines.
3. A circle is formed so that all learners have visual contact.
4. Initiation of conversation by one learner with another.
5. Instructor selects sentences from recorded interactions to highlight grammar, spelling, and usage on the board.
6. Students ask questions about items on the board.
7. Learners copy sentences with annotations on meaning and usage, creating a personalized “textbook” for home study.

These activities exemplify the central procedures emphasized in the literature on CLL, though additional practices may emerge spontaneously from the dynamic interactions between learners and knowers within the classroom context.

Conclusions

CLL emphasizes a holistic and humanistic approach to language education. It highlights the interconnection between affective and cognitive development. From the analysis of its principles and classroom practices, several key points can be drawn:

1. CLL places the learner at the center of the educational process to allow students to shape classroom content according to their personal interests and communicative needs.
2. The teacher is required to be highly proficient in both the first and target languages, culturally sensitive, psychologically aware, and skilled in nondirective facilitation, often requiring specialized training.
3. The method emphasizes whole-person learning by encouraging learners to express emotions, reflect on experiences, and engage in personal growth alongside language acquisition.
4. The teacher's role mirrors that of a Rogerian counselor to create a supportive and secure environment for learning, though questions remain about the universal applicability of this metaphor.
5. CLL does not rely on a fixed syllabus; instead, course content emerges dynamically from learner contributions, fostering authentic communication while presenting challenges for defining objectives and assessing progress.
6. While CLL promotes fluency and interpersonal development, it may provide limited exposure to specialized vocabulary and detailed grammatical structures, making it less suitable for highly structured or technical language instruction contexts.

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