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Empowering Communication: A Conceptual Exploration of Communicative Language Teaching

Nur Nadiah Basher^{1,*}, Lim Jun Hong¹, Santhny Chandrasegaran¹, Nurain Syakirah Abdullah¹, Melor Md Yunus¹, Harwati Hashim¹, Asep Sunandar²

¹ Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

² Faculty of Education, Universitas Negeri Malang, Jalan Semarang, Nomor 5 Malang, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a widely recognized approach in language education that emphasizes meaningful interaction, real-world communication, and learner-centered instruction. Shifting from traditional grammar-based methods, CLT fosters communicative competence by encouraging students to engage in authentic conversations and collaborative learning. This conceptual paper explores the evolution, core principles, and pedagogical applications of CLT, highlighting its role in enhancing second language acquisition. The paper identifies key challenges in conventional language teaching, such as limited speaking opportunities, rigid curricula, and an overemphasis on rote memorization, which often fail to develop students' practical communication skills. This conceptual paper synthesizes fundamental perspectives and pedagogical theories pertinent to the empirical studies of CLT. The paper critically discusses the effectiveness of CLT in various educational contexts and its impact on learner motivation, engagement, and autonomy. The analysis suggests that CLT expands beyond improving language proficiency but also cultivating critical thinking, cultural awareness, and adaptability, essential skills in an increasingly globalized world. However, challenges persist in its implementation, including the preparedness of teachers, availability of resources, and the difficulty of assessing spontaneous communication. Many educators struggle with balancing fluency and accuracy while integrating CLT into standardized curricula and assessment frameworks. To address these challenges, this paper explores innovative approaches such as task-based language teaching (TBLT) and differentiated instruction to enhance the practical application of CLT. The paper concludes with recommendations for optimizing CLT-based instruction, ensuring that learners acquire linguistic competence and attain the confidence to use language effectively in diverse communicative settings. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, this paper contributes to ongoing discussions on improving language pedagogy for future-ready learners in the 21st century.

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: nnadiahb3389@gmail.com

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1. Introduction

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has emerged as an evolutionary shift in language teaching, attributed to its learner-centered instruction in teaching, authentic communication and meaningful engagement that were exhibited in its distinctive features. A theoretical perspective proposed had substantiated that CLT emphasizes spoken discourse and active participation from the learners, and it had assisted learners to develop a profound degree of accuracy in language [1]. CLT was developed as an implication of the shortcomings that existed in the conventional grammar-based teaching approaches. CLT pursues the goal of allocating more emphasis on language proficiency in authentic speaking contexts rather than still solely focusing on the linguistic structure of language. CLT approach denotes and signifies the extensive change from teacher-centered instruction to learner-oriented education. In CLT, learners' development in communication competence is mostly facilitated by collaborative projects, applied problem-solving tasks, and authentic conversations with peers. Fundamentally, CLT acknowledges that the language learning process involves developing learners to be able to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts rather than just continuously acquiring new knowledge of the language. This is equivalent to a comprehensive review of this field that stated learners can learn via realistic projects that encourage interactive speaking activities complemented by meaningful engagement [2].

In CLT designed classrooms, learners are encouraged to participate in communicative activities such as group discussions, role plays and interviews. These communicative activities are beyond fostering critical thinking and creativity, it further improves learners' language skills. Tiu *et al.*, (2023) [3] affirmed that mastering language proficiency in effective spoken interaction helps learners succeed academically and provides them with the competency to tackle career related challenges. In most of the lessons, learners are encouraged to take charge of their own learning and apply their language skills in relevant settings thus, it creates a more engaging learning environment for learners. However, despite the pedagogical advantages of CLT, it is still challenging to apply CLT effectively in diverse educational settings. Teachers who participated in a study which administered CLT with the aim to improve learners' speaking skills discovered that communicative tasks were challenging to conduct mostly on account of time constraints [4]. Conventional language teaching recurrently places a large proportion of emphasis on textbook based teaching and rote memorization which were profoundly favorable for the exam-oriented systems. Furthermore, accuracy and fluency to be maintained in teaching instructions while strictly adhering to the standardized curriculum were a challenge for most of the teachers. Adapting CLT approaches in language teaching were rendered more difficult by several issues that include inadequate teacher training, large class sizes and limited resources available had indeed complicated the process. In light of these complications mentioned, novel strategies and innovative approaches are apparently essential to the practical implementation of CLT. Successful strategies suggested in the implementation of CLT were proposed by academics such as differentiated instruction and task-based language teaching (TBLT). These strategies provide the teachers with adaptable frameworks when designing communicative activities that adequately cater to the needs of the learners.

The long-term effects of educational digital technology employed on language learning, the efficacy of CLT in multilingual learning settings and methods for the successful implementation of CLT in diverse educational contexts are the research gaps that were apparent in the study of CLT. Although the advantages of CLT have been explicitly discussed and discovered in past studies, there were substantially fewer empirical studies exploring the use of digital technologies such as voice recognition applications and virtual communication platforms or software that supported the development of communicative competence progressively. Furthermore, minimal findings were

observed on the adaptation of CLT among learners with diverse cultural backgrounds which were shaped by distinguishable traditions and values. This is distinctively noticeable among learners who were from urban and rural learning environments participating in interactive speaking activities built upon CLT driven pedagogy. Bridging these gaps and rectifying these discrepancies in CLT are ultimately essential to ensure that CLT is an adaptive and innovative approach to be integrated into 21st century learning.

This conceptual paper discusses CLT comprehensively by exploring the evolution, core principles and pedagogical applications of CLT. The paper reviews the process through which the drawbacks of traditional language instruction is overcome and the underlying issues of it would be critically analyzed. The paper also assesses the efficacy of CLT across different ranges of educational settings and examines the ways in which it affects learners' motivation, classroom involvement and learner autonomy. The paper also addresses the challenges encountered by teachers in putting CLT into practice and explores innovative approaches such as Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) in improving the practicality of CLT. The paper concludes with recommendations to optimize CLT in language teaching, ensuring that learners acquire critical thinking skills and language competency in facing the global challenges.

2. Evolution and Core Principles of CLT

2.1 Historical Development of CLT

The origins of CLT could be traced back as early as the 1970s when the academicians discovered the deficiency in the effectiveness of conventional language teaching which was largely concentrated on repeated exercises and structural correctives on the grammar found in the language [1]. The solid basis of drilling in grammar and vocabulary often falls short in fostering the communicative skills which were fundamental for daily language usage. These preceding methods and methodologies established in the past disregard the practical usage of the language in authentic real-world settings. Primarily, rote memorization was in favor as the core method for language teaching in the past. Minimal opportunities were given in the practice of impromptu conversation, learners were being taught on translating texts or repeating patterns of the texts. Although these methods did provide basic understanding of the language structure to the learners, it was still insufficient for the learners to equip themselves with the skills to engage in conversations with others in their daily life. The idea of communicative competence was initially proposed by Hymes in 1972 that describes the capacity to utilize a language for communication purposes and its implicit language knowledge [5]. This perspective had emphasized the demands of effective communication more than verbal precision which designated it as a substantial shift from the conventional teaching methods. With this concept being introduced, it highlighted the fact that if learners demonstrate the ability to use the language extensively in social settings, it is just as important as mastering the grammar rules. At this stage, language was recognized as a dynamic tool that was able to enhance communication instead of a set of systems and rules.

The Council of Europe had significantly contributed to the development of CLT as it promotes the design of communicative curricula which were meant to facilitate learners' practical skills in language proficiency [6]. The establishment of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) formalized the communicative elements by defining language proficiency in the context of what the learners can employ the language for specific purposes rather than the knowledge they have about the language. As a result, CLT became universally recognized and accepted in educational settings across the world, thus impacting the curricula, teaching methods and frameworks in assessment. Evidently, CLT has evolved further in the 21st century, embracing the ideas derived from

technology enhanced learning and sociocultural theory. Contemporary applications of CLT include the emphasis on the enhancement of critical thinking and digital literacy which contributes to communicative competence. This evolution has reflected that there is a continuous shift progressing towards a more comprehensive approach in learner-centered design which refines language education [7].

2.2 Theoretical Foundations of CLT

Dara *et al.*, (2024) [8] has asserted that the four interconnected competence components of grammar, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategy derived from Canale's communicative competence contributed as an expanded framework for CLT. Sociolinguistic competence pertains to the capacity to effectively apply the language in various cultural contexts whereas grammatical competence entails a thorough understanding towards the structure of language. Discourse competence retains the main goals of coherence and cohesiveness whereas the emphasis of strategic competence is the employment of communication techniques to prevail linguistic deteriorations and the constraints it possesses. All these elements serve as the foundation of CLT, advancing to the tangible demands of practical communicative tasks as opposed to discrete grammar practices in acquisition of the language.

In the context of psycholinguistics, CLT was reinforced by Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which suggested that language learning happens when learners receive comprehensible input that is just slightly additional to their current proficiency level. According to the Affective Filter Hypothesis, the significance of creating a low anxiety atmosphere was also emphasized to allow learners to practice the language without having the fear of making errors in the language. Furthermore, the importance of social interaction in language learning was highlighted in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Vygotsky strongly believed that learning took place in the zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is the gap between learners accomplishing learning outcomes on their own and what they can accomplish with assistance from others. The fundamental principle of CLT is that language acquisition is an interactive process which includes cognitive engagement and practice in real-world contexts [9].

2.3 Core Principles of CLT

The core principles of CLT have a great emphasis that focuses on meaningful communication, learner autonomy and interactive learning. These principles assured that language teaching in both curriculum designs and classroom instructions adhered to the communicative demands that learners need to equip in the actual world. Authentic language use is the core consideration in CLT, and learners are encouraged to complete the tasks that simulate real conversations that happen in everyday situations [10]. Learners practicing language in context through a series of activities like role plays, group discussions and interviews ensure learners acquire essential language competencies to use outside of the classroom [11]. CLT prioritizes the role of social interaction in CLT, with learners constantly collaborating with others to construct language learning. The activities that encourage critical thinking and problem-solving skills as a result of social interaction activities are like pair work, group projects and interviews. The functional use of language is one of the core principles of CLT as learners are encouraged to express their ideas and negotiate meaning with the goal to achieve communicative milestones [12]. Adhering to these principles and guidelines to CLT, a dynamic learner that is competent to use the language in conversation will be able to be produced.

2.4 Fluency Vs. Accuracy

The balance between fluency and accuracy has always existed as a topic of discussion in language education and it is always a controversial issue. Accuracy entails the use of syntax, vocabulary and pronunciation correctly in language, whereas fluency relates to the ability to speak the language in a natural way. In conventional approaches, learners participated in recurrent activities and would receive instant feedback on error correction; this is when precision of the language is regularly prioritized as the main strategy. However, CLT transforms and concentrates on fluency by encouraging learners to give precedence to communication rather than perfection of the language [13]. Learners were encouraged to express their ideas without having the worries of making mistakes, this would help them to become more fluent. The practice of fluency strengthens language retention through purposeful usage and improves learners' confidence in communication [14]. Eventually, CLT acknowledged the interdependence of fluency and accuracy. Accuracy ensures that communication remains clear and understandable while fluency assists learners to communicate effectively in conversations. Navigating the right balance from this aspect will develop learners to competently while practicing the target language.

3. Challenges in Conventional Language Teaching

3.1 Limited Speaking Opportunities

Traditional language teaching traditionally implements teacher-led approaches that effectively limit student speaking opportunities. The traditional approach to language learning focuses mainly on grammar drills as well as reading from textbooks and repetitive writing exercises rather than real-life language application according to Qasserras [1]. Such learning methods reduce student engagement and establish classrooms where individuals avoid risk-taking behavior because of fear. Students become less willing to speak because of this situation which ultimately reduces their ability to speak fluently. The lack of authentic contact with real-life language practice prevents students from successfully converting classroom education into functional applications.

Students fear making mistakes because the establishment of linguistic accuracy takes priority above fluency attainment. Students lose their confidence when they lack space to try new things according to Zulfikar [15]. Children get immediate point-of-correction in traditional classroom designs leading to fear which hinders their desire to speak freely. Students resist speaking because of judgment fear which additionally blocks their ability to experiment with language during development of communicative competence skills.

A critical challenge exists because learners fail to obtain practical experience with language use. According to Kashinathan *et al.*, (2021) [16] the educational focus within numerous classrooms tends to favor exam preparation schemes rather than unplanned language exchange. Students lose important opportunities to speak naturally in the target language thus their speaking skills decrease in proficiency. Learners experience minimal authentic conversation practice which results in their inadequacy to interact outside educational settings. The practice of CLT through role-play and problem-solving activities falls victim to the replacement with rote learning methods. When students are detached from real-world language use, they find it challenging to move theoretical knowledge into real-world applications.

3.2 Rigid Curricula

National education systems typically place excessive focus on teaching grammar rules and memorizing vocabulary yet ignore teaching necessary speaking abilities. Teachers are compelled to concentrate on accuracy by standardized testing practices according to Elena Markina and Antonio Garcia Mollá [17]. Educational language assessment designs mostly depend on multiple-choice assessments along with structured writing assignments that diminish oral communication performance. Teaching to the test becomes essential and interactive speaking lessons get minimized as a result. The teaching methods employed by standardized tests lead students to achieve excellent scores in grammar but prevent them from communicating effectively in basic conversations.

The rigid nature of implementing CLT hinders the teacher's ability to conduct innovative instruction that focuses on student-led learning practices. The strict nature of syllabi according to Kurniawan and Agung Budi [18] requires teachers to finish syllabus requirements before focusing on interactive CLT activities. Open-ended activities like group discussions and peer interviews become limited due to the requirement of covering a wide range of linguistic material. The strict guidelines in lesson plans create obstacles to creative lesson design because teachers must adhere to specific teaching plans and time requirements.

The requirement to finish the syllabus restricts students from participating actively in lessons. Educators, according to Chang *et al.*, (2020) [19] substitute activities requiring communication for exams because they need to follow mandatory academic standards. Consequently, meaningful language usage decreases. Teachers prefer using standard grammar practices instead of debate activities as they believe the exercises will help students perform well on national examinations. A mismatch develops between academic knowledge and real-life usage since students infrequently engage in spontaneous language exchanges they would encounter beyond the educational setting.

3.3 Rote Memorization

The traditional methods separate vocabulary along with grammar lessons from practical conversation practice. According to Meylani and Ruşen [20], students experience deficient practical linguistic skills since the heavy focus on memorized material separates theoretical knowledge from actual speaking abilities. Students learn numerous word list items along with verb forms and sentence patterns in many educational settings without understanding their meaning. The educational method disregards practical language use because students do not put their memorized material into real-life conversation situations. Their real-life speech capabilities stay restricted because memorization techniques have constrained their sentence formation abilities.

When speaking and listening receive no priority in traditional methods students only experience passive learning. Students who dedicate themselves to memorizing word lists typically do not build a conversation ability which shows the necessity of adoption of task-based learning techniques according to Afifah *et al.*, (2020) [21]. Learners fail to develop meaningful understanding of grammar rules and vocabulary when they do not receive enough practice opportunities to speak. Students who possess knowledge about the definition of "negotiation" fail to employ the term properly when discussing conflict resolution.

The main underlying challenge in education today turns out to be student engagement which stays restricted. According to Kashinathan *et al.*, (2021) [16] learners lose motivation when they memorize passively because this approach denies them practical usage of language thus resulting in poor fluency retention. Students who view language learning as a rote activity instead of social interaction gradually lose their natural interest in the subject. The absence of student engagement

creates difficulties for language acquisition because purposeful practice stands vital to building long-lasting retention. Rote memorization proves ineffective as a language proficiency development method without integrating communicative tasks into lessons.

4. Pedagogical Applications of CLT

4.1 Authentic Learning Experience

Authentic learning experiences involve activities closely resembling real-world language use, making language learning practical, relevant, and engaging for students. Unlike traditional methods focused on rote memorization of vocabulary and grammar in isolation, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) encourages learners to actively participate in meaningful communicative tasks, enhancing their engagement with the language [22]. Lesiana *et al.*, (2024) [22] conducted qualitative research involving classroom observations and interviews in a secondary school context, revealing that CLT significantly enhances classroom interaction through increased learner participation. However, their study acknowledged limitations such as a relatively small sample size and teacher dependency on constant positive reinforcement and encouragement to maintain student participation, suggesting that broader-scale research is needed for wider generalizability.

Additionally, second language acquisition research highlights the effectiveness of authentic tasks in boosting learner engagement by creating relevance and personal significance [23]. Zare *et al.*, (2024) [23] developed and validated a questionnaire among 481 EFL students to assess task engagement comprehensively, examining emotional, behavioral, cognitive, and social dimensions. Despite their methodological rigor, the reliance on self-report measures necessitates further research incorporating direct observational data to reinforce findings.

Mahdi and Dawood Ahmed [24] further supports the effectiveness of task-based activities, particularly problem-solving exercises and role-playing, through experimental research conducted at King Khalid University. This study involved structured Language Enhancement Program (LEP) activities designed explicitly to enhance students' oral communication skills. Mahdi found significant improvement in students' oral fluency and participation but noted limitations such as short intervention duration and potential context-specific biases, indicating the need for replication in diverse educational settings.

Similarly, Kolsut *et al.*, (2023) [25] employed qualitative classroom observations and interviews, emphasizing the positive correlation between authentic task engagement and student motivation. Their findings confirmed that when classroom tasks clearly reflected real-world scenarios, learners were significantly more committed and motivated. However, their study acknowledged limitations such as limited participant diversity, recommending further comparative studies in varying educational and cultural contexts to ensure broader applicability.

Integrating authentic communicative tasks within CLT helps learners view language acquisition as relevant, thus leading to enhanced retention, fluency, and proficiency beyond classroom settings. To maximize these benefits, educators should continually evaluate the practical relevance and methodological robustness of their instructional practices.

4.2 Role Playing, Discussions and Problem-Solving

Role-playing is widely used within CLT, enabling learners to practice language in simulated real-world contexts, such as conducting job interviews, ordering services, or planning travel itineraries. This method significantly boosts learners' fluency and equips them with problem-solving skills, adaptability, and cultural awareness. Lesiana *et al.*, (2024) [22], through classroom observations and

teacher interviews, identified that role-playing significantly enhanced learners' participation and enthusiasm. However, they acknowledged limitations, including small sample sizes and that constant teacher encouragement was necessary to sustain active learner participation.

Quantitative research by Emilizar and Sylvia [26] similarly supports the effectiveness of role-playing activities, demonstrating increased willingness among EFL learners to engage in spoken communication. Despite promising findings, the authors admitted limitations, including the brief duration of the study, suggesting further longitudinal research to assess lasting effects.

Structured discussions and problem-solving activities further contribute to learners' communicative engagement and fluency. Zare *et al.*, (2024) [23] validated a questionnaire that confirmed higher cognitive and social engagement when learners actively engaged in structured discussions. Yet, their self-report-based methodology suggested that integrating observational methods could offer deeper insights into actual classroom dynamics.

Kořut *et al.*, (2023) [25] also found through qualitative observations that recognizing the real-world relevance of classroom activities significantly increased student motivation and commitment. They suggested comparative studies in various cultural contexts to enhance external validity and generalizability.

Additionally, Mahdi and Dawood Ahmed [24] confirmed that problem-solving activities such as situational dialogues effectively promoted collaboration, analytical thinking, and practical language application among learners. The experimental approach taken at King Khalid University indicated improved student confidence and reduced anxiety. Nonetheless, the study's limited institutional context posed challenges to generalizing findings broadly, recommending further investigation across diverse educational environments.

These studies collectively emphasize the effectiveness of role-playing, discussions, and problem-solving activities in developing essential language skills and broader cognitive and social competencies. However, practical challenges like large class sizes, limited resources, and institutional constraints must be clearly recognized. Addressing these factors, alongside continued assessment of motivation and autonomy, ensures the practical application and sustainability of CLT strategies in diverse educational contexts.

5. Effectiveness of CLT in Various Educational Contexts

5.1 Impact on Learner Motivation and Engagement

Student engagement plays an essential role in language learning. Due to that, it directly influences students' motivation, involvement, and overall proficiency in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms. Lesiana *et al.*, (2024) [22] emphasize that meaningful classroom interaction is key to fostering student engagement, especially when students are encouraged to actively participate in communicative tasks.

By immersing students in practical communication, these activities help improve their confidence and fluency in using the language. Additionally, Lesiana *et al.*, (2024) [22] emphasize that when students are given more opportunities to engage in communicative tasks, their capability to socialize and express themselves improves considerably. This change towards a more dynamic, student-centered learning environment urges students to take ownership of their language development, making the learning process more effective.

Engaging in authentic communication tasks helps learners overcome hesitation and fear of making mistakes, allowing them to speak more spontaneously. Lesiana *et al.*, (2024) [22] emphasize that classroom interaction plays a crucial role in language development, as students who engage in interactive tasks are more likely to gain confidence in expressing their thoughts. Similarly, Zare *et al.*,

(2024) [23] emphasizes that task engagement is significantly linked to a learner's ability to process and use language in real time, fortifying the idea that frequent exposure to communicative tasks improves fluency.

Habitual exposure to naturalistic language use enables students to internalize sentence structures and increase their ability to process and produce language in real-world contexts. This is supported by findings from the Language Teaching Research [25] study, which indicate that task-based and communicative classrooms create an environment where students are encouraged to engage in discussions, reducing anxiety and improving fluency.

Research by Humphreys and Dustin J [27] comparing CLT with the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) revealed that students taught through CLT exhibited higher self-efficacy, lower language anxiety, and greater motivation. The study highlights that students feel more confident and willing to participate in language learning when they are actively involved in communicative tasks rather than passive memorization.

Research indicates that CLT plays a significant role in promoting intrinsic motivation in learners, as they find practical communication more engaging and relevant compared to rote memorization. Siregar *et al.*, (2023) [28] emphasize that CLT not only improves students' cognitive engagement but also boosts their writing motivation, particularly in translation practice, where learners must actively interpret and convey meaning rather than simply recalling vocabulary and grammatical rules.

Anxiety greatly affects students' willingness to communicate, particularly in ESL contexts. Research by Apatura *et al.*, (2025) [29] highlights the prevalent anxiety among ESL students, reinforcing the necessity of communicative practices, such as those emphasized in CLT, to mitigate anxiety and enhance learners' communicative confidence. Their findings indicate that creating supportive classroom environments and utilizing interactive communicative tasks are effective strategies in reducing learner anxiety, thus improving their overall motivation and willingness to actively engage in classroom communication activities.

Furthermore, Basir *et al.*, (2021) [30] discovered that enforcing CLT strategies in ESL classrooms led to a noteworthy increase in students' motivation, as the method promotes real-life interactions and meaningful communication. Their findings suggest that when students engage in communicative tasks, they develop a stronger sense of purpose in language learning, which in turn enhances retention and comprehension.

Ismail *et al.*, (2023) [31] found that students exposed to Task-Based Instruction (TBI) display increased motivation to engage with texts, as they viewed reading as an interactive and purposeful activity rather than a mechanical task.

By exposing students to natural conversations, CLT promotes better pronunciation, greater listening comprehension, and an increased willingness and confidence to engage in English-speaking situations outside the classroom. This interactive approach to language learning ensures that students not only gain proficiency but also develop the confidence to use English effectively in real-world scenarios. Beyond motivation and engagement, CLT plays a crucial role in fostering learner autonomy and adaptability. The next section discusses how CLT promotes independent learning, critical thinking and cultural adaptability in ESL classrooms.

5.2 Developing Autonomy and Adaptability

Through accentuating real-world communication, CLT fosters critical thinking and adaptability, providing students with the necessary skills to maneuver through complex language situations. Through discussions, students analyze, interpret, and respond to ideas, polishing their ability to think independently and engage meaningfully in conversations. According to Kaowiwattanakul and

Sukanya [32] underscores that integrating literature-based learning within the CEFR framework enhances EFL students' reading comprehension while promoting critical thinking and analytical reasoning, reinforcing the concept that authentic communication fosters deeper cognitive engagement.

Structured activities in CLT classrooms encourage self-articulation and problem-solving in various communicative contexts. Susilo *et al.*, (2021) [33] stress that the CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) technique improves students' ability to construct and articulate their ideas with clarity, strengthening their critical thinking skills. Similarly, Matmool *et al.*, (2023) [34] found that literature circle activities improve students' speaking skills by encouraging peer discussions and collaborative interpretation, supporting the idea that interaction in real-world contexts fosters adaptability and deeper engagement with language.

Aswad *et al.*, (2024) [35] suggest that CLT-based instruction enhances student learning outcomes by integrating communicative activities that push students to undertake critical reflection and decision-making. Their findings imply that students become more confident and versatile communicators when given opportunities to engage in real-life discussions and problem-solving tasks.

By actively participating in communicative exchanges, students develop a mentality that allows them to think critically, evaluate different perspectives, and adapt their responses accordingly. This holistic approach to language learning not only strengthens language proficiency but also prepares students to use English effectively in diverse, real-world situations. The integration of CLT fosters long-term language retention and comprehension, as learners associate meaning with real-life contexts. The discussion suggests that CLT is an effective approach not only for language proficiency but also for cultivating essential 21st-century skills such as autonomy, critical thinking, and cultural adaptability. Regardless of the advantages of CLT, its execution is not without challenges. There are numerous factors that commonly impede the effectiveness of CLT in language classrooms. The following sections examine the challenges and explore possible solutions.

5.3 Cultural Adaptability

Cultural integration is an essential consideration in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) effectively, as it fosters intercultural competence by immersing learners in authentic communication and culturally relevant contexts [1]. Recognizing the learners' cultural backgrounds and adapting instructional strategies accordingly ensures that language learning is not only engaging but also meaningful and respectful of learners' identities and cultural sensitivities.

Using culturally relevant materials, such as local songs, stories, and culturally familiar role-playing scenarios, can significantly enhance student engagement and facilitate language acquisition [36]. For instance, Megawati *et al.*, (2024) [37] illustrated practical approaches by using culturally meaningful Islamic songs to engage Indonesian pre-service English teachers, enhancing learners' emotional connection and linguistic confidence. This could provide an idea for educators in Malaysian classrooms to utilize local folklore or popular songs in English activities, helping learners connect emotionally with the content and easing their anxiety about language usage. This is supported by Abdallah and Mahmoud MS [36] where he highlighted the importance of intercultural competence, advocating authentic communication activities emphasizing cultural relevance. This approach creates a comfortable and familiar atmosphere, promoting willingness to communicate and greater participation in class.

Additionally, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) contributes further to developing cultural adaptability by involving students in authentic social interactions that require navigating diverse

cultural scenarios [38]. Mohlaroyim and Abdulhakimova [38] stressed TBLT's effectiveness in navigating cross-cultural scenarios, recommending interactive tasks where learners collaboratively address culturally diverse situations. This highlights the ability for educators to incorporate projects that encourage students to explore various cultures, discuss differences and similarities, and reflect on their own cultural perspectives, thereby fostering deeper intercultural competence and communicative confidence.

Moreover, the deliberate inclusion of intercultural elements within CLT, such as comparative analyses of cultural practices and etiquette in communication, equips learners with essential skills to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries [1]. Lastly, Solihabonu and Normatova [39] noted CLT's importance in fostering global competence through culturally responsive teaching. Educators might use role-play scenarios that explicitly address Malaysian cultural settings, such as family gatherings, traditional festivals, or local marketplace interactions, helping learners confidently engage in meaningful, culturally aligned language practice. By understanding cultural nuances and linguistic subtleties through these tasks, learners are better prepared to engage in real-world communication outside of their familiar environments.

To effectively adapt CLT culturally, educators should be provided with professional training focused on designing culturally inclusive lesson plans. Training modules could include strategies for selecting culturally sensitive materials, integrating diverse cultural contexts into communicative tasks, and fostering intercultural dialogues within the classroom. Furthermore, continuous reflection and feedback from students can guide teachers in dynamically adjusting their approaches to align with learners' evolving cultural and educational needs.

6. Challenges in Implementing CLT

6.1 Teacher Preparedness and Training

A primary obstacle in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) stems from insufficient teacher readiness. The teaching methods focused on grammar education have trained numerous teachers to a point where they face challenges when adapting to communicative approaches. Abu Talag [40] identifies how teachers frequently depend on common traditional practices based on rote learning and direct instruction to restrict their student-centred classroom capabilities. Lack of training in communicative language teaching methods creates barriers for teachers who need proper skills to guide significant language exchanges and modify class activities toward fluency development. A study by Hui *et al.*, (2023) [41] reveals that although teachers perceive the value of CLT, they often face difficulties in the implementation because of lack of adequate training and support resulting in lack of confidence in carrying out communicative activities. Their research stresses that many educators find it difficult to change from a teacher centred approach to student centred interactions as they have not been properly prepared to facilitate spontaneous use of language in the classroom.

Additionally, Faisal *et al.*, (2025) [42] provide deeper insights into the anxiety and emotional barriers faced by pre-service teachers during their teaching practicum. Their findings highlight that pre-service teachers often experience significant anxiety when expected to implement communicative methods due to inadequate exposure and training in interactive language teaching strategies. This anxiety negatively affects their confidence, resulting in challenges in executing effective communicative tasks during lessons. Their study recommends targeted professional development and emotional support mechanisms during teaching practices to better equip pre-service teachers for successful CLT implementation.

The essential element for improvement will be professional development. Educational institutions, according to Ming *et al.*, (2023) [43] should provide continuous training programs and workshops that teach CLT implementation skills alongside the required confidence strategies to teachers. The programs combine training that focuses on interactive cooperation among students and interactive role-playing and practical language usage which supports the essential habits of CLT. Nam and Hyunjeong [44] shows that teacher-originated factors such as resistance to change together with inadequate comprehension of CLT strategies block progress in education. Hui *et al.*, (2023) [41] further argue that overcoming resistance requires structured professional development programs that focus on equipping teachers with adaptable communicative strategies. Educational institutions must maintain continuous support mechanisms for teachers to accomplish their progressive adoption of communication-based instruction methods in classrooms.

Multiple teachers experience difficulty according to Salam *et al.*, (2024) [45], when they try to maintain syllabus progression while applying CLT teaching methods. The result of this situation typically produces second-rate communicative task execution. Educational institutions should establish resource platforms and scheduling programs to help teachers develop lessons which unite program targets with communication learning principles.

6.2 Assessment Difficulties

The emphasis of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) lies in developing fluent real-world communication instead of following conventional accuracy-based learning methods. The modification of teaching approaches establishes new testing challenges because standard assessments cannot measure communicative competencies. The assessment methods, which include multiple-choice tests and fill-in-the-blank exercises, evaluate grammar and vocabulary while neglecting the spontaneous nature of language output.

Meylani and Ruşen [20] argue that traditional evaluation methods cannot assess communicative capabilities since they emphasize correctness over actual communication purposes. The authors Afifah *et al.*, (2020) [21] suggest that students should use role-play activities, oral presentations, and task-based assessment formats to display their problem-solving abilities and fluency. The implementation of performance-based tests supports CLT because they evaluate real-life language application through speaking assessments such as oral interviews and group discussions that demonstrate authentic language use.

However, the implementation of alternative assessments faces several challenges. Limited time allocation and the necessity of adhering to standard curricula create significant obstacles. Teachers need improved training regarding fluency-based assessment techniques because their current accuracy-based assessment methods remain difficult to replace.

The solution requires exploring new assessment methods which support the principles of CLT. The assessment methods which emphasize vocabulary memorization and grammar proficiency fail to properly check communicative competence. The assessment methods approved for CLT like formative assessment and peer feedback together with portfolio assessments and oral performance tests produce better results in measuring student communicative abilities. These approaches direct their focus toward student fluency and interaction along with the actual use of language to fulfill practical needs within real-world settings in order to assess a broader range of language abilities.

Students enhance their language progress through alternative assessment methods that combine self-assessments and learning journals and reflective writing. Students develop meaningful communication skills through project-based assessments and debates and collaborative group tasks which let them use their language competencies in various scenarios. Educators who implement

different methods from this list can build an all-encompassing language assessment system which works within the CLT framework.

6.3 Resource Constraints

The implementation of CLT experiences additional obstacles because of resource limitations which primarily affect educators' ability to manage large classrooms as well as limited instructional material availability and opposition from institutional authorities.

The size of large classes limits both the teacher's ability to offer personal feedback and the assessment of natural communication activities. The restricted ability to perform interactive tasks such as role-plays along with group discussions according to Chang *et al.*, (2020) [19] diminishes student opportunities to practice authentic language communication. Limited resources also complicate CLT. The educational facilities that serve rural areas frequently lack basic instructional tools including audio resources along with visual presentation accessories. The absence of suitable classroom resources prevents teachers from utilizing modern textbooks which diminishes authentic communication according to Elena Markina and Antonio Garcia Mollá [17].

Curriculum modifications face resistance from institutional powers thus becoming another obstacle. The educational approach of certain institutions remains anchored to traditional standardized testing systems because they believe such a transition will damage their academic standings according to Kurniawan and Agung Budi [18]. Unwillingness among teaching professionals works as a barrier which prevents them from embracing CLT despite its positive effects. The resolution of these issues requires educational institutions to deliver teacher professional development that integrates both accuracy-based and fluency-based curricular elements. Legislators need to back the use of modern technology that includes language software and digital platforms which increase out-of-class language learning opportunities.

The successful method of teaching language through CLT faces substantial problems with assessment procedures and resource availability despite demonstrating effectiveness. Successful implementation of CLT requires alternative assessments together with proper resources while also obtaining institutional backing.

7. Innovative Approaches to Enhance CLT Application

7.1 Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

The evolution of teaching approaches that have seen a shift from the traditional method of grammar-focused strategy to a communicative-based approach which ensures real-world communication and interactive engagement necessitates a comprehensive change in the policy and curriculum development in order to be aligned with the instructional practices. Effective integration of CLT involves deeper insights into the reality of the curriculum and the real challenges observed by the teachers for policymakers to make an informed decision in developing the curriculum. Flexibility and learner-centered instruction should replace rigid and teacher-centered approaches as it can promote active participation and positive influence in learning [17]. According to Afifah *et al.*, (2020) [21], TBLT refers to an approach that focuses on the completion of meaningful tasks through active communication. Hence, the cultivation of environments in which students are actively involved in meaningful communication, rather than passively receiving information, as offered by TBLT can be encouraged in the CLT-based classroom.

Additionally, TBLT helps in the reformation of assessment to be able to measure communicative approach in an engaging and constructive way. Meylani and Ruşen [20] assert that traditional

assessment methods like multiple-choice questions or cloze tests have been proven to be insufficient to define students' characteristics in their language abilities. The changes in the education policies should encourage performance-based assessment such as role-plays, dramatization, or oral presentations that can reflect real-world language use for them to be able to apply the skills in appropriate contexts. Thus, the implementation of CLT through TBLT will be able to emphasize the application of language in terms of developing learners' level of confidence and proficiency in various scenarios of communication.

Besides, teachers are considered as an integral part of policymakers and curriculum design especially in implementing CLT in their own classroom. However, Chang *et al.*, (2020) [19] found that many are still lacking in their understanding and skill development in the area of CLT approaches. Since they were taught using conventional, grammar-based approaches, it is difficult for them to switch to using TBLT in a CLT-based classroom. Thus, policies should also be centered around enhancing teachers' continuous professional development by equipping teachers with the proper technique and methodologies in applying CLT strategies, digital tools, and classroom management approach that allows for interactive learning experience through TBLT. Teacher training programs and peer collaboration are one of the examples in providing exposure to innovative teaching. Hence, the policies and curriculum design surrounding the CLT will therefore be improved by encouraging teachers to include TBLT in implementing CLT-based classrooms.

7.2 Differentiated Instruction

Socioeconomic gaps in language education are one of the prominent issues that may hinder the learning progress of learners. Hence, CLT offers a more inclusive and equitable method of instruction by emphasising interaction, teamwork, and real-world communication through differentiated instruction. A learner-centred approach integrated in CLT which prioritizes communication instead of rote memorization makes language more interactive and engaging which is particularly beneficial for students with disadvantaged backgrounds. This is because schools in rural areas may have limited access to proficient language speakers. Hence, CLT encourages real-life communication through collaboration projects and interaction-based learning which will help learners to learn from each other and develop self-confidence without relying solely on textbooks or other formal classroom instruction.

Furthermore, a major advantage of integrating differentiated instruction in CLT to bridge socioeconomic gaps is through its flexibility in assessment and curriculum design. Traditional approaches usually in standardized tests often favor learners that have unlimited access to various resources for test preparation. Hence, CLT gives flexibility in measuring students' proficiency through alternative methods such as oral presentation, portfolio assessment and project-based assessment. According to Meylani and Ruşen [20] these types of assessment encourage students' communicative competence. This will ensure students from various backgrounds are evaluated based on their actual language use, making it a more equitable approach in learning.

While CLT provides many benefits to the users, schools in rural areas may struggle in adopting CLT due to limited access to the resources, inadequate infrastructure and a shortage of trained teachers. Chang *et al.*, (2020) [19] found that one of the challenges in integrating CLT in the classroom is due to the limited time to develop materials, insufficient knowledge on CLT as a whole and access to the culture of the learning environment. A successful implementation of CLT highly depends on its immersive and interactive learning environment to develop communicative competence. However, these conditions can hardly be met in a rural area setting which calls for an immediate response from

various stakeholders or policymakers to address the issue that requires creative solutions, ensuring students have equal opportunities in developing their language proficiency.

7.3 Integration of Digital Tools

Technology offers a new exciting learning environment that allows for accessibility and engagement of CLT to be integrated. Language learning applications and online discussion platforms are some of the digital tools that provide learners with valuable opportunities to be an active participant in the context of real-world communication. A study by Qasserras [1] found that CLT is recognized for its credibility in developing cultural competence among language learners as it is often engaged with authentic materials and diverse cultural context. Hence, integration of technology with CLT such as virtual exchange programs help learners to converse with other native speakers of the language allowing them to not only instill linguistic skill but also encourage cultural awareness [18].

The introduction of artificial intelligence has revolutionized the field of personalized learning, enabling learners to develop advanced communicative skills that extend beyond communication. According to Shafiee *et al.*, (2024) [46], learners' pronunciation refinement and conversational skills were enhanced by communicative technology, including digital storytelling applications and AI-powered chatbots, which provided immediate feedback. By analyzing speech patterns, identifying errors, and suggesting modifications, these technologies make language more personalized and interactive. Hence, learners can practice their pronunciation in real time which in turn helps them to improve their self-confidence in their speaking ability.

Additionally, immersive experiences provided by virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) that can act as a real-life scenario of communication are one of the innovative strategies to be integrated with CLT. In the realm of language learning, AR and VR hold immense potential for fostering essential skills such as speaking, listening, and vocabulary acquisition. By simulating real-world scenarios, AR and VR create opportunities for students to practice language use in meaningful contexts [47]. For instance, an AR application might allow students to explore a virtual marketplace where they can interact with digital vendors to practice conversational skills or learn context-specific vocabulary. Nor Sanak *et al.*, (2024) [48] examined the use of AR filters in teaching English speaking fluency and discovered that AR effectively supports diverse learning styles and proficiency levels. Their research highlighted AR's inclusivity, enabling students to practice speaking in various formal and informal contexts, thereby catering to different learner needs. Meanwhile, a study by Hashim *et al.*, (2024) [49] reported that learners' fluency and competency in their communicative ability improved significantly as a result of repetitive practice in immersive settings using VR. Participants gained confidence in speaking English spontaneously, which is a basic element of CLT. Hence, technology integration in CLT-based classrooms, therefore, enables a dynamic, captivating, and highly personalized learning environment that can accommodate each student's learning proficiencies and preferences.

8. Future Directions and Recommendations

As the educational landscape evolves, future study should investigate the incorporation of technology into CLT implementation. While online discussion platforms and AI-powered applications empowered learners in facilitating their skill development and helping them become involved in real-time communication, there remains a scarcity of studies in the area of assessing their long-term effect on the communicative competence through CLT. It is fundamental for researchers to discover the difference of use between each digital platform such as speech recognition software and virtual

exchange programs that can be applied for intervention strategies to enhance and contribute to learners' language proficiency. Understanding the strengths and limitations of these tools can give deeper insights for educators to determine the suitability of the tools to be incorporated in the classroom.

Another area that can contribute to the field of research is to investigate the approaches of adapting CLT in a broader demographic perspective. Education and socio-cultural background are examples of the demographics that can be integrated. This involved taking into account the perspectives from non-English majors on their implementation of CLT to enhance their language acquisition. Besides, the research can also put forth the comparison of CLT used between respondents from urban, sub urban and rural areas in order to provide significant benefits for second language learners in making effective use of the CLT. This will directly offer extensive information on the application of CLT among the respondents with diverse demographics. The data from this study can be used as a framework or a starting point for future studies.

Moreover, utilizing a different research design or approach to investigate the same topic is highly encouraged to be studied as to offer a different understanding such as the concept, opinions or experiences regarding CLT. For example, a case study can be incorporated in future research on a significant figure in the education world such as a second language expert educator. The study will be able to provide in-depth insights on the psychological, environmental, and sociocultural components of the respondents and provide sufficient justification for their use of CLT. Besides, experimental study can be conducted pertaining to the same theories as in the current study. In order to explore the dynamics of learners, future research can focus on comparing and contrasting the language acquisition breadth or size of learners who are exposed and applied to the CLT with those who are not employed CLT. Hence, a wider context of information on CLT will be able to be delivered with the different executions of future research.

9. Conclusion

In conclusion, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has evolved into a revolutionary approach that should be applied and emphasized on its use of actual language to achieve meaningful communication among learners. CLT has transformed from a conventional approach to today's dynamic and learner-centered approach which are beneficial for the learners to execute communication in daily life situations. The application of CLT in pedagogical implementation has its challenges which hampered the speaking chances in class including to the rigid curricula that instructors are used to. In addition, teacher preparedness, challenges faced in conducting assessments and the limitations in resources remain as major obstacles that most of the instructors are facing. A multidimensional approach which can address this issue should be employed together with innovative assessment methods and continuous teachers' development programs. A thorough examination regarding CLT in future should further explore the incorporation of technology with the implementation of CLT as educational technologies are widely accessible especially in this era. Additionally, the cultural context of learners such as backgrounds and educational environments will shed light on the application of CLT with regards to language acquisition. In essence, the success of CLT to be continuously evolved lies within the effort of researchers, teachers and policymakers to address the existing issues that hamper the progress of implementing CLT thus establishing innovative approaches to cater to these issues. CLT empowers learners to navigate themselves in embracing the world and CLT indeed is a fundamental component for successful language learning.

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