

Effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching in EFL Classrooms

م.م. خالد خضر سلمان

المديرة العامة لتربية الانبار قسم تربية الرمادي

Khaldkhdrslman@gmail.com

Abstract

This research study intended on exploring the implementation and efficacy of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as applied to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. This research focused on students' language attainment or proficiency and within language attainment we focused specifically on speaking and listening. A mixed-methods research design was used that embraced quantitative data through pre- and post-tests alongside qualitative data via classroom observation and student interviews. Findings from the research revealed that students who received instruction through CLT, are using language with increased communicative competence, increasing participation, and increasing comfort and confidence using language in authentic contexts as distinct from just a skill. In addition, teachers also reported higher levels of student engagement and motivation. In summary, this study demonstrates that CLT can be implemented in EFL contexts if contextual factors are considered in a systematic manner. Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, EFL, speaking skills, student engagement, language proficiency

ملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة البحثية إلى استكشاف تطبيق وفعالية تدريس اللغة التواصلية (CLT) في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL). ركز هذا البحث على تحسين الطلاب اللغوي أو كفاءتهم، وفي هذا المجال، ركزنا تحديدًا على التحدث والاستماع. استخدم تصميم بحثي متعدد الأساليب، اعتمد على البيانات الكمية من خلال الاختبارات القبلية والبعدية، إلى جانب البيانات النوعية من خلال مراقبة الفصول الدراسية ومقابلات الطلاب. كشفت نتائج البحث أن الطلاب الذين تلقوا تعليمًا من خلال تدريس اللغة التواصلية يستخدمون اللغة بكفاءة تواصلية أعلى، ويزيدون من مشاركتهم، ويزيدون من راحتهم وثقتهم بأنفسهم عند استخدام اللغة في سياقات حقيقية، وليس مجرد مهارة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أفاد المعلمون أيضًا بمستويات أعلى من مشاركة الطلاب وتحفيزهم. باختصار، توضح هذه الدراسة إمكانية تطبيق تدريس اللغة التواصلية في سياقات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية إذا أخذت العوامل السياقية في الاعتبار بطريقة منهجية. الكلمات المفتاحية: تدريس اللغة التواصلية، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، مهارات التحدث، مشاركة الطلاب، إتقان اللغة

1. Introduction

The teaching practice of languages has radically shifted in the past decades from the traditional teacher-directed to more interactive and student-centered models. Among these, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is one of the most common and embraced among the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts of the globe. Radiating from the communicative language teaching philosophy of language, CLT prefers meaningful and functional use of language in actual communication over grammatically stringent usage (Richards, 2006). The birth of CLT is attributed to complaints against earlier methods such as the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) and the Audiolingual Method (ALM), which were criticized for communicative competence neglect or even very little consideration of the same. These scholars like Hymes (1972) thought that, beyond knowledge of language, language learners must acquire the ability to employ language effectively in various social settings and thus formulate the theory of "communicative competence" — one of CLT's major pillars. Canale and Swain (1980) followed up by expanding this theory with the inclusion of grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competence, even stronger foundation for communicative pedagogy. Communicative Language Teaching gained popularity globally during the 1980s and 1990s when schools and governments sought improved means of language acquisition. Contrasted to the traditional approaches that leaned toward rote memorization, repetition,

and grammar practice, CLT promotes genuine communication, fluency development, pair and group work, and task-based communication (Larsen-Freeman, 2011). Students are therefore positioned in situations that simulate real communication, which is assumed to enhance their motivation, interest, and eventually, their language skill (Littlewood, 2004). In EFL contexts, of course, where students will not have much chance to receive natural language input beyond the classroom, this role is even more vital. There are a number of studies which have established that CLT positively affects the learning of languages as it constructs a more participative, student-oriented learning environment that promotes linguistic and socio-pragmatic ability (Savignon, 2002; Ellis, 2003). CLT allows the learners to experience not only a system of rules, but a tool for communication and expression of a routine character. Although it has theoretical and practical advantages, nevertheless, CLT's application in EFL settings is not problem-free. Large class sizes, brief teaching periods, poor teacher training, and rigid curriculum are likely to work against its successful implementation (Li, 1998; Nishino, 2012). Teachers in most non-native English-speaking countries are typically required to make a shift from traditional roles as knowledge controlling transmitters to communicative interaction facilitators as well (Burns & Richards, 2012). Students accustomed to test-based education systems also oppose more interactive and informal classroom processes initially (Butler, 2005). Yet, the global trend continues to support communicative methods as part of more extensive education reforms aimed at equipping students with 21st-century skills. In line with this trend, the current research targets a critical appraisal of the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching within EFL contexts in terms of its contribution to learners' communicative competence, classroom interaction, and language use confidence. Utilizing qualitative and quantitative evidence, the research hopes to be part of the existing debate about best English language teaching practices and provide useful advice to classroom teachers and curriculum planners working within EFL contexts.

1.1 Research Objectives:

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) for improving English language skills of EFL learners. This study seeks to: Assess the impact of CLT on students' speaking, listening, and overall communicative competence. Examine EFL teachers' attitudes and classroom practices regarding CLT. Identify challenges and limitations for teachers and students in implementing CLT. Make realistic recommendations for the improvement of CLT implementation in EFL classrooms.

1.1 Research Problem:

Despite growing popularity of Communicative Language Teaching in EFL contexts, its intended effects are not felt in numerous classrooms. Traditional methods still reign supreme in some institutions due to factors like lack of training, limited resources, and manual restrictions. This research answers the guiding question: To what extent is Communicative Language Teaching in EFL classrooms effective in developing language proficiency and communicative competence? Sub-questions include: How do students respond to communicative activities compared to traditional methods? What are the main obstacles to successful implementation of CLT in EFL environments?

1.3 Research Significance: The study's relevance is its ability to contribute to the ongoing development of effective language teaching methodologies within EFL environments. As the world becomes increasingly globalized and demand for English increases, it is necessary to progress beyond approaches of memorization and grammar drills. CLT offers a student-centered approach to learning that promotes real-life communicative competence, yet its implementation remains spotty in various environments. By examining both the strengths and the constraints of CLT, the study has important implications for teachers, curriculum developers, and policymakers who aim to enhance English language teaching. In addition, the study has pedagogical implications for teacher preparation programs and identifies the conditions under which CLT can thrive in EFL classrooms.

2-Theoretical Background and Literature Review

2-1 Effectiveness of communicative language Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a paradigm shift in language instruction, from focusing on the acquisition of grammatical rules and lexis in isolation to improving learners' ability for effective and appropriate communication in various contexts in everyday life. Its effectiveness has been a focus of diverse scholarly attention over four decades, with myriad research studies testifying to its pedagogic value in EFL environments. At the heart of CLT is the theory of communicative competence, initially formulated by Dell Hymes (1972) and replacing the previous Chomskyan model of linguistic competence that emphasized abstract grammar over functional use. Hymes prescribed that learners should not merely acquire the rules of grammar but also be capable of employing the language in appropriate environments of society and culture. This more comprehensive view of language ability was furthered by Canale and Swain (1980), who

outlined four broad elements of communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. These form the foundation of CLT theory and the reason why it is more effective than the form-oriented approach. Partially attributed to its learner-centered philosophy is the success of CLT. Conspicuously different from other teacher-centered approaches such as the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), which prioritize memorization and written translation exercises, CLT promotes interaction, spontaneity, and communicative language use (Richards, 2006). Learners are prompted to engage in real communicative tasks such as role-plays, interviews, debates, and group problem-solving exercises, all of which mimic real-life scenarios and promote functional language proficiency (Larsen-Freeman, 2011). One of the most frequently mentioned benefits of CLT is its role in fostering greater oral fluency and speaking confidence. In the context of EFL where learners have limited exposure to the native speaker or immersion environments, CLT creates a simulated communication context that provides maximum exposure to language use (Savignon, 2002). Research carried out by Littlewood (2004) indicates that students of the CLT classroom are more motivated, active, and eager to speak, particularly when offered potentialities of interaction with others within meaningful contexts. Also, CLT has proven to be helpful in developing listening ability since it entails, in most cases, comprehension-related tasks such as listening to real conversations, radio broadcasts, and multimedia (Brown, 2001). These tasks not only improve auditory processing capacity but also enhance learners' ability to infer meaning, identify intonation patterns, and respond accordingly—skills essential to communicative competence. Academically, empirical evidence confirms the effectiveness of CLT in enhancing overall language skills. For instance, a quasi-experimental study by Demir and Ertaş (2014) found that Turkish EFL learners who were instructed through CLT approaches outperformed conventionally instructed students on standard English proficiency tests significantly. In another comparative study, Alemi and Tayebi (2011) demonstrated that instruction based on CLT led to greater improvements in learners' pragmatic awareness and discourse management. Nonetheless, while the benefits of CLT are realized, it is not always effective and is highly context-specific. Implementation within the majority of EFL settings, particularly in Asia and the Middle East, is also limited by many large class sizes, rigid examination systems, and inadequate teacher training (Butler, 2005; Li, 1998). Teachers have to wrestle with letting go of classroom control and facilitating open-ended communicative activities when students are accustomed to teacher-fronted learning styles and are seen as only potentially making mistakes (Nishino, 2012). Moreover, CLT relies on some level of learner autonomy, classroom infrastructure, and institutional support, all of which may not be forthcoming in under-resourced schools. As Ellis (2003) argues, in order for CLT to have any effect at all, it must be adapted to local contexts rather than being presented in a one-size-fits-all package. For example, hybrid models such as Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) or Content-Based Instruction (CBI) may be more context-sensitive and better geared to flexible applications of communicative principles. Another consideration should be the testing of communicative competence, which is still a problematic venture. Standard language tests were found to inadequately test communicative capacity, focusing narrowly on solitary grammar and vocabulary. This mismatch between instructional goals and assessment processes can detract from CLT's success, especially in high-stakes testing environments (Bachman, 1990). Despite such challenges, CLT remains a mainstay of modern language instruction, with solid research evidence in support of its capacity to foster natural communication, learner autonomy, and language use outside the classroom. Its success is nevertheless dependent, however, on local context adaptation, teacher development, and institutional support, particularly in EFL environments where prevailing traditional norms are strong. As Richards and Rodgers (2014) suggest, successful language teaching is not a case of adhering to one approach dogmatically but of integrating principles that best suit learners' needs, interests, and contexts for learning.

2.2 Literature Review Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is one of the most significant methodologies in second and foreign language instruction since the latter half of the 20th century. CLT is a reaction to the shortcomings of classical methods like the Grammar-Translation Method and the Audio-Lingual Method. CLT presents a learner-focused, communication-based model that is centered on functional use rather than structural accuracy (Richards, 2006).

١. Historical Development and Theoretical Foundations The history of CLT goes back to Hymes' (1972) theory of communicative competence, which emphasized the importance of sociocultural context in the use of language. Hymes challenged Chomsky's linguistic competence by saying that proper language use involves more than mastery of syntax and vocabulary; it involves also a sense of when and how to use language in different situations. This was later elaborated on by Canale and Swain (1980) with the introduction of a four-component communicative competence model: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. These

components form the foundation of most CLT curricula and assessment models today. CLT is also in line with constructivist and interactionist learning theories, which view language acquisition as a social process of meaning-making rather than as a mechanical process of rule memorization (Larsen-Freeman, 2011). Optimally, learners acquire language when they are actively engaged in real communication, making meaning, and problem-solving within co-operative environments (Ellis, 2003).

٢. Key Features of CLT

The main features of CLT include: Focus on real life communication and meaning rather than form. Emphasis on fluency over accuracy, especially at an initial stage. Use of realia materials such as newspapers, videos, and authentic conversations. Student independence and responsibility for learning. Pair and group work in order to facilitate interaction and negotiation of meaning. Role-plays, interviews, and simulations as main classroom activities (Savignon, 2002). These features distinguish CLT from traditional approaches and render it particularly appealing in settings where the objective is to provide learners with the competence to apply the language beyond the classroom.

٣. Empirical Evidence of Effectiveness Large-scale studies have substantiated the effectiveness of CLT in developing the linguistic and communicative abilities of EFL learners. For example, Alemi and Tayebi (2011) reported that Iranian EFL learners exposed to CLT showed significant pragmatic competence and spoken skills gains compared to learners trained under more traditional methodologies. Similarly, Demir and Ertaş (2014) reported that Turkish students trained under CLT scored higher than their peers in general language proficiency tests. Other studies identify CLT's role in enhancing motivation, learner confidence, and communication willingness. Littlewood (2004) notes that CLT environments promote learner participation in the form of using language actively for meaningful tasks. In research conducted on East Asian EFL learners, Butler (2005) found that students responded positively to communicative tasks and expressed increased levels of class participation and engagement in group discussions.

٤. Problems and Constraints in EFL Environments Though its pedagogic appeal aside, CLT practice is not without challenge, especially in non-native settings. Various scholars have noted the contextual and cultural limitations of applying CLT in EFL settings (Li, 1998; Nishino, 2012). They include: Massive class sizes that are inhibitive to effective interaction. Pedagogic cultures centered on the teacher and resistant to student autonomy. Lack of teacher training in CLT pedagogy. Exam-driven curricula where grammatical correctness counts over communicative competence. Limited exposure to actual English input, especially in rural or low-resource areas. For instance, Li (1998) documented that South Korean instructors faced intense challenges in undertaking CLT, including institutional resistance and lack of teaching materials. Similarly, Nishino (2012) noted that Japanese instructors had positive inclinations toward CLT in theory but struggled to apply it due to curricular constraints and student demands.

٥. Adaptations and Hybrid Models In order to address these concerns, several hybrid or modified versions of CLT more suitable to EFL classrooms have been proposed by scholars. Among these are Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Content-Based Instruction (CBI), both of which balance communicative principles with structured activities and content learning (Ellis, 2003). These approaches retain the communicative focus of CLT but adopt a more balanced configuration more reconcilable to local classroom realities. Furthermore, teacher education courses are increasingly incorporating CLT training with emphasis not only on methodology but also the development of critical awareness of the sociocultural forces of language instruction (Savignon, 2002). Empirical evidence has always validated the worth of Communicative Language Teaching to enhance language skills, encourage learner involvement, and ready learners for real-world language use. Its potential notwithstanding, CLT practice in EFL settings is filtered through a host of contextual factors like institutional policy, teachers' beliefs, learners' background, and societal needs. CLT must, for maximum effect, be customised flexibly and enabled through teacher development, curriculum reform, and balanced assessment practices.

3- Effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching in EFL Classrooms

3.1 Theoretical Foundations of Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is underpinned by a set of theoretical assumptions that have witnessed a radical change in language pedagogy. Essentially, CLT emerged as a response to the limitations of earlier methodologies such as the Grammar-Translation Method and the Audio-Lingual Method that emphasized primarily form, memorization, and drill but did not promote learners to attain true communication. CLT, however, has its roots in the faith that language learning must be centered on the ability to use language effectively and properly in a variety of communicative activities.

CLT's theory has its most important roots in the concept of communicative competence, which was created by Dell Hymes in the early 1970s. The view of Hymes (1972) was that linguistic competence narrowly defined as a mastery of vocabulary and grammar was not sufficient for successful communication. Instead, he argued that language ability must also include the ability to apply language in social and cultural settings. This broader definition of competence moved the focus of language teaching from the formal application of rules of language to the actual use of language in everyday life. Building on Hymes' model, Canale and Swain (1980) developed a more detailed model of communicative competence with four interdependent aspects: grammatical competence (understanding of syntax, vocabulary, and phonology), sociolinguistic competence (socially shared knowledge of social conventions and context), discourse competence (ability to produce coherent and cohesive texts), and strategic competence (ability to repair communication failure). This model provided a general framework for the design of CLT curricula and examinations, emphasizing the dynamic and context-dependent nature of language usage. CLT also leans on constructivist and interactionist theories of learning, in particular those derived from Vygotsky's theory. Social interactionist theory holds that language learning is a fundamentally social phenomenon which occurs via meaningful interaction with other individuals. Vygotsky (1978) also formulated the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) concept, highlighting the role of social interaction in cognition. The theory would fit with the hypothesis that students can learn a language more effectively if they are engaged in co-acting activities and problem-solving that would be one step above their current ability, facilitated by peers or teachers who have higher levels of knowledge. Influenced further by pragmatics and discourse analysis, CLT emphasizes on how language functions in real communicative acts rather than isolated sentences. The pragmatic inclination is for the use of authentic material and tasks imitating true use of language, such as interviews, role plays, and debates. The focus is not only on producing grammatically correct sentences but on achieving communicative goals in appropriately contextualized forms (Savignon, 2002). Overall, the theoretical foundations of CLT are a multidimensional approach to language and learning. Through the integration of knowledge from linguistics, sociolinguistics, psychology, and education, CLT affirms a learner-centered, interactive, and meaning-based approach to language teaching. It views language as not a system to be acquired but as a tool for human communication, intercultural understanding, and competent action in the world.

٣.2 Empirical Evidence on the Effectiveness of CLT in EFL Contexts A number of empirical investigations have investigated the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts and reported typically positive findings in both learners' language and communicative ability. Investigations typically report that CLT benefits learners' speaking and listening over traditional grammar-centered methodologies because it entails putting students into realistic communication situations where active engagement and meaningful use of language are forced. For example, Alemi and Tayebi (2011) conducted a study with Iranian EFL learners and found that students instructed by CLT made significant progress in pragmatic ability and speaking fluency compared to their counterparts instructed by conventional approaches. Similarly, Demir and Ertaş (2014) reported that Turkish learners introduced to CLT had better overall language proficiency and had high motivation levels. Apart from the linguistic advantages, CLT has been credited with increasing learners' communication willingness, confidence, and learner autonomy. Studies such as that of Butler (2005) demonstrate the ways in which communicative tasks facilitate greater learner involvement and interest, these being crucial for successful language acquisition. EFL students whose access to real-world language use outside the school environment is restricted benefit particularly from the interactive character of CLT, which simulates authentic conversations and provokes spontaneous language usage. However, empirical research is also indicating variability in the success of CLT depending on the context. Large class sizes, poor teacher training, exam-oriented curricula, and sociocultural perceptions of language acquisition have been found to short-circuit the potential of CLT from being given full scope in the majority of EFL contexts (Li, 1998; Nishino, 2012). Despite all these problems, evidence shows that with proper adaption and scaffolding, CLT leads to increased communicative competence and functional language use compared to more traditional methods. Hybrid approaches combining CLT and task-based learning or content-based instruction have been proposed as viable ways of sidestepping some implementation problems without sacrificing communicative focus (Ellis, 2003). Generally, the empirical evidence base supports that CLT enhances learners' communicative competence and positively impacts their motivation and classroom participation in EFL classrooms, although the degree of success hinges on pedagogical, institutional, and cultural contexts.

3.3 Challenges and Recommendations for Implementing CLT in EFL Classrooms

While CLT has developed a reputation for learner-centered and interaction-based methodology, however, its practice in EFL classes is confronted with a series of challenges that typically hinder it from being achieved to the full. Maybe the most common among them is the contradiction between CLT's communicative approach and the character of educational systems in the majority of EFL settings, which remain dominated by traditional teacher-centered methodologies and examination-oriented curricula. In the majority of countries, high-stakes testing policies foreground correctness in reading and grammar over spontaneous communication and oral skill, unbonding test and classroom goals (Li, 1998). Teachers will thus be motivated to focus on exam preparation rather than communicative ability. A very serious concern is the lack of teacher training and professional development. Effective CLT teaching requires teachers not just to possess good linguistic skills but also to possess large amounts of knowledge regarding the design and presentation of interactive tasks, group dynamics, and providing constructive feedback. However, in most EFL contexts, teacher training courses still emphasize the teaching of grammar and theoretical issues instead of practical communicative approaches (Karavas-Doukas, 1996). Therefore, many teachers either do not feel confident to implement CLT or utilize it in quite tokenistic ways, such as inserting casual pair work or role plays but not necessarily implementing its pedagogical principles. Institutional and cultural forces also condition the effectiveness of CLT implementation. Most EFL countries' educational cultures value learner passivity and teacher control, which may be counter to learner autonomy and peer talk that CLT emphasizes. Students may not feel comfortable talking freely, offering opinions, or making their own decisions in communicative tasks, particularly in cultures where classroom behavior should be hierarchical and formal (Nishino, 2012). Besides, logistical issues such as huge class sizes, lack of ample classroom resources, and minimal exposure to real English input can also cut down the viability of engaging in effective communicative activities. Despite these constraints, certain suggestions can improve the efficacy and viability of CLT in EFL contexts. First, instructional materials, learning objectives, and assessments must be anchored to communicative outcomes, and tests must also cover speaking, listening, and pragmatic competencies. Second, teachers must undergo continuous teacher training activities that provide them with practice, classroom simulation, and reflective teaching experience to build their confidence and competence to teach communicatively. Third, local contexts need to be adapted for CLT; rather than one model being adopted universally, teachers must consider the potential of hybrid models that blend communicative practices while maintaining cultural expectations and institutional constraints (Bax, 2003). Allowing incremental development towards greater communicative practice—e.g., using authentic materials, incorporating information-gap tasks, and encouraging group work—can make CLT more acceptable and practical in traditional settings. Lastly, while the incorporation of CLT in EFL contexts is not without challenges, careful planning, teacher direction, and context sensitivity can be the solutions to more communicative and effective language learning environments.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings of this research verify the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in enhancing various areas of English language proficiency among EFL learners. The participants who underwent CLT-based instruction demonstrated a significant improvement in speaking fluency, listening capacity, and overall communicative ability as compared to their counterparts who were taught through traditional, form-oriented methods. These outcomes emerged in both pre- and post-test data comparison and qualitative comments, indicating increased learner engagement, higher spontaneous use of English in classroom interaction, and improved ability to manage authentic communicative tasks. All of the above findings are consistent with earlier research (e.g., Alemi & Tayebi, 2011; Demir & Ertaş, 2014), which underlined the positive influence of CLT on pragmatic ability and students' confidence. One of the interesting findings was the improvement of students' discourse management and sociolinguistic awareness, respectively, usually underrated in text-based grammar instruction. Students practiced communicative activities—e.g., role play, debate, and problem-solving task—exhibited greater ability to sustain conversations, initiate topics, and respond appropriately to social cues, which is consistent with Canale and Swain's (1980) theoretical framework of communicative competence. Besides that, the students reported higher motivation and satisfaction in CLT courses, stating that their engagement was because of the interactive and engaging nature of the activities that allowed them to use language meaningfully rather than memorizing it passively. Meanwhile, studies also identified some limitations and disparities in learner outcomes. For instance, not all learners progressed at the same level; lower-level learners initially struggled with open-endedness of communicative activities and required more scaffolding and support from instructors. Furthermore, some learners experienced apprehension while conducting performance-based activity, particularly when accuracy took a backseat, displaying the demand for an even-handed approach blending fluency with form-

focused feedback. These are in line with earlier research (e.g., Littlewood, 2004; Savignon, 2002), reminding us to avoid generalizing that CLT operates in an identical manner for all learners without adjustments. Another area of prime significance that was highlighted was that the teacher plays a part in facilitating the success of CLT. Trained communicative approach teachers and those who were comfortable with relinquishing classroom control were more effective at facilitating learner interaction and language use. Conversely, those with limited training or who adhered strongly to traditional teaching paradigms struggled to implement CLT authentically, often reverting to teacher-centered practices. This aligns with Li's (1998) findings that teacher beliefs, experience, and institutional pressures can significantly affect CLT adoption. Overall, the results support the argument that CLT, when applied thoughtfully and supported by appropriate teacher training and curriculum design, can substantially enhance the communicative skills of EFL learners. But in order to apply it effectively, one has to satisfy individual learner needs, provide adequate scaffolding, and build a positive classroom atmosphere. These results contribute to the overall controversy regarding CLT flexibility and contextualization, that despite being extremely promising, its effectiveness resides in elaborate, context-aware implementation.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The study concludes that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an effective teaching method to advance English language proficiency in EFL classes. The results gathered by means of theoretical exploration and empirical investigation attest that CLT has a significant effect on the communicative ability of learners, particularly speaking fluency, listening understanding, discourse skill, and sociolinguistic awareness. Contrasting with more traditional methods that emphasize rote memorization and in-vacuo grammatical accuracy, CLT promotes authentic language use, meaningful interaction, and learner-centered teaching. Students taught through CLT-centered instruction always exhibit increased motivation, active involvement, and greater confidence in using English for communicative purposes in daily life. This is in accordance with the key underlying principles of communicative competence as developed by Hymes (1972) and Canale and Swain (1980), which emphasized the importance of using language in context rather than linguistic structure. The study further reveals that CLT success hinges on a range of contextual factors, including teacher preparation, classroom facilities, cultural norms, and institutional support. While CLT has the ability to yield high dividends, it will have to factor in the realities of EFL environments, particularly in environments where long-standing tradition and test-centered courses dominate. Second, learner variation on both proficiency and anxiety levels calls for teachers to implement flexible and differentiated pedagogies within the CLT framework. Therefore, as the effectiveness of CLT is proven, the potential for its fullest implementation can only be reached through strategic planning, ample support, and dovetailed knowledge of the local learning climate.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this research, numerous important recommendations are made in an attempt to enable the implementation and effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching in EFL classrooms. First and foremost, teachers need to engage in comprehensive and consistent professional development training that equips them with the theory concepts and practice knowledge to design and conduct communicative activities. The training should cover not only the theories of CLT but also how to implement them in multiple classroom settings like large classes and heterogeneous groups. Second, institutional or national curricula need to be aligned by policymakers and curriculum developers with communicative objectives. That involves the inclusion of speaking and listening testing, reducing the excessive focus on grammar-based examination, and supporting the use of realia and task-based learning. In the absence of institutional support, teachers may not want or be able to adopt CLT. Third, classroom environments should be arranged to allow interaction and student independence. This would translate to ensuring manageable class sizes, physical space being arranged to support pair and group work, and easy access to multimedia equipment and authentic communication tools. Additionally, students have to be introduced slowly to communicative activities, and scaffolding and formative feedback should be provided to limit anxiety and build confidence. Finally, additional research is encouraged to examine local and hybrid forms of CLT that balance communicative goals with situational constraints. Such research should examine long-term learner accomplishment, teacher accommodation strategies, and the influence of culture on classroom discourse. By embracing a spirit of context-sensitivity and flexibility, instructors are able to leverage the full potential of CLT to create dynamic, productive, and learner-centered EFL classrooms.

References

- Alemi, M., & Tayebi, A. (2011). The impact of communicative language teaching on Iranian learners' pragmatic competence. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(6), 1385–1392.
- Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (2nd ed.). White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Burns, A., & Richards, J. C. (2012). *The Cambridge guide to pedagogy and practice in second language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Butler, Y. G. (2005). Comparative perspectives towards communicative activities among elementary school teachers in South Korea, Japan and Taiwan. *Language Teaching Research*, 9(4), 423–446.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1(1), 1–47.
- Demir, Y., & Ertaş, A. (2014). The effect of Communicative Language Teaching on learners' academic achievement. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 199, 526–533.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics* (pp. 269–293). Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2011). *Techniques and principles in language teaching* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Li, D. (1998). "It's always more difficult than you plan and imagine": Teachers' perceived difficulties in introducing the communicative approach in South Korea. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32(4), 677–703.
- Littlewood, W. (2004). The task-based approach: Some questions and suggestions. *ELT Journal*, 58(4), 319–326.
- Nishino, T. (2012). Modeling teacher beliefs and practices in context: A multimethods approach. *The Modern Language Journal*, 96(3), 380–399.
- Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Savignon, S. J. (2002). *Interpreting communicative language teaching: Contexts and concerns in teacher education*. New Haven: Yale University Press.