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Needs and CLT Effectiveness in a Paraguayan High School English Instruction: A Study of Student and Teacher Perspectives

Necesidades y eficacia del enfoque comunicativo (CLT) en la enseñanza del inglés en un colegio secundario paraguayo: un estudio de las perspectivas de estudiantes y docentes

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to identify the preferences, and perceived importance of elements in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction at a public high school in Concepción, Paraguay. Using a descriptive quantitative case study design, the research replicated Andi & Arafah's (2017) methodology, focusing on first-year students and involving 63 students, 51 experienced teachers, and the school's English teacher. The objective was to inform the development of improved teaching materials and activities. Findings revealed preferences toward grammar topics like "Be" verbs in simple present form and Action Verbs were highlighted as essential for effective communication. For pronunciation, students showed a preference for learning through native speaker recordings. Interactive methodologies, including Learning through Games, Talking in Pairs, Role-playing, and Videos, were unanimously rated as "very important" and aligned with a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. These findings stressed the effectiveness of real-life scenarios and collaborative strategies in EFL instruction. Further research can evaluate the impact of preferences by testing them with the same group.

Keywords: English as a Foreign Language Teaching; Needs Analysis; Communicative Language Teaching; Public Education.

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RESUMEN

Este estudio tuvo como objetivo identificar las preferencias y la percepción de la importancia de los elementos en la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) en una escuela secundaria pública de Concepción, Paraguay. Utilizando un diseño de caso descriptivo y cuantitativo, la investigación replicó la metodología de Andi y Arafah (2017), centrándose en estudiantes de primer año e involucrando a 63 estudiantes, 51 docentes con experiencia y el docente de inglés de la escuela. El objetivo fue informar el desarrollo de materiales y actividades de enseñanza mejorados. Los resultados revelaron preferencias hacia temas gramaticales como los verbos "Be" en forma de presente simple y los verbos de acción, considerados esenciales para la comunicación efectiva. En cuanto a la pronunciación, los estudiantes mostraron preferencia por aprender a través de grabaciones de hablantes nativos. Las metodologías interactivas, como el aprendizaje a través de juegos, conversaciones en pareja, dramatizaciones y videos, fueron unánimemente calificadas como "muy importantes" y se alinearon con el enfoque de Enseñanza Comunicativa del Lenguaje (CLT). Estos hallazgos resaltaron la efectividad de escenarios de la vida real y estrategias colaborativas en la enseñanza del inglés. Investigaciones futuras pueden evaluar el impacto de estas preferencias probándolas con el mismo grupo.

Palabras clave: enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera; análisis de Necesidades; enseñanza comunicativa del Lenguaje; Educación Pública.

Introduction

In today's dynamic and ever-changing educational landscape, the acquisition of English language skills through effective communication remains crucial. This holds particularly true in the context of public education in Concepción, Paraguay, specifically at the Centro Regional de Educación Juan E. O'Leary, where the relevance and applicability of instructional materials for first-year students have come under scrutiny. The current set of English language materials, provided as part of the *Paraguay Aprende* program developed by the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC), was initially designed to address the rapid shift to distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic (Paraguay: Ministerio de Educación y Ciencias, 2021). This program offered digital textbooks and multimedia content aimed at bridging educational gaps by providing access to resources for both students and teachers. Despite its positive intent, its limitations have sparked concern among stakeholders.

The transition back to in-person classes in 2021 revealed challenges in the educational community regarding the suitability of materials designed for remote education. Besides the informal concerns by students and teachers of the institution, upon a previous analysis of the *Paraguay Aprende* materials, the researchers found that they appear to align more closely with the Grammar-Translation method, which emphasizes translation exercises, memorization, and grammatical accuracy at the expense of oral communication and listening skills (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This language didactic approach stands in contrast to the communicative principles outlined in Paraguay's current Curriculum Design, which prioritizes interactive, student-centered language learning (Paraguay: Ministerio de Educación y Ciencias, 2021).

Besides the National Curriculum's requirements, CLT replaced older approaches because of its flexibility, attractiveness and focus on practice in real-life scenarios. According to Simion (2019), CLT aligns with students' desire to focus on practical communication skills. Furthermore, another advantage of this approach is that foreign languages can be better mastered through language communication activities and engaging classroom teaching strategies (Xiao, 2024). Finally, CLT is versatile and adaptable, meeting most demands in modern language teaching and learning environments (Dos Santos, 2020). Overall, this approach is crucial to this research not only because of the National Curriculum's guidelines but also for the advantages that can be more accurately determined by analyzing the needs of the particular class.

Literature Review

Needs Analysis

Teachers in schools often rely on government-provided textbooks that they are required to use, without having the opportunity to select materials that align with their students' needs. This lack of choice can result in textbooks that are mismatched with the school's context, curriculum, and students' prior knowledge, making it difficult for teachers to adapt the content to their learning objectives. As a result, there is often a misalignment between the learning goals set by teachers and the actual needs of the students. To evaluate the material, teachers typically observe whether the content works for their students, using their familiarity with learners' needs, gained through teaching experience and referencing the syllabus and learning objectives, to determine what is appropriate (Kusuma, & Apriyanto, 2018).

A more formal way to evaluate the needs of students is through a needs analysis. This instrument is used to systematically identify learners' specific language needs. A needs analysis is essential for designing effective English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses. It plays a critical role in all stages of curriculum development by ensuring that teaching methods, materials, and objectives align with learners' goals. Furthermore, it enhances motivation and success while identifying limitations in existing curricula and preferred teaching approaches (Balatska & Vyslobodska, 2020). This process is particularly valuable when implementing the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, as it gathers vital information to ensure the program matches learners' goals and adapts its components to meet their requirements. Needs analysis also examines teachers' and learners' attitudes toward CLT, determining its compatibility with current learning needs and aiding in the design of CLT techniques to address individual learner requirements (in content, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and teaching methodologies) effectively (Boroujeni & Fard, 2013).

Moreover, the application of needs analysis in EFL contexts highlights preferences and attitudes toward traditional, such as the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) and the Direct Method, and non-traditional methods such as the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Traditional methods often prioritize linguistic competence through explicit grammar instruction, translation, and structured drills, which ensure accuracy but limit real-world communication skills (Babayev, 2023; Zhong-guo & Min-yan, 2007). In contrast, CLT integrates grammar into communicative activities. This approach balances fluency and accuracy while fostering learner autonomy through negotiation of meaning and self-correction (Zhang, 2023). Teachers play a central role in CLT by combining explicit grammar instruction with interactive tasks, such as group work, to promote meaningful interaction and real-life language application (Holandyah et al., 2021). Moreover, according to Richards & Rodgers (2014), in CLT, grammar is meant to be taught inductively through authentic materials like newspapers, magazines, and digital media, and techniques such as role-plays, simulations, and debates, by integrating all language skills into lessons. Thus, CLT overcomes the limitations of traditional methods by blending linguistic precision with sociolinguistic competence, enabling learners to use grammar effectively in diverse, authentic situations (Zhong-guo & Min-yan, 2007).

A needs analysis also evaluates the teaching of vocabulary and how sometimes it is more effective to blend traditional and communicative approaches while addressing the need for diverse methods. Traditional techniques, such as flashcards, word mapping, and vocabulary notebooks, align with explicit instruction and focus on systematic teaching, ensuring retention through direct explanations and structured practice (Melaku & Kibru, 2020). These methods are valuable for introducing and reinforcing core vocabulary. In contrast, approaches aligned

with CLT, such as contextualized practice, collocations and chunks, task-based activities, and guessing from context, promote incidental learning and deeper understanding by integrating vocabulary into meaningful contexts like conversations and role-plays (Thornbury, 2002). Almuhammadi (2020) emphasizes the importance of contextual strategies, noting that learners benefit significantly from consciously engaging with word use in context, which fosters effective vocabulary acquisition. However, Almuhammadi (2020) also points out that many teachers rely on a limited set of methods, underscoring the need for professional development to expose teachers to a broader range of current practices. By combining explicit teaching with interactive, learner-centered activities and professional growth, teachers can cater to diverse learning needs and enhance both retention and application of vocabulary.

Finally, preferences in pronunciation are also important to consider to analyze a classroom's needs. These range from traditional accuracy-focused methods to communicative context-based approaches. For a needs analysis, there are options such as more traditional methods, like the Direct Method, which emphasizes imitation and repetition, where learners model their speech on a native-like example provided by the teacher or audio recordings (Zouaidi, 2024). These methods focus on isolated sounds and patterns, using minimal-pair drills and listen-and-repeat exercises to enhance accuracy and oral fluency. In contrast, non-traditional approaches, such as those based on the Communicative Framework for Teaching Pronunciation, integrate form and meaning, guiding learners to apply pronunciation features in real-life communication (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). This framework includes five stages: description and analysis, listening discrimination, controlled practice, guided practice, and communicative practice. For instance, learners might first analyze pronunciation features then practice them through role-plays, storytelling, or discussions in meaningful contexts. This approach shifts the focus from isolated drills to functional language use, emphasizing fluency and learner engagement in natural interactions. By blending elements of both approaches, teachers can identify specific challenges, provide structured practice, and encourage self-monitoring through recording or peer feedback, helping learners confidently use targeted features in authentic communication (Levis & Sonsaat, 2017).

Communicative Language Teaching

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach offers significant advantages in language education, particularly in fostering learner autonomy, communicative competence, and cultural proficiency. Thamarana (2015) states that this learner-focused approach builds confidence and enjoyment in communication. Furthermore, Qasserras (2023) underscores that CLT enhances language proficiency by immersing students in authentic communicative contexts, where they can refine their ability to convey and interpret messages effectively. Additionally, CLT promotes cultural competence by allowing learners to experience and appreciate diverse cultural norms, which enriches their language use in multicultural settings (Qasserras, 2023). Together, these studies highlight CLT's ability to prepare learners for real-world communication by fostering both linguistic and cultural skills.

Research on attitudes toward Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) reveals a generally favorable perception among teachers and learners, though certain challenges persist. According to Khatib and Tootkaboni (2019), both teachers and learners in Iran express positive attitudes toward CLT principles, particularly its learner-centered approach. However, gaps remain in areas like grammar emphasis, error correction, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom. Similarly, Melgarejo and Canese (2023) highlight CLT's effectiveness in improving English proficiency in diverse contexts, including rural and urban areas, while acknowledging the need to integrate its practices with traditional methods for optimal outcomes. Studies from

Ecuador and Bangladesh echo these findings, demonstrating partial alignment between teacher beliefs and CLT practices, such as limited implementation of task-based activities (Toro et al., 2018) and a preference for traditional methods like error correction and native language use (Moisur et al., 2017). Collectively, these insights stress the importance of aligning teacher beliefs with CLT practices through reflective training and consistent application to bridge the gap between theory and classroom implementation.

National Curriculum

The National Curriculum Prioritization (2021) was introduced by the Paraguayan Ministry of Education and Sciences in response to the educational challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This initiative reorganized the original curriculum, focusing on essential competencies to ensure equitable education across the country, regardless of the mode of instruction. The prioritized curriculum is characterized by its flexibility, dynamism, and transitory nature, addressing students' emotional health, fostering technological literacy, and emphasizing the integration of pedagogical approaches. It aims to bridge learning gaps caused by the pandemic, reduce instructional hours, and provide a framework that can be adapted to local contexts while maintaining alignment with national educational objectives. By doing so, it ensures continuity in education and promotes the holistic development of learners, including their cultural and social integration (Paraguay: Ministerio de Educación y Ciencias, 2021).

In the first year of high school, the curriculum prioritizes specific foundational skills, particularly in language learning. Among the key objectives are the abilities to greet, introduce oneself, and say goodbye, as well as to understand and use simple expressions and questions. Students are also expected to request and provide personal information using the verb "to be," discuss topics related to time and weather, and recognize vocabulary such as cardinal numbers (20-100), family members, and personal items. Additionally, they practice creating dialogues about daily activities, expressing skills using "can" or "cannot," and understanding short texts with simple syntactic structures. This curriculum seeks to develop communicative competencies that enable students to engage in everyday interactions while building a foundation for more complex language skills in the future (Paraguay: Ministerio de Educación y Ciencias, 2021).

This study explores its relevance in aligning teaching methods with students' specific needs in one concrete English classroom. With challenges in the *Paraguay Aprende* initiative and the misalignment between materials and CLT as outlined in the National Curriculum, this research investigates how needs analysis can address these gaps. Specific questions include:

1. What are the first-year students' needs regarding grammar, vocabulary, teaching methods, content, and pronunciation?
2. What are the views of experienced teachers on CLT's effectiveness in this context?

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a quantitative research design to collect and analyze the needs of first-year students at a public scientific high school in Concepción, Paraguay. The study replicated a previous study conducted by Kaharuddin & Arafah (2017) titled *Using Needs Analysis to Develop English Teaching Materials in Initial Speaking Skills for Indonesian College Students of English*.

Participants

This study included 63 students from six different parallel classes of the first year at the mentioned High School. It also included the English teacher of the said class and experienced teachers who are familiar with English education in the public sector. Thus, the chosen sample had very similar experiences with practices in these types of institutions. In order to conduct the questionnaires, simple random sampling was chosen for students and the purposive sampling technique was chosen to be applied to the teacher and other teachers from different backgrounds and cities in Paraguay who received training in English as a Foreign Language teaching, some even with postgraduate specializations in the area. The researchers randomly selected students from each of the six parallel classes. The English teacher had also been invited to participate in answering a questionnaire

Instrumentation

Questionnaires were used to gather insights from three groups: first-year students, their classroom teacher, and experienced English teachers. Students shared their needs, preferences, including expectations for effective learning. The classroom teacher provided feedback on material effectiveness based on observations and experiences. Experienced teachers from other institutions offered recommendations and broader perspectives on CLT's strengths, limitations, and applicability, enriching the study's findings. The validity lies in triangulation, using data from students, their teacher, and experienced teachers to ensure diverse perspectives.

Data Collection and Analysis

The study analyzed questionnaire data from first-year students, their teacher, and experienced English teachers with over five years of experience in diverse Paraguayan institutions. Tabulated results were categorized to analyze materials, linguistic needs, and CLT strategy benefits. Data were scored on a 1–4 scale for satisfaction, importance, and effectiveness. Frequencies and mean scores were calculated to identify trends, with scores categorized for interpretation.

Results

Table 1. Grammar Preferences

N o.	Responde nts	Basic Grammar Items							
		Singular and Plural Nouns	Possessive s	Pronoun s	'Be' verbs (simple present 1)	Articles: Indefinite and Definite	Demon strative s	Actio n Verbs	Present Continuou s
1.	Students	2.96	3.14	3.06	3.16	3.08	3.22	3.03	3.07
2.	English School Teacher	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	3
3.	Experienc ed Teachers	3.37	3.23	3.5	3.58	3.23	3.34	3.57	3.44
	μ	3.11	3.12	3.18	3.58	3.10	3.18	3.53	3.17
0 – 1.50 = not important 1.50 – 2.50 = less important 2.51 – 3.50 = importante 3.51 – 4.00 = very important									

Table 1 evaluates preferences for basic grammar items in the National Curriculum for First-Year High School English. Key findings include: Singular and Plural Nouns (3.11), Possessives (3.12), Pronouns (3.18), Demonstratives (3.18), and Present Continuous (3.17) were rated as "important." Highly significant were 'Be' verbs in the simple present (3.58) and Action Verbs (3.53). Articles scored 3.10. These scores, derived from students, the English teacher, and experienced educators, highlight the critical role of these grammar items in language acquisition.

Table 2. *Topics Preferences*

No.	Respondents	Topics Contemplated in the Paraguayan National Curriculum								
		The Classroom	Family Members	Colors	Greetings	Numbers	Home and Furniture	Weather and Seasons	The Alphabet	Free Time Activities
1.	Students	3.09	3	3.06	3.41	3.24	2.96	3.16	3.16	3.06
2.	English School Teacher	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
3.	Experienced Teachers	2.95	3.37	3.15	3.43	3.39	2.97	3.21	3.39	3.29
	μ	3.01	3.45	3.4	3.61	3.54	3.31	3.45	3.18	3.45
0 – 1.50 = not important 1.50 – 2.50 = less important 2.51 – 3.50 = important 3.51 – 4.00 = very important										

Table 2 highlights preferences for topics in the Paraguayan National Curriculum for English learning. Greetings scored highest (3.61), deemed "very important," while Family Members, Numbers, and Weather and Seasons followed closely (3.45 each). Topics like The Classroom, Home and Furniture, and Free Time Activities, rated 3.01–3.45, fell within the "important" range but lower in priority. The Alphabet scored 3.18, reflecting moderate importance. These findings underscore shared views on the cultural and linguistic relevance of these topics for language acquisition.

Table 3. Pronunciation Preferences

No.	Respondents	Pronunciation Learning Methods		
		Learning Pronunciation from a Dictionary	Learning Pronunciation by Imitating the Teacher	Learning Pronunciation from Recordings of Native Speakers
1.	Students	3.05	3.16	3.25
2.	English School Teacher	3	3	4
3.	Experienced Teachers	2.25	3.14	3.29
	μ	2.77	3.1	3.51
0 – 1.50 = not important 1.50 – 2.50 = less important 2.51 – 3.50 = important 3.51 – 4.00 = very important				

Table 3 evaluates preferences for pronunciation learning methods. Learning from a dictionary scored 2.77, while imitating the teacher scored 3.1, both within the "important" range. Learning from native speaker recordings ranked highest at 3.51, deemed "very important." These results highlight the value placed on authentic native pronunciations in language learning.

Table 4. Vocabulary Preferences

No.	Respondents	Vocabulary Learning Methods					
		Learning Vocabulary through Rote Memorization	Learning Vocabulary through communication	Learning Vocabulary through Audio-lingual Learning (listening and repeating)	Learning Vocabulary according to Specific Topics	List-based Vocabulary Learning	Situational Learning (Learning Vocabulary from dialogue)
1.	Students	2.79	3.2	3.08	3.10	2.88	3.16
2.	English School Teacher	2	3	3	3	2	4
3.	Experienced Teachers	2.51	3.6	3.10	3.53	2.47	3.6
	μ	2.43	3.26	3.06	3.21	2.45	3.59
0 – 1.50 = not important 1.50 – 2.50 = less important 2.51 – 3.50 = important 3.51 – 4.00 = very important							

Table 4 highlights vocabulary learning preferences among students, teachers, and experienced educators. Situational Learning, such as vocabulary from dialogues, ranked highest (3.59, "very important"), emphasizing the value of authentic conversational contexts. Communication-based learning followed closely (3.26, "important"), while topic-specific vocabulary scored 3.21. In contrast, list-based learning (2.45) and rote memorization (2.43) were rated less important. These findings underscore a clear preference for dynamic, context-rich methods, prioritizing authentic communication and situational relevance in vocabulary acquisition. The scoring system reflects participants' nuanced evaluations, ranging from "not important" to "very important."

Table 5. Methods Preferences

No.	Respo ndents	Language Teaching Methodologies or Techniques								
		Learning through Games	Learning through Pictures	Learning through Videos	Learning throughT alking in Pairs	Self- directed Learnin g	Learnin g through Tasks	Learnin g through Listeni ng to Native Speaker s	Learnin g through speakin g with non- native friends	Learnin g by Role- playing
1.	Studen ts	3.09	3.13	3.24	3.16	2.9	3.28	3.31	3.36	3.22
2.	Englis h School Teache r	4	3	3	4	2	3	2	3	4
3.	Experi enced Teache rs	3.61	3.5	3.4	3.5	2.63	3.04	3	3.32	3.58
	μ	3.57	3.21	3.21	3.55	2.51	3.11	2.77	3.23	3.6
0 – 1.50 = not important 1.50 – 2.50 = less important 2.51 – 3.50 = important 3.51 – 4.00 = very important										

Table 5 evaluates preferences for language teaching techniques among students, the school teacher, and experienced teachers. Methods like Learning through Games, Pair Work, Role-playing, and Videos scored 3.55–3.57, deemed 'very important,' highlighting their efficacy and appeal. Meanwhile, Self-directed Learning, Listening to Native Speakers, and Task-based Learning scored within the 'important' range, reflecting moderate recognition. These findings emphasize the value of dynamic, participatory methods in language instruction, offering insights for optimizing teaching strategies in classrooms.

Table 6. CLT Preferences among Experienced Teachers

No.	Strategies within the Communicative Language Teaching Instruction	μ
1.	Employing real-life scenarios and role-plays to enhance practical language use.	3.67
2.	Providing simulations of everyday interactions to build students' confidence.	3.6
3.	Promoting pair work and peer interaction to foster communication skills.	3.56
4.	Encouraging students to engage in collaborative learning.	3.62
5.	Incorporating language games that make learning enjoyable and interactive.	3.56
6.	Encouraging students to communicate in English during specific classroom activities.	3.54
7.	Utilizing visual aids such as pictures, videos, and multimedia to aid comprehension.	3.69
8.	Using authentic materials such as newspapers, advertisements, and audio recordings.	3.4
9.	Designing tasks and projects that require language application and problem-solving.	3.53
10.	Providing feedback and guidance to improve students' pronunciation skills.	3.56
11.	Traditional assessment methods for evaluating their language proficiency (A1) in this context.	2.68
12.	Conducting regular pronunciation exercises and drills.	3.19
0 – 1.50 = not important 1.50 – 2.50 = less important 2.51 – 3.50 = important 3.51 – 4.00 = very important		

In table 5, experienced teachers provided insights into strategies for beginner English learners within the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) framework. Strategies like employing real-life scenarios and role-plays ($\mu=3.67$), providing simulations of everyday interactions ($\mu=3.6$), and collaborative learning ($\mu=3.62$) were highly rated as "very important," emphasizing practical application and interaction. Visual aids ($\mu=3.69$) emerged as the most valued, reflecting their importance in aiding comprehension. Language games ($\mu=3.56$) and feedback on pronunciation ($\mu=3.56$) were also highly regarded. Conversely, traditional assessment methods ($\mu=2.68$) and pronunciation drills ($\mu=3.19$) were rated lower, suggesting a preference for dynamic, communicative, and student-centered approaches over traditional methods.

Discussion

Through the needs analysis, the researchers found that for grammar needs in EFL contexts highlight the importance of balancing traditional and communicative approaches. While students and educators value explicit instruction in foundational grammar items such as "Be" verbs (3.58), Action Verbs (3.53), and Pronouns (3.18), the literature emphasizes integrating these elements into communicative tasks, as proposed by Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). CLT promotes both accuracy and fluency by blending explicit grammar instruction with interactive activities like role-plays and group discussions, enabling learners to apply grammar in real-world contexts (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Zhang, 2023). This suggests that EFL instruction should combine structured grammar practice with opportunities for meaningful communication to meet students' needs effectively.

For vocabulary and pronunciation, the findings reveal a strong preference for context-rich and communicative methods. Vocabulary learning techniques like situational learning, and communication-based methods highlight the importance of authentic contexts, while rote memorization is less valued. Similarly, for pronunciation, native speaker recordings are highly prioritized, reflecting a preference for authentic models over traditional tools like dictionaries. The literature supports these trends, advocating for a blend of explicit and communicative techniques. Effective vocabulary instruction combines traditional methods like word mapping with contextualized practices like collocations and role-plays (Thornbury, 2002; Almuhammadi, 2020). For pronunciation, integrating structured drills with communicative approaches, such as role-plays and peer feedback, promotes fluency and accuracy (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Levis & Sonsaat, 2017). This balanced approach addresses diverse learning needs, fostering both retention and practical application.

High-priority general topics such as greetings and family members reflect the curriculum's focus on foundational communicative skills. Meanwhile, ESP content like "Recycling Basics" and "Countries and Borders" highlights the relevance of incorporating environmental and social science themes into language instruction. The literature supports these findings, emphasizing that ESP connects language learning with students' specialized academic paths, fostering motivation and engagement (Vivanco & Gómez Ortiz, 2005; Sánchez Perlaza & Wilson, 2024). These insights suggest that combining general English instruction with ESP principles can better prepare students for academic and professional challenges.

Finally, the findings in this study align with the literature on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), reinforcing the importance of dynamic, participatory, and student-centered methods while highlighting the benefits of integrating diverse techniques to meet learners' needs. Methods such as role-playing, real-life simulations, and collaborative activities were rated highly by participants, emphasizing practical application and interaction over traditional approaches like rote memorization or isolated drills. This preference resonates with studies by Thamarana (2015) and Qasserras (2023), which advocate for CLT's focus on authentic communication, cultural competence, and learner autonomy. However, gaps identified in traditional methods and assessment align with Melgarejo and Canese's (2023) observation of the need to blend CLT with more explicit instruction for optimal outcomes. The use of tools like needs analysis, as emphasized by Balatska and Vyslobodska (2020), proves essential in designing effective language programs that balance communicative strategies with systematic support, ensuring alignment between learner goals and instructional practices. These findings highlight the potential for refining CLT implementation through reflective teacher training and consistent application to address both linguistic and cultural proficiency in diverse classroom contexts.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this study identified that first-year students prioritize dynamic, context-rich methods for learning grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, with situational and communicative approaches deemed most effective. Regarding teaching methods, students and teachers alike emphasized the value of interactive activities like role-plays and collaborative tasks, aligning with CLT principles. Experienced teachers viewed CLT as highly effective, particularly in fostering practical language application and learner engagement, though they also recognized the need to balance it with explicit instruction for grammar and pronunciation.

The study's limitations include its small sample size, which limits the generalizability of findings to the broader population. While the insights are particularly relevant for high schools specializing in natural or social sciences, they may not fully apply to other educational contexts. Additionally, relying solely on a questionnaire for the needs analysis might have restricted the depth of understanding; incorporating interviews could provide richer insights into students' and teachers' perceptions. Future research could expand the scope to include larger, more diverse groups and employ mixed-methods approaches to explore these findings further.

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