

**Teachers' perspectives on communicative language
teaching: a review of the literature**

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Abstract

In teaching English, there is always the discussion on which approach to apply in order to make the learning process successful for learners. The approach which this study focused on is the Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLT). This research aimed to describe the teachers' perceptions on the use of CLT in a private language institute in Asuncion, Paraguay. This mixed method study used an initial questionnaire, then, semi-structured interviews method to collect the data. The results showed that participants generally had positive perceptions towards the use of CLT. There were also some diverse perceptions on the difficulties of applying the approach. The results from this study may be useful for future studies regarding this teaching approach. At the same time, it may provide significant data on teachers' perception on the approach being applied in the institute where the data was gathered.

Key Words: Second Language - CLT - EFL - BICS - Meaningful language.

Perspectivas de los profesores sobre la enseñanza comunicativa de lenguas: una revisión de la literatura

Resumen

En la enseñanza del inglés, siempre existe la discusión sobre qué enfoque aplicar para que el proceso de aprendizaje sea exitoso para los alumnos. El enfoque en el que se centró este estudio es el enfoque de Enseñanza Comunicativa de Lenguas (CLT). Esta investigación tuvo como objetivo describir las percepciones de los profesores sobre el uso de CLT en un instituto privado de idiomas en Asunción, Paraguay. Este estudio de método mixto utilizó un cuestionario inicial y luego un método de entrevistas semiestructuradas para recolectar los datos. Los resultados mostraron que, en general, los participantes tenían percepciones positivas hacia el uso de CLT. También hubo algunas percepciones diversas sobre las dificultades de aplicar el enfoque. Los resultados de este estudio pueden ser útiles para futuros estudios sobre este enfoque pedagógico. Al mismo tiempo, puede proporcionar datos significativos sobre la percepción de los docentes sobre el enfoque que se está aplicando en el instituto donde se recopilaban los datos.

Palabras clave: Segundo Idioma - CLT - EFL - BICS - Lenguaje significativo.

INTRODUCTION

The main chapters of this study consist of an introduction of the research study, a literature review about perception definitions and their connection with a teaching approach, contextual information about Language Learning views, definitions of Language Acquisition, views on Communicative Skills, the link between Perception and a Teaching Approach and the main features about the Communicative Language Teaching approach, and a chapter mentioning the methods used in this study.

This research study offers a comprehensive review of the literature, shedding light on the theoretical foundations and previous research that have shaped the conceptions surrounding Communicative Language Teaching and English Language Learning. It explores different language teaching methodologies, presents the principles of communicative language teaching, and examines the critical role that schools and language institutes play in language acquisition. It contributes to a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the field of language education in Asunción, serving as a valuable resource for educators, researchers, and stakeholders alike. The aim of this study is to examine the literature associated with teachers' perception of CLT.

LITERATURE REVIEW

What is Perception?

Perception is linked to the way a person approaches situations. Gestalt's psychologist Koffka (1922) stated the theory related to perception can be explained as the meaning that is attached to what the person sees. It is the reaction or the effect that a stimulus received by the senses causes on an individual that receives it. This process allows the person to associate the reaction produced by that stimulus to previous incidents. Consequently, that individual can interpret it and also be able to process the situation mentally. Nonetheless, that interpretation of the reality by a specific person may or may not be accurate or in accordance to what others interpret or to the factual occurrence. Perception has four phases: stimulation, registration, organization, and interpretation. (Pickens, 2005, p. 113)

Stimulation:

Senses play a crucial role in this phase. The person receives the stimulus at this initial point. The individual is able to be unconsciously selective through touch, smell, taste or sight. This phase also requires the persons' willing reception of the sensory stimulus. Consequently, that makes it possible to continue with the subsequent phases in the perception process. (Pickens, 2005, p. 115)

Registration

Pickens (2005, p. 120) also mentions Broadbent's model which states that there is a sorting pattern that filters the concepts each person has formed in their head. He addresses the fact that there is a restricted capability for a person to process information. Due to that limited availability, data is selected separately. In other words, the individual internalizes only the most important information, according to personal judgment and this is also called Selective Perception.

Organization

The organization is driven by a specific goal the individual has. Once the person filters the information and processes it, then, it is possible to organize the relevant and irrelevant aspects of it. The person is able to follow a goal and disregard the information that is unimportant. As a result, the individual arranges the data in a meaningful manner. There are criteria to determine what information is more significant, and these criteria are: Physical Constructs, Role Constructs, Interaction Constructs and Psychological Constructs. (Pickens, 2005, p. 125)

Interpretation

This stage, which is also called by Pickens (2005, p. 130), the evaluation stage, is the last one of the perception processes. The individual applies a personal preconception in this interpretation phase. Thus, the criterion that determines the person's bias helps to evaluate the information. Once the person evaluates the data, it is possible to make it meaningful. As a result, in front of the information; the person that has experienced all these four stages can finally make a decision if needed.

The study of perception

As there are many areas of knowledge, events, objects, or ideas to understand, accordingly, there are sciences. When referring to studying perception, the cognitive and learning sciences are the ones that aim to understand the system that processes internal information in the brain in order to perceive the world. Research about perception cannot occur in the absence of a method. In order to study perception, some methods are used by researchers in one single cognitive scientific field. Others are used by researchers from numerous disciplines, for example, arguments, introspection, experimental psychology and neuroscientific methods. However, it is important to recognize that there is no a single method that can answer all the fundamental questions about perception rather; a

combination of methods may get closer to answer them. (Stufflebeam, 2006)

Perception and Teaching Approach

Second Language Learning Approaches

Scarino and Liddicoat (2009) argue that there are four main psychological lines to consider in Language Learning: The behaviorist, The Innate capacity, The Cognitivist and The Sociocultural. These lines that different theorists presented are very closely related to language learning or acquisition. One point in which most of the approaches converge is the different necessities, motivation or background the learners have. On the other hand, the main difference between the theories is the role the second language (SL) or target language plays in the learning process.

Language Acquisition

Escamilla and Grassi (2000) acknowledged Krashen's theory, which affirms that there are different levels of competence that the students have in the Language when coming to an English class. Therefore, it is not appropriate to assume students' proficiency. On the contrary, teachers should know reasonably well the proficiency level of each student as well as the individualities regarding the acquisition pace they are in.

Krashen (1983) differentiated the stages as following: Silent/Perceptive/Pre- production, Early Production, Speech Emergence, Intermediate Fluency and Advanced Fluency. Then, considering that there are different levels of competence, acquisition consists in the process of assimilating a language similarly to when the mother tongue was acquired rather than learning grammar rules.

BICS

Cummins (1999) argues that there are strong discrepancies in acquisition and developmental patterns amongst communicative language and academic language, or BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) and CALP. The distinction in the theory between these two levels highlights misconceptions about the nature of language proficiency which contributes to academic failure among EFL students. Cummins also argues that BICS differs from the mere intellectual or academic setting. It rather is the face to face type of communication. BICS has to do with the proficiency the student may have to communicate socially in an environment outside the classroom, considering students phonology and ease to transmit and understand the language in a communicative setting.

In essence, teachers should be aware that BICS improvement must be constantly motivated

in order for students to succeed in the language learning process. Khabit (2016) states that it was noticed that BICS have a tendency to improve quite fast. These types of skills must be developed through language that is reinforced by circumstantial clues such as objects, props, pictures, graphs, etc. The signs help the learner to find sense in the spoken or written setting. Interaction within the students is obtained thanks to contextual language and it allows them to get interpersonal clues to build sense at the end. For an input to be clear it is necessary for the student to have a context that portrays the here and now (Bio, 2011)

BICS and Communicative Language Teaching

The promotion of BICS in the classroom improves the chances to motivate students as reported by Pica (2000 p. 2), who names this as desired outcome or goal and similarly to Ju (2013), she argues that when the language is relevant for speakers they are much more able to learn. In other words, the Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLT) increases the chances for students to be motivated and engaged in learning and acquiring the language. For instance, if students talk about their ideas, opinions or experience as is endorsed in CLT, there is a higher chance they acquire the language and apply it in future exchanges (Krashen, 1983, p. 166). Much research on CLT has been done and it shows that a lot of aspects in students' BICS improve significantly such as fluency, autonomy in their learning and self-confidence when speaking in the target language. As it is well known, students' proficiency does not only require the ability to reproduce grammatically correct structures but also, it is their self-reliance to produce and be ready to make mistakes because that is the only way in which the language learning process is guaranteed. Hence, from the willingness to make mistakes and correct them comes the autonomy the student can develop resulting in fluent speech (Karim, 2004).

Criticism to BICS AND CALP

Critics accuse BICS and CALP of categorizing together contextual and cognitive developments inaccurately. Reza (2015) considers that language skills cannot be classified as simply as in two groups. Most of the school subjects do not fit the categorizations to be taught in a context-embedded, context-reduced, semantic or cognitive style.

The following limitations have been criticized about the context and cognitive development distinction that BICS and CALPS promote: A. Limited variables: The theory is restricted to psychological and individual aspects of the learner, aspects such as culture, community, economy and household expectations are not included. B. Prioritization of educational success: other indices of success such as employment, self-confidence, emotional

development or creativity are not regarded. C. Separation of context and cognition since, all kinds of learning process and interchange is in some kind of context, the notions of contextual and cognitive aspects cannot be separated. D. Generalization of learners' cognition and learning style: the theory requires a more individual approach to the learners' learning style and cognitive ability. (Baker & Wright, 2017)

Communicative Language Teaching

Origins

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a very well-known approach, and it is viewed and used as a successful theoretical method. This approach has different definitions and the common denominator amongst them is its perception as an approach, whose goal is to reach the maximum communicative proficiency in foreign language learning (Karim, 2004, p. 340). Basta (2011) states that CLT started to emerge in Great Britain in the 60s. Noam Chomsky was one of the first linguists that indicated that the standard structural theories of the time could not represent the originality and uniqueness of single sentences. As a result, there was a revolution from the persistence of the simple knowledge of grammatical structures to emphasis on communicative proficiency. Various theorists such as Wilikins (1973) also highlighted the importance of communicative competence in language learning. The concept of language as communication derives fundamentally from CLT. Chomsky originally implanted the idea of teaching language in a communicative way in order to gain communicative competence. After that Hymes (1972) developed the concepts of competence and performance. These ideas mean that language requires the acquisition of skills and knowledge. Then, the Communicative approach contested the predominant audio-lingual method. It was a shift to a more social and cultural oriented knowledge necessary for understanding the language functions. Hallidays' (1973) practical version of language usage distinguishes its functions in seven:

1. The instrumental function: using language to accomplish something.
2. The regulatory function: using language to manage others conducts.
3. The interactional function: using language to promote communication with others.
4. The personal function: using language to express emotional feelings and connotations.
5. The heuristic functions: using language to generate something and learn.
6. The imaginative functions: using language to create fictional realities.
7. The representational function: using language to transmit data.

In the meantime Hymes (1972, pp. 284-291) proposed the following concepts of communicative competences: linguistic or grammatical competence, sociolinguistic or pragmatic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence and fluency. (Basta, 2011, p. 78)

Views on the CLT approach

Many authors agree that CLT meant a shift from traditional language teaching. This was a change from plain emphasis on grammar structure to focus on the communication and interpretation of meaning through the target language itself. This shift helped to recognize students' errors in speech as a process of learning and led to focus on encouraging learners in the use of more genuine and unstructured language. The concept that funds CLT authentic language promotion is Krashen's (1983) Natural Approach method, which claims that as long as the student is consistently exposed to the target language, such an approach can lead to acquiring the language just as children acquire their mother tongue. Studies suggested that CLT leads to better fluency and confidence during communicative interactions. Findings also suggest that instruction in communicative setting help to acquire more knowledge and use of language within learners (Lightbown, 1990)

Brown (2001) considers that the CLT approach contains one of the principles of teaching. He states that Communicative Competence (CC) focuses on some specific components: organizational competence, pragmatic competence and psychomotor skills. He considers that CLT might deliver one of the most crucial principles in language teaching and learning. Considering that communicative proficiency is the aim of a language classroom, teachers must focus teaching on all its components: organizational, pragmatic and psychomotor. Communicative objectives develop their maximum potential by giving more attention to language practice and not simply rules, to fluency and not just correctness, to original students' production and context, and to learner's ultimate need to apply classroom practices to spontaneous situations in real life settings.

Richards (2006) describes CLT as a group of main principles about language learning teaching. These principles can be put into practice in different ways and which report various facets of teaching and learning a language. This approach has suffered several changes. Primarily its main concern was communicative competence. This was followed by the use of language rather than the structure. Later, the emphasis changed to identifying learners' needs and at the same time the academic needs focused on the classroom activities that would be

more suitable for the implementation of CLT such as group work, task work or information gap.

According to Harmer (2007) CLT focuses on student's involvement in meaningful communicative practice in the classroom so that language will follow its own flow, and the many activities that help students to mimic real life situations are crucial for the development of their skills. CLT activities normally should engage students in genuine or convincing communicative situations where the use of the language is the main target of the exercise rather than the accuracy of their statements. For these exercises to be communicative, students must have the motivation to transmit something. What students are intending to communicate should have a meaning for them. The focus should be on the content of what they are trying to say rather than on the language structure. The main point is trying to recreate real life communication. All of these characteristics are the ones that allowed CLT to have a big influence in EFL classrooms all around the world.

Thornbury (2013, p. 5) states that the main contribution of CLT is the emphasis on language's social purpose, as with the same classroom activities Harmer (2007, p. 27) already mentioned, for instance attention to context and register, because during the practice of communicative interaction there are always numerous activities to put them in practice, such as role plays, real conversations or descriptions. In other words these types of activities help to learn the target language by using it. The fundamental concepts to ensure a strong form of CLT are fluency, creativity and cooperation. The ideal would be a small class of communicative motivated students. With the essential ingredients the approach might promote language learning and communication.

Critique of CLT

Besides the major contributions CLT has brought to language teaching such as dynamic classes and better understanding of the language use. Swam (1985) acknowledges that this approach has brought positive progress such as short time and higher quality of language acquisition. However, he considers that CLT has become a doctrine rather than a methodology. The concepts that he critiques from the approach are:

1. The notion of meaning
2. Misunderstandings about skills and strategy
3. The conception of a semantic program
4. The authentic resources myth in materials design and methodology

The notion of meaning

Misunderstanding between skills and strategies

According to Candlin (1981) and Kasumi (2017) CLT aims to train learners to develop skills in order to imply and express their ideas through realistic strategies for real life situations. Students should be able to comprehend non-verbal and verbal speech for better communication. Swam (1985, pp. 7-8) contests these concepts by arguing that learners already know how to convey meaning. What students need are the lexical terms to interpret the ideas and express themselves. The most common problem for students is that they know what they want to say but they do not know how to do it. (Yasin, Aziz, & Jannah, 2017)

The authentic resources myth in materials design and methodology

The main focus of CLT is the implementation of authentic materials and the practice of genuine interactions and classroom dialogues as close as possible to real life use of the target language. Nevertheless, the classroom is not the real world, and learning a foreign language is different from using the language in reality. It is expected to have a fair amount of artificial conversations; it is acceptable to present grammatical structures to mimic how they are used in the outside world. The use of authentic materials has been disappointing and many times they may cause more confusion than advantage. Swam (1985, p. 77) and Heitler (2005) claim that it is preferable to adapt materials for foreign language learners.

Further criticisms of CLT

Other authors that look at CLT with critical eyes, such as Rashtchi & Keyvanfar (2007), suggest that CLT might not be suitable for learners with limited background in the target language. This indicates that learners should have an advanced level before joining CLT classes. At the same time, Pica (2000, p. 20) claims that as CLT is centered almost entirely on the context of the message from comprehensible input and unsatisfactorily on the structure, this approach does not necessarily prepare students for learning the target language effectively. For Pica even advanced students that attend CLT classes present many deficiencies in production. As a result, those errors continue without being corrected and there is no grammatical improvement or new incorporation of grammatical structures to help the learners' improvement in the target language.

Didenko & Pichugova (2015) argue that fundamental concepts to CLT have never come to an agreement on some essential issues. The most explanatory example of this according to them is the definition of communicative competence. Studies have suggested various models of competence; still such explanations have not made the application of CLT practices in classes more convenient. One possible reason for this is that CLT intends to grasp many

disciplines at the same time and this fact is a disadvantage for the approach.

Possibly one of the major concerns that Siddiqui (2015) addresses is that in many countries resources and the number of students where the CLT approach is intended to be applied are really limited. Many times teachers have to manage a large number of students and still manage to promote communicative activities. While the maximum number should not go over 15 learners, classes usually have 30 to 35 students. Therefore, because of the large numbers, students do not have the opportunity to be exposed and practice the target language and end up using their mother tongue. These difficulties usually obstruct the holistic approach needed for a communicative class contrary to the CLT principles.

In the meantime, there have also been concerns presented by Ellis (1996) regarding CLT principles in compatibility with other countries' cultural settings and preferences. That is the case in Asian countries. This is due to the approach's views of certain standards, such as individualism in contrast to collectivism of other cultures. Another example is the instance of a study conducted by Rao (2002) on a Chinese university where students preferred non-communicative activities. These students considered that exercises such as drilling or grammar structure presentation were important. Hence, Rao considers that there is a need to modify CLT to local teachers in order to make the approach suitable for the local cultural means. Also, to adjust the student- teacher roles in maintaining rooted cultural customs in the approach, as well as reconsider the combination of CLT and traditional methods as the best option.

Advantages and Disadvantages of CLT

Advantages of CLT

Communicative competence according to Brown (2001, pp. 68 - 69) should lead the learner to handle the communicative skills necessary for outside the classroom. The advantage of CLT in this realm is that it shifts focus from the teacher to the student. In other words, the role of the teacher becomes that of a simple facilitator and most of the time is devoted to the student. Thus, the learner has more chances to practice interaction in the target language and according to Thamarana (2015) it makes it possible to achieve communicative competence.

Shartri (2010) notes that learners benefit when they can adapt what they learn to their own purpose of studying the language. By using CLT the learner can concentrate on the goal they have set to learn the target language. For instance, Alferhaid (2015) provides the example of a student that might be interested in using English for an accountant position. In this case, the method might have more emphasis on contents related to the accountancy area.

Simultaneously, the student still has the opportunity to develop various skills in a holistic fashion while learning English for a specific purpose. Another benefit from the CLT approach is teaching assessment. To measure the applicability of a language test for real learning, Bachman and Palmer (1996) state that these test results should reflect evidence that they actually replicate the way the target language is used in real life situations. Feedback after a typical CLT approach assessment helps the learners to be conscious of their performance because CLT allows students to have errors. Feedback also leads learners to be aware of their flaws and best skills (Alferhaid, 2015, p. 1050).

Belchamber (2007) states that the CLT approach helps to encourage a climate of reliance and support in the classroom. The learners are usually more prompt to participate. For instance, one of the most common tactics used in a CLT classroom is pair checking answers previous whole class checking. Students need to feel involved to assure participation and language learning. Doman (2005) argues that the constant negotiation among students through communication encourages even more participation and involvement. In some cases, learners find it difficult to engage in the negotiation process; still they may contribute with the class. Therefore, it is important to remember that even the slightest contribution or negotiation can be an achievement when promoting communication. One of the challenges and at the same time advantages of CLT is the mixed abilities class. The advantage is that learners are able to contribute according to their proficiency in the language and their self-confidence. Then, there is a challenge for the more proficient students, but the work of those with a regular proficiency is still enormously beneficial.

CLT is very relevant when we discuss language learning or acquisition. Lowe (2005) talks about the Language Mastery concept that, as its name says, encourages students to master the target language. CLT promotes better performance in exams and in addition motivates learners to see the language beyond the classroom. At the end learners who master the language communicatively will be well prepared for speaking the language on a social basis.

Disadvantages of CLT

According to Ridge (1994) the practice of CLT frequently implements a reduced view of language as exclusively communicative. She considers that the reason for this is a limited outlook of language competence from the CLT approach. Recommendations on the syllabus always emphasize the meaning over the form. However, they may neglect the perspective of proficient performance which is broader, as encouraged by Taylor (1988). Ridge (1994, p. 4) and other authors such as O'Hare & Bo (2013) argue that perhaps classifications of proficient

and communicative characteristics must be combined with grammatical and structural features which can provide a more integral study of language for learners resulting in a learning. Brumfit (1985) and Yuan (2011) warn that overstressing on communicative creativity, deprive of references of what it is or what language wants to convey, and it may be one of the most risky limitations in a language classroom

Teachers are most of the time constrained to follow prearranged schedules and forced to use teaching materials pre-selected by authorities. Even though Pan (2012) argues that teaching materials could be the best resources teachers have to be able to enable learning and encourage communication among students. Unluckily, they are one of the most challenging parts to realize for CLT according to Jung & Norton (2002). There are also plenty of materials that do not fulfill the requirements for students in countries where English is a foreign language in CLT classrooms (Le, 2005)-

A practical difficulty to the CLT application in an EFL setting that Abahussain (2016, p. 68) mentions is the restricted time for preparation and practice of communicative material/classes. For example, findings by Alkhayyat (2009) in a Jordanian setting encountered time limitations for arrangement of materials and classwork time availability. EFL teachers in this study alleged that over these circumstances they would be incapable of making their classes following CLT activities, because given that communicative activities are time consuming they would not have enough time for preparation and practice. Time stress therefore means a major drawback for CLT classes.

Another disadvantage listed by Abahussain (2016, p. 65) is the teachers and learners confusion about assessment when implementing CLT approach. Various studies previously conducted agreed that teachers and students wish to have clearer processes for performance assessment appropriate for CLT classes (Ozesevik, 2010; Chang, 2011; Al-Mohana, 2014). For instance, Robertson (2012) conducted a study that shows that in a country where English is a foreign language such as Korea, teachers feel worried about having students perform during exams. As claimed, these exams fail to assert communicative competence by concentrating on unfitting written skills rather than proper communicative language skills. As a consequence, teachers feel concerned about how to prepare students and both students and teachers feel demotivated about learning the target language.

As much as the CLT supporters are constantly learning the ways in which it could be possible to come across with students' necessities for language acquisition, there is prove from

different sources (Dailey, 2010) (Huang, 2016) (Alam, 2016) of disenchantment with the CLT approach or perhaps a perception that it has not proved what it claimed in theory. There are difficulties implementing it adequately, especially in countries where English is a foreign language. According to Ellis (1996, p. 9) one of the most feasible possibilities is that systems with limited resources are unable to prepare teachers who in many cases have limitations in proficiency on their own language.

Studies on CLT

Study in a Public Rural and Urban Schools

This research study revised the CLT approach; its application and impact on learner's motivation in rural and urban Schools of the Republic of Kosovo. According to Kasumi (2015) this study was conducted since CLT shows various advantages compared to the Engage-Study-Activate (ESA) method and the Direct Method regarding performance and motivation. The research on student's performance was conducted by observing schools in rural and urban areas. These results were compared by contrasting students' performance of those who are taught by CLT and those with the ESA and the Direct Method. The research study was conducted with the intention to implement CLT in Kosovo schools as a basis for improvement of teaching and learning achievement.

The tests were conducted at the beginning of the academic year, measuring the performance of students while using the ESA method and the Direct Method before implementing the CLT. At the end of the year the students were assessed again to measure the learner's performance after they were instructed using CLT. The findings on the first evaluation showed a slight better result in the urban areas with the implementation of the ESA and the Direct Method. In the meantime, the results in the rural area showed a significantly lower performance compared with the urban area. On the other hand, CLT showed considerably superior results in both rural and urban areas compared to the other two methods (Kasumi, 2015, p. 161).

The principles of CLT align with the necessities of the curriculum in Kosovo according to Kasumi (2015, p. 158). The study advocates the implementation of CLT's creative and interactive nature which promotes meaningful communication; which can be combined with the Direct Method and the ESA. As suggested by Dörnyei (2009), CLT in Kosovo schools should transform and be combined with more structural systems of language to still conserve the communicative outlook. The implementation of CLT is believed to contribute for better performance in English language acquisition.

Case study on Teachers Beliefs of CLT implementation

A case study was made in a school which investigated and paralleled teachers' belief and in classes observed regarding CLT of two different teachers in Bangladesh. The study intended to highlight the value of studies regarding teachers' understanding of CTL by linking data of their belief about this approach. Teachers' belief on a method is vastly influenced by their experience as students and during their teaching instruction. Richards and Lockhart (1994) state that teachers' perception of a teaching method might be influenced by their training, their teaching familiarity or it might be grounded on their own language learning experience. Therefore, the importance of teachers' belief of CLT lies in the need to recognize the differences between the principles and practices of CLT. By these means, they could comprehend and exercise new teaching procedures and schemes (Moisur, Mehar, & Pandian, 2017).

The study was conducted to two teachers in a school who were instructed under the curriculum of CLT in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The teachers were interviewed and observed, according to Moisur, Mehar, & Pandian (2017, p. 300), in order to collect as much data as possible about the language in the classroom and their beliefs. The findings from the observations showed that teachers promoted practices that do not completely align with CLT error correction and students participation principles (Richards & Lockhart, 1994, p. 185). For instance, teachers dominated the oral communicative activities with constant error correction. Other findings regarding the beliefs collected from the interviews showed that the two teachers' notions differed from the CLT practices about the native language use in class. For example, the teachers expressed they considered acceptable the use of the first language to make corrections to avoid recurrent errors. However, the study also revealed that the teachers' beliefs and practices aligned with communicative practices such as communicative exercises, pair and group work (Freeman, 2008), as well as both written and oral practices.

Moisur, Mehar, & Pandian (2017, p. 307) argue that with the study it would be possible to encourage awareness about the importance of the alignment between the CLT belief and practice. They also aim to promote the clarification of how instructors can implement any modification to their teaching performance. In this way, first teachers could be able to identify disparities with CLT theories and practice and, second, that change and development is normal during the course of professional development in the teaching field. Then, the study will be used by teachers to reflect about their performance as educators, as Richards and Lockhart (1994, p. 6) advocate to reflect on how and why they act in a certain way, their

limitations and decisions.

Study on the use of CLT to improve students' Oral Skills

The study was conducted to determine whether or not the use of CLT in EFL classrooms promotes students' oral performance. The participants were students and teachers of a public elementary school in Loja in southern Ecuador. The research study was conducted by giving a questionnaire to the teachers and class observations were also made. The study was conducted taking into account that different methods are used in Ecuadorian classrooms to teach EFL classes though many times they do not fulfill the wanted communicative goals. (Toro, Camacho, Pinza, & Paredes, 2018)

The study gathered data from observations in order to compare to the answers given by the teachers through the questionnaire. The results from the observation and questionnaire showed that there were limited task-based activities to promote communication used during classes as suggested by Richards (2006, p. 29). Observations in the study also showed that there were other communicative strategies that were in fact implemented such as modeling, repetition and pair group. However, it was observed that the limited communicative practices were not consistent enough according to Toro, Camacho, Pinza, & Paredes (2018) in order to produce the desired outcomes at the time of oral production.

Toro, Camacho, Pinza, & Paredes (2018, p. 110) state that the study will signify an important source of information about ELF teaching and learning and will also help to develop the teaching practice with applicable methods. Findings in the study indicate that some communicative practices were implemented in the classes observed by the questioned teachers, yet they were still insufficient to stimulate dynamic student involvement during classes. Some interactions were witnessed in the classes and appropriate strategies were implemented. Therefore it is required to implement those communicative strategies more consistently in order for the CLT to reflect improvement in learners' oral skills. The study represents a valuable basis to consider the strategies and the administration of them in order to acquire the skills necessary for the target language development.

Weak and strong version of CLT

Richard and Smith (2014) argued that CLT was a predominantly positive change from outdated teaching methods, yet later in its application it started to show flaws leading to distinguishing a weak and strong version of CLT. The reason for the deviation from the CLT basis might be the need of teachers to compensate for the unfulfilled demands of CLT. While

the goal of CLT is linguistic interaction in the target language in the outside world, the weaker form is the one in which the language is learned for merely probable use in the future. Communicating in the foreign language in order to learn it should be the principle of CLT classes and not the other way around, to learn in order to communicate (Prabhu, 1983); (Thornbury, 2013). Ellis (2003) states on the one hand that the weak version uses task-based activities along with traditional teaching methods. On the other hand, the strong version uses task-based activities as the basis of the classes. The parallel between both versions is essentially the different use of task-based activities of one and the other.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, in this research study the literature review delved into the theoretical foundations and prior research that have informed our understanding of Communicative Language Teaching and English Language Learning and it served as the foundation for a research investigation into teachers' perspectives through empirical study. It shed light on the connection between perceptions and teaching approaches, highlighting the elaborate connection between theory and practice. It also provided insights into language acquisition and the pivotal role played by schools and language institutes in shaping language learning experiences. It elucidated the principles of communicative language teaching, emphasizing the importance of active communication in the language acquisition process.

Through the examination of different language teaching methodologies, this study has contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the field of language education, and beyond. It also, particularly delved in learning theories, providing a methodological foundation for understanding how teachers process information related to language teaching approaches. Researchers employ various methods, including arguments, introspection, experimental psychology, and neuroscientific methods, to search into the complexities of perception. In the realm of language teaching, teachers' perceptions are influenced by different second language learning approaches, such as behaviorist, innate capacity, cognitivist, and sociocultural perspectives.

Within the spectrum of language learning approaches, teachers' perceptions of CLT are crucial. CLT, as a communicative and proficiency-focused approach, aims to enhance students' language skills through meaningful communication. Scholars like Scarino and Liddicoat highlight the psychological dimensions of language learning, emphasizing the diverse needs, motivations, and backgrounds of learners. Moreover, proponents of CLT argue that it fosters Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS), contributing to students' fluency, autonomy,

and self-confidence in the target language.

However, CLT is not without criticism. Some critiques challenge aspects such as Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). These critiques question the limited variables considered, the prioritization of educational success, and the separation of context and cognition. Despite these criticisms, CLT has significantly influenced language teaching by shifting the focus from grammatical structures to communicative proficiency, fostering fluency, confidence, and authentic language use among learners.

In conclusion, teachers' perceptions of CLT are shaped by the cognitive process of perception, influenced by their understanding of language learning approaches and the broader context of language acquisition theories. While CLT has transformed language teaching by prioritizing communicative competence, its success depends on how well teachers navigate the complexities of perception, adapting their methods to the diverse needs and motivations of language learners.

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