

A Systematic Analysis of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in EFL Classroom: Teacher and Student Perspective

Bedah

Department of Education Science, UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten Serang, Banten, Indonesia

Naf'an Tarihoran

Department of Education Science, UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten Serang, Banten, Indonesia

Yayu Heryatun

Department of Education Science, UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten Serang, Banten, Indonesia

Abstract: This study examines the perspectives of teachers and students on the CLT method in the EFL by employing a systematic approach guided by the PRISMA framework. Of the total 225 journals found through the Mendeley, Taylor&Francis, and ScienceDirect databases (2020-2024), as many as 21 relevant articles were analyzed in depth. The research methods include, qualitative evaluation, using library research. The result of the study showed that CLT has great potential in improving students' communication skills through activities such as group discussions and real-life situations. Students show a positive attitude towards CLT because the activities are relevant to their communication needs. However, challenges such as time constraints, supporting materials, and teacher training hinder its implementation. Many teachers continue to use traditional methods due to limited training and institutional support, even though they recognize the benefits of CLT. The study recommends intensive training for teachers, curriculum reform, and the use of digital tools to support CLT learning. Adaptation of this method to the cultural and social needs of students is also needed to maximize learning outcomes. These findings provide important insights for the development of education policies that support the effective implementation of CLT.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), English Foreign Learning (EFL), teachers and Students Perspective.

Introduction

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach has become one of the most widely used methods for teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The approach aims to improve students' communicative skills through interaction-based activities such as discussions, group work, and simulated real-life conversations. The application of CLT is believed to help prepare students for the increasing demands of global communication. Research shows that CLT has a positive impact on student's motivation to learn English, especially in an interactive and collaborative classroom, however, although CLT shows great potential, its application faces great challenges in various educational settings ([Jebahi, 2022](#); [Moloi et al., 2026](#)). The CLT stands on two main pillars: (1) Communicative competence, for example, proposed by Hymes (1972) which includes linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursive, and strategic aspects in the use of language. (2) Task-based approach, where learning activities focus on real tasks or problems that involve the use of language ([Wang, 2023](#)). CLT also emphasizes that language learning should reflect the social function of language, involve interaction between speakers, and allow students to practice in an environment that supports real communication. Classroom activities in CLT are designed to encourage genuine communication and collaborative problem-solving among students ([Tu, 2026](#)). Successful language learning depends not only on grammatical competence but also on the ability to use language appropriately in various communicative situations ([Wilczewski & Alon, 2023](#)).

The basic principles of CLT are focused on the use of language that aims to be communicative in a social context. CLT is based on four principles: (1) Focus on the meaning and function of language, (2) Real communication-based learning activities, (3) Student-centered use of language, 4. Unify language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) ([Farrow et al., 2024](#)). CLT targets the development of the ability to communicate effectively in real situations, not only understanding grammar rules ([Concina, 2023](#)). CLT requires teachers to adopt a facilitator role, fostering authentic communication through task-based interactions ([Guo, 2022](#)). Interaction is at the heart of CLT, emphasizing the role of collaborative tasks in developing communicative competence ([Farhang & Papi, 2025](#)), Project Based learning integrates communicative practices and real-world language use, making the learning process engaging and relevant ([Wang et al., 2022](#)). CLT focuses on the development of learners' communicative competence, including not only grammar and vocabulary but also the ability to use language in socially appropriate ways ([Li et al., 2022](#)).

The attitude of students and teachers towards CLT plays an important role in the successful application of this method. Previous research has shown that students tend to have a positive attitude toward CLT, especially because the activities are designed according to their

communicative needs. For example, English students showed an increase in motivation through group work and cosplay ([Losi & Nasution, 2022](#)), however, a positive attitude is not always balanced with the teachers' readiness to adopt the method. Many teachers still rely on traditional methods, such as translation and drilling, due to a lack of training or institutional limitations ([Nazari et al., 2022](#)).

The implementation of CLT in the context of EFL often faces various challenges, for example, limited resources, teacher-centered learning culture, and lack of communicative competence of teachers. The integration between controlled communication training and the freer use of communication is an important element of the CLT approach ([East, 2026](#)). Implementing task-based activities within CLT can significantly improve student engagement by reflecting real-world communication scenarios ([Mudinillah et al., 2024](#)). Activities commonly used in CLT include role-plays, group discussions, and simulations of real-life situations. This activity provides opportunities for students to use language spontaneously, helping them develop linguistic and social competencies at the same time ([Adem & Berkessa, 2022](#)). Understanding and implementing the CLT paradigm requires a shift in teaching practices towards more interactive and student-centered approaches. In CLT there may be a lack of focus on the development of reading and writing skills, as the emphasis is often placed on speaking and listening ([Slamet, 2025](#)).

CLT has an advantage, for example, providing students with a practical relevant learning experience, increasing learning motivation, and expanding speaking skills in real contexts. However, this approach has also faced criticism, especially in the context of the EFL. Some of the weaknesses that are often found are: Difficulties for teachers who do not have adequate communicative competence, Reliance on resources that may not be available in many EFL schools, The cultural gap between communicative approach and learning habits in several countries ([Tiu et al., 2023](#)). The speaking activities in CLT are essential to developing learners' oral fluency and interaction skills, despite challenges in resource-scarce contexts. CLT can be hampered by the size of class sizes and lack of teacher training ([Nasution et al., 2024](#)). CLT may overlook the importance of grammatical accuracy in the early stages of language acquisition, leading to students developing habits that are difficult to correct later ([Qureshi et al., 2022](#)).

Barriers to CLT adoption also include contextual factors such as resource availability, and class size. For example, in many developing countries, inadequate infrastructure and lack of teacher training are the main obstacles to the implementation of CLT ([Akramy et al., 2024](#)). Furthermore, cultural differences between the target language and the student's mother tongue often pose challenges in building an effective learning environment ([Xiao & Qiu, 2022](#)).

these factors show the importance of an adaptive approach and institutional support in maximizing the potential of CLT.

At the same time, students' attitudes towards CLT not only reflect their preference for this method but also relate to learning outcomes. Research in several countries, including Afghanistan and Turkey, shows that students' positive perception of CLT helps improve their communication skills ([Metruk, 2023](#)). However, this perception may be influenced by the challenges faced during the learning process, such as time limitations and lack of appropriate materials. Therefore, understanding the relationship between student perception and learning outcomes is important to optimize CLT-based learning design. In the context of teachers, their perception of CLT is often at odds with classroom practice. For example, although some teachers have a positive perception of communicative teaching, they still rely on traditional methods due to the limitations of the education system or lack of teaching ability this shows the need for more effective training strategies to support teachers in implementing communicative pedagogy in accordance with their principles. Furthermore, education policies need to support flexibility in the implementation of CLT, taking into account the diversity of students's socio-cultural backgrounds ([Al-Khamisi & Sinha, 2022](#); [Vuogan & Li, 2024](#)). In this study, the researcher's curiosity grows related to:

1. What are the perceptions of both students and teachers regarding the use of the CLT approach in teaching English across different educational settings?
2. What is the connection between teachers' and students' perceptions of CLT and English learning in the context of EFL?

Research Methods

Description of the sample

This study uses the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines in its search strategy, applying predefined keywords in accordance with the review's topic ([Ahmed et al., 2024](#); [Matos et al., 2023](#)). The primary keyword used is communicative Language teaching in EFL. The search was conducted across several academic journal databases, including Mendeley, Taylor&Pracis, and ScienceDirect focusing on publications from the past 5 years.

Procedure

The researcher conducted an initial search using keywords that had been developed by the researcher. The procedure applied to determine whether the article found in the initial search is relevant to this study: a) read the title: the relevant title will be noted by the researcher, b)

read the abstract: if the abstract is inadequate and in accordance with the criteria, then the article will be excluded from the study, c) read the entire full text of the article: evaluated and review the selected articles to determine the final articles to be included in the review methodical.

Study Selection Criteria

This review analyses recent empirical studies based on specific inclusion criteria: 1) articles published in Mendeley, ScienceDirect, and Tylor&France. 2) Articles published in the last 5 years, namely from 2020-2024, 3) Articles that use English, 4) Articles that are original and available in full text. It is the relevant articles that will later be selected by the researcher.

Result and Discussion

Result

Based on the results of journal searchers in Mendeley, Tylor&France, and ScienceDirect with the keyword Communicative Language Teaching in EFL. The researcher found 225 journals in accordance with these keywords with a time limit of 2020-2024. A search on Mendeley found 132 journals. A total of 225 journals were screened so that 92 journals were adapted and then screened again to get journals whose content was appropriate and relevant that could be used because the other 4 journals were not included in the study. The results of the research from each platform are explained in Table 1. This report is in accordance with the Preferred Items for PRISMA reporting guideline (Matos et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2022). PRISMA diagram (Figure 1 explains the article selection process).

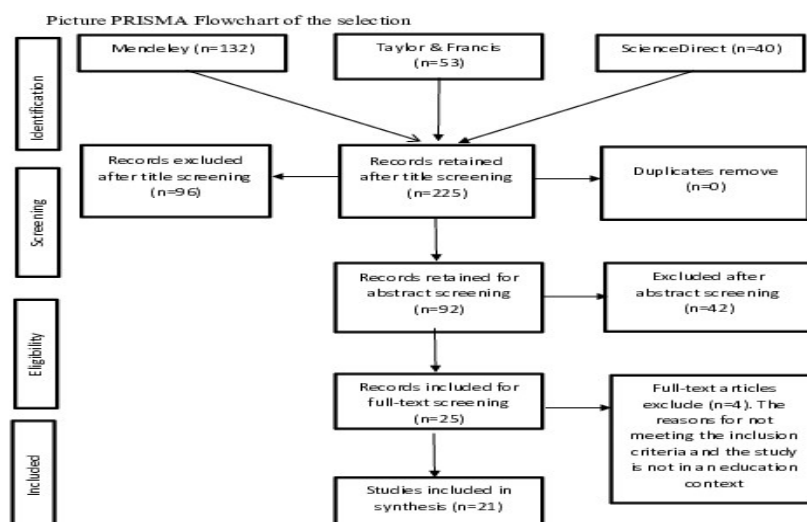


Figure 1 explains the article selection process

Table 1 Summary and Characteristics of the final studies selected

No	Title of this study	Country	Author and year of publication	Source	Method	Findings
1	Students Attitudes Toward Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in English Intensive Program	University of Pembangunan Panca Budi, Medan, Indonesia	Rizky Losi, Muhammad Muslim Nasution, 2022	Mendeley	Quantitative	The study found that students had a positive attitude toward the CLT method in intensive English-speaking programs, with activities like group work, role-playing, and games boosting their motivation.
2	The Using Of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach: A Case Study of Jordania Female EFL Learners at the University of Jordan	Muta'a University, Jordan	Kosay Alshwateer, 2021	Mendeley	Quantitative	The study identified several obstacles to implementing CLT, including low student motivation, administrative challenges, and limited teaching resources.
3	Impediments to the Application of Communicative Survey Among Saudi University Teachers	Jazan University, Saudi Arabia	Abdulrahman Alkhirbash, 2023	Mendeley	Qualitative	This study identifies barriers to CLT implementation in Saudi universities, including an unsupportive social context, low secondary school English outcomes, and low student motivation.
4	The implementation of communicative language teaching in English practice	Plantation Crop Farming, Yogyakarta, Indonesia	Arini Sabrina, 2020	Mendeley	Qualitative	The study shows that aligning the Scientific and CLT approaches helps achieve learning objectives.
5	EFL Student's Perceptions and Attitudes Toward Using Communicative Activities in CLT Classroom	Ataturk University, Turkey	Ali Rezalou, 2021	Mendeley	Quantitative	The study found that students' attitudes and perceptions positively influenced their English communication skills through the CLT approach
6	Factors affecting the application of communicative	Tezpur University	Moustafa, Husein	Mendeley	Quantitative	The study identifies obstacles to implementing CLT in Syria, such as

	language teaching CLT in Syrian School	Assam, India	Alkarsh, 2021			insufficient teacher training, poor infrastructure, overloaded curriculum, large classes, and low student motivation and ability.
7	Attitudes of EFL Learners toward Communicative Language Teaching	Takhat, Afghanistan	Sayed Asif Akramy, Besmillah Daqiq, Sayeed Naqibullah Orfan, 2024	Mendeley	Literature Review	The study reveals generally positive attitudes toward the CLT method, favoring diverse activities like group, work, discussions, and role plays.
8	Communicative language teaching methodologies in Oman EFL Context	University Of Buraimi, Oman	Khailifa Mohammad Alkhamisi, Yogesh Kumar Sinha, 2022	Mendeley	Qualitative	The study shows a link between CLT policies and classroom practices, highlighting the need to consider cultural context, literacy, school location, and student backgrounds for effective implementation.
9	The Impact of EFL Teachers' Pedagogical Beliefs and Practices: Communicative Language Teaching in A Saudi University Context	King Abdul Azis University, Jeddah Saudi Arabia	Ahmad Alghamdi, 2021	Mendeley	Mix Method	This study finds that EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia view the CLT method positively but often rely on traditional techniques like memorization, translation, and drilling.
10	A case of EFL teachers' practice of teaching speaking skills the principles of communicative language teaching (CLT)	University of Kazerun, Iran	Habtamu Adem Mendida Barkessa, 2021	Mendeley	Qualitative	The study finds that teachers supplement textbooks with speaking materials, use pre-task and post-task phases, prioritize group discussions, but face challenges in fully implementing CLT due to contextual factors, especially student-related issues.
11	Chinese EMI University students attitude towards the implementation of communicative teaching (CLT) in English language classes	Beijing Normal University, Hongkong	Yiwen Xu, 2023	Mendeley	Qualitative	In this study, it was found that the attitude of the students showed positive results on the application of CLT in English learning.
12	Afghan EFL teachers	Jawjan	Ahmad Shah	Mendeley	Quantitative	The study found that Afghan EFL teachers

	perceptions toward challenges they encounter in implementation CLT in their classes	University, Afganistan	Qasemi, Zlauddin Quvanch, 2023			face challenges in implementing CLT, including limited speaking competence, insufficient time for material preparation, and a lack of understanding of target language culture.
13	The effect of communicative language teaching in test preparation course on TOEIC score of EFL business English students	Buriram Rajabhat, University, Thailand	Pallapa Llercharoenwanich, 2022	Mendeley	Mix Method Quantitative and Qualitative	The study shows that using CLT in test preparation effectively improves students TOEIC scores by providing practice in exam-like and real-world settings, enhancing their performance.
14	Vietnamese EFL teachers' beliefs about communicative language teaching (CLT)	Vietnam	Lethi hang Nguyen Vu Thu Ha, 2022	Mendeley	Quantitative	The findings in this study show that teachers have quite good beliefs about CLT.
15	The implementation of communicative language teaching by Kurdish EFL student-teachers at the college of education	University of Salahaddin Erbil, Iraq	Asma Abas Brime Zheen Hamad Amin, 2022	Mendeley	Descriptive	The study found that teachers have not fully implemented the CLT approach, with a focus on grammar over functions and meanings and teaching remains traditional and teachers centered.
16	The perception an practice of EFL teachers in teaching using vocabulary communicative language teaching (CLT)	Debre Markos University, Ethiopia	Dr. Kitau Joseph Zewdu, Fentye Molla, 2021	Mendeley	Descriptive	The study finds that EFL teachers view teaching vocabulary with CLT positively, but their practice doesn't align with this perception.
17	University EFL Learners' Perceptions of Communicative Language Teaching and Learning	University of Zilina, Slovakia	Rstatislav Metruk, 2023	Mendeley	Quantitative	The study found that EFL learners in Slovakia had a positive perception of the communicative approach's basic principles.
18	English language teaching through communicative method: A qualitative study of pre-Service teachers perceptions	Chatolic University Kupang, Indonesia	Bernadus Kopong Danibao, Maria Jacolina Amping Radja Tari, 2023	Mendeley	Qualitative	The study found that participants were optimistic about communicative language teaching but noted challenges and suggested ways to improve students' classroom interactions.
19	Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	Wafi Ayed	Mendeley	Quantitative	This study shows that teachers understand

	perceptions of the communicative approach of the	Saudi Arabia	Althagafi, 2023			the CLT approach well but apply it less in teaching.
20	Implementation of Communicative Language Teaching Approach at Innovative Learning Center Sidoarjo	STKIP PGRI Sidoarjo, Indonesia	Sulistyaningsi ng, Diana Astriana, 2020	Mendeley	Qualitative	This study's findings show that 80% of teachers understand the communicative language teaching approach, and all of them have applied it in the English teaching process.
21	Communicative Language Teaching in Aviation Vocational College Context: The Effect of Students Learning Perception an Attitude on Their EFL Learning Performance	Politeknik penerbangan Surabaya, Indonesia	Laila Rochmawati, Tiara Silvia, Lusiana Dewi Kusumayati, 2022	Mendeley	Quantitative	In this study, CLT can be a catalyst for perception and learning attitudes to improve student learning performance in the context of EFL teaching.

Discussion

In this literature review method research, two discussions need to be described:

A. The attitude of students and teachers towards the communicative language teaching approach in teaching English in various educational contexts, explaining the attitude of students towards the Communicative Language Teaching approach students tend to have a positive attitude towards the communicative language teaching approach because of its interactive and communication-based nature, of activities such as group discussions, real-life situation simulations, and group work increase student motivation to learn English ([Akramy et al., 2024](#)). however, constraints such as time constraints and lack of supporting materials can affect students' perception of the effectiveness of the CLT approach. Teachers' Attitudes towards CLT: Some teachers have a positive view of the potential of communicative language teaching in improving students' communication skills, however, many teachers still rely on traditional methods such as translation and drilling due to limited training and institutional support, in addition to the obstacles faced by teachers include lack of infrastructure, large class sizes and cultural differences between the target language and the student's mother tongue ([Qasemi & Quvanch, 2024](#)). If it is associated with the context of education, the attitudes of students and teachers are greatly influenced by the availability of resources, educational policy support, and socio-cultural background. For example, in developing countries, infrastructure and teacher training barriers are the main challenges to implementing CLT effectively.

B. The connection between teachers and students views on CLT and English learning in the context of EFL encompasses various factors:

1) Teachers' Perception of CLT and Its Influence on Learning

Positive Perception of Teachers: Teachers who have a positive perception of CLT tend to be more flexible in adopting the CLT approach, which is affected by a more interactive and relevant learning design for students. Implementation Limitations: Several studies have shown that limited infrastructure and training cause teachers to continue to rely on traditional methods such as translation or drilling

2) Students' perception of CLT and its effect on learning

Student motivation: Students with a positive perception of CLT tend to be more motivated in learning English because of activities that are relevant to their communication needs. Students' perception of communicative approaches has a strong correlation with motivation

and desire to participate in activities that simulate real-life communication needs ([Pemberton, 2024](#)). Obstacles to students: Positive perceptions of students can be disrupted by factors such as a lack of supportive materials or limited learning time, so learning outcomes may not be fully optimal.

3) Synergy Relationship between Teachers and Students

Lack of alignment between teacher and student perceptions of CLT can create challenges in classroom dynamics, which often leads to the ineffective implementation of communicative practices ([Mirzaei & Shamsudin, 2024](#)). Perception Balance: If the positive perception between teachers and students towards CLT is balanced, then learning is more effective. Teachers can design activities that support student engagement, while students are more enthusiastic about participating in activities such as group discussions or communication simulations. Perception imbalance: Conversely, imbalances, for example, if the teacher does not support CLT or the student finds this method too difficult, can hinder learning outcomes.

4) Implications for learning

The research analyzed in the literature review shows that positive perceptions of CLT, both teachers, and students, contribute to improving speaking and listening skills, increasing students' confidence in using English orally, and improving critical thinking skills through discussions and collaborative activities. A balanced approach combining task planning and spontaneous communication enhances students' linguistic proficiency ([Xuan et al., 2026](#)). In the discussion of this study, the researcher argues that to achieve the goals of the CLT Implementation, there are several suggestions: 1. Provide intensive training for teachers on the CLT Method to increase confidence and skills in its implementation. 2. Provision of adequate facilities and resources, as well as curriculum reform to reduce structural barriers. 3. Adapting the CLT method according to the cultural, social, and educational needs of students to maximize learning outcomes. 4. Increase the use of digital tools to support CLT-based interactive learning.

Conclusions

The study focuses on two key aspects: the perspectives of students and teachers on the communicative language teaching approach in English instruction across different educational settings, and the connection between how both teachers and students perceive CLT and its impact on English learning outcomes in the EFL context. Researchers found that Communicative Language Teaching has significant potential to improve students' communication competence in EFL learning. through interactive methods such as group discussions, real-life situation simulations, and role-playing. Each student showed increased

learning motivation and better learning outcomes. In addition, the success of CLT implementation is influenced by the attitude of students and teachers as well as the limitation of educational resources.

Students' attitudes towards CLT show a positive attitude because this approach meets their communication needs, although some constraints such as time constraints and lack of supporting materials can hinder its effectiveness. In terms of teachers, they also have a positive perception of CLT but often still use traditional methods due to limited training and institutional support. Perception imbalance between students and teachers can hinder learning. This study also emphasizes the importance of incentivized teacher training, curriculum reform to reduce structural barriers, and CLT adaptation according to the cultural and social context of students. The use of digital tools is also recommended to support CLT-based interactive learning so that better synergy is created between teachers and students in achieving learning objectives.

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