

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ON USING COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING  
IN THE ENGLISH CLASS****Rimajon Sotlikova<sup>1\*</sup>, S. Sugirin<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup> Academic Lyceum 3 under Urgench State University, Usbekistan<sup>2</sup> Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta. Jalan Colombo No. 1, Karangmalang, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

\* Corresponding Author. Email: rima16@mail.ru

**Abstract**

This study aimed to describe the EFL teachers' understanding and knowledge about CLT, their attitudes toward CLT and their difficulties and challenges in the implementation of CLT practices in the Indonesian context. This study first presents an overview of CLT approach, the definition and principles of CLT which is followed by a brief history of CLT, and a review of existing literature related to communicative competence, as well as how it functions in CLT is presented. Then, this study examines the impact of ESP in CLT contexts. A qualitative method research design was used for this research. Participants for this study were 13 lecturers of English teaching in Engineering Faculty of YSU. The main modes of data collection consisted of questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and documentations. The data of this research was collected by: distributing questionnaire for all English lecturers which numbers are 13, who teach the English language in Engineering Faculty of YSU; conducting interviews with 5 of them (they were chosen based on their background major); collecting Engineering Faculty's syllabus for English class, learning book, lesson plans and additional teaching book in ESP context which was used for teaching English due to the circumstances in the Engineering Faculty. The data of this research, questionnaire was analyzed by Normal Curve category analyze. And the qualitative data of this research was analyzed by data reduction, data displays and data verification. The results show that the respondents have good understanding and knowledge about CLT; they have positive attitudes toward CLT; however, they observe many difficulties and challenges in implementing CLT in their classrooms.

**Keywords:** CLT (Communicative Language Teaching), ESP (English for Specific Purposes), communicative competence, attitude, challenge, implementation

**How to Cite:** Sotlikova, R., & Sugirin, S. (2016). Teachers' perceptions on using communicative language teaching in the english class. *LingTera*, 3(2), 203-209. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.21831/lt.v3i2.11137>

**Permalink/DOI:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.21831/lt.v3i2.11137>

**INTRODUCTION**

English is one of the most widely spoken language in the World and it is used in many areas such as technology, science, business, etc. And it is very important for our life, especially for development of knowledge, culture and relationship among countries. In this globalization era, many fields of our life such as, educational, occupational and social, English has become a crucial factor of being used in the international communication in successful life.

According to Richards (2006, p.1), the ever-growing need for good communication skills in English has created a huge demand for English teaching around the World. Millions of people today want to improve their command of

English. The worldwide demand for English has created an enormous demand for quality language teaching and language teaching materials and resources. The demand for an appropriate teaching methodology is therefore as strong as ever. Perhaps the majority of language teachers today, when asked to identify the methodology they employ in their classrooms, mention "communicative" as the methodology of choice. However, when pressed to give a detailed account of what they mean by "communicative," explanations vary widely. Communicative language teaching sets as its goal the teaching of *communicative competence*. While grammatical competence is an important dimension of language learning, it is clearly not all

that is involved in learning a language since one can master the rules of sentence formation in a language and still not be very successful at being able to use the language for meaningful communication. It is the latter capacity which is understood by the term communicative competence. Language teaching has seen many changes in ideas about syllabus design and methodology in the last 50 years, and CLT prompted a rethinking of approaches to syllabus design and methodology. Richards (2006,p.6) conveniently grouped trends in language teaching in the last 50 years into three phases:

Phase 1: traditional approaches (up to the late 1960s)

Phase 2: classic communicative language teaching (1970s to 1990s)

Phase 3: current communicative language teaching (late 1990s to the present)

Since the 1990s, the communicative approach has been widely implemented. Current communicative language teaching theory and practice thus draws on a number of different educational paradigms and traditions.

Language teaching approaches are very important for the purpose of learning and teaching in English. To make teaching English more interesting and meaningful, English teachers use different types of teaching methods and approaches. And CLT is one of most effective approach in achieving communicative competence. Today, it is one of the most popular and widely used among all approaches in teaching English.

The teaching of English as a foreign language has seen various approaches and methods being introduced and implemented to enhance the learning process of acquiring the language. Method refers the way of teaching a language and approach refers the theories of language learning. According to Cambridge international Dictionary: "*Method means a particular way of doing something and Approach refers to different theories about the nature and acquisitions of language or how languages are learned*". (Patel & Jain, 2008, p.89)

The communicative approach is a learner centered approach. This approach gives the learner not only grammatical competence but also a social skill as to what to say. (Patel & Jain, 2008, p.94). As Harmer (2006, p.85) states:"The "how to teach" aspect of the Communicative approach is closely related to the idea that "the language learning will take care of itself". An English teacher plays an

important role in teaching English and obviously a teacher has to follow methods and use approaches in his/her teaching. And the idea of communicative competence is one of the most influential development in language education, in language teaching. Most teachers accept the importance and benefit of using CLT approach in classrooms to develop students' communicative competence in English. But there are still some teachers don not practice it at all.

The recognition and understanding of events, objects, and stimuli through the use of senses (sight, hearing, touch, etc.). Several different types of perceptions are distinguished:

First, Visual perception: the perception of visual information and stimuli; Second, Auditory perception: the perception of information and stimuli received through the ears. Auditory perception requires a listener to detect different kinds of acoustic signals, and to judge differences between them according to differences in such acoustic characteristics as their frequency, amplitude, duration, order of occurrence, and rate of presentation, and third, Speech perceptions: the understanding or comprehension of speech. (Richards and Schmidt, 2002)

Based on the cases above, the researcher considered to choose the title, "Teachers' perception on using Communicative Language Teaching in the English class at the Engineering Faculty of Yogyakarta State University in Indonesia" as a thesis. The researcher described the English lecturers perceptions on CLT by knowing their understanding and knowledge about CLT, attitudes toward CLT, challenges in implementing CLT approach in their English class and their efforts to overcome those challenges. The thesis was focused on teachers' perceptions on using CLT in the English class by describing their understanding and knowledge about CLT, attitudes toward CLT, their difficulties and challenges in implementing CLT approach in their English classroom and their efforts to overcome the challenges. The objectives of the research were: to describe the teachers' understanding and knowledge related to CLT approach using in language classrooms; to describe the teachers' attitudes toward CLT; to describe the teachers' challenges in implementing CLT; to describe the teachers efforts to overcome the difficulties and challenges. The present research is important as it provides English teachers' perceptions regarding to CLT as an approach to be used in the language classrooms. The research is expected to describe

teachers' perception on using CLT and contribute its value in order to enhance students' communicative competence in English. The study was aimed at giving some contributions:

For the English teachers who do not know how to conduct real communication in class. They can take this research as a comparative study to what they have done or have been doing at present, or even those teachers who are not familiar with communicative language teaching approach at all. They can use the model of CLT in their English classroom in order to conduct the class with real English communication that students can be able to communicate in English on behalf of their needs.

## **METHOD**

This research is applied to descriptive research. The purpose of the descriptive research is to describe systematically the facts and characteristics of a given population or area of interest, factually and accurately. A descriptive research is used in the literal sense of describing situations or events. It is the accumulation of a data base that is solely descriptive- it does not necessarily seek or explain relationships, test hypotheses, make predictions, or get at meanings and implications, although research aimed at these more powerful purposes may incorporate descriptive research. The purposes of the study are to collect detailed factual information and describe existing phenomena; to identify problems or justify current conditions and practices; to make comparisons and determine what others are doing with similar problems or situations and benefits from their experience in making future plans and decisions. The steps of descriptive research are: to define the objectives in clear and specific terms, design the approach, collect the data and report the results (Isaac & Michael, 1981, p.46). According to Denscombe (2007, p.286) qualitative data takes the form of words (spoken or written) and visual images (observed or creatively produced). They are associated primarily with strategies of research such as ethnography, phenomenology and grounded theory, and with research methods such as interviews, documents and observation. Qualitative data, however, can be produced by other means. For example, the use of open-ended questions as part of a survey question-

naire can produce answers in the form of text – written words that can be treated as qualitative data.

In this research the subjects were 13 English lecturers who taught English in different departments of Engineering Faculty of Yogyakarta State University. They were chosen as respondents in this research. The object of the research is teachers' perceptions.

## **Data Collection Techniques**

The data of this research was collected by: distributing the degree of agreement and disagreement questionnaire for all English lecturers which numbers are 13, who teach the English language in Engineering Faculty of YSU; conducting interviews with 5 of them (they are chosen based on their background major which is English Education); collecting Engineering Faculty's syllabus for English class and English learning book; some of respondents' lesson plans; some of respondents' additional teaching book in ESP context that were used for teaching English due to the circumstances in the Engineering Faculty.

The researcher in this research conducted audio recording one to one semi-structured interview with the respondents of the research. According to the view of Denscombe (2007, p.176) with semi-structured interviews, the interviewer still has a clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered. However, with the semi-structured interview the interviewer is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which the topics are considered, and, perhaps more significantly, to let the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised by the researcher. The answers are open-ended, and there is more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest. The researcher conducted one to one interview with the respondents. In documentation the researcher gathered the syllabus, the learning book of English in Engineering Faculty, some respondents' teaching materials, lesson plans and additional course book in ESP context used by teachers to see whether they include communicative language teaching approach in their English class and whether they match with their statements that were described by interviewing and questionnaire.

Table 1. The Research process schedule

No.	ACTIVITY	TIME					
		Jul-Sep	Oct	Nov-Jan	Feb-Mar	Apr-May	Jun
1	Research preparation	✓					
2	Thesis proposal seminar		✓				
3	Thesis proposal correction			✓			
4	Data collection				✓		
5	Writing research report					✓	
6	Thesis exam						✓

**Trustworthiness**

This research applied triangulation techniques to test the data trustworthiness. The sources of triangulation were interview, questionnaire and documentation. The researcher compared the result of the interview with the interview and the result of questionnaire and the interview with the documents.

**Data Analysis Techniques**

This research data analysis consists of three kinds of activities based on Miles and Huberman’s view (1994, p.10) . They are: Data reduction (Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appear in written form or transcriptions. As data collection proceeds, further episodes of data reduction occur (writing summaries, coding...). Data collection is not something separate from analysis. It is part of analysis. Data reduction is a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards and organizes data in such a way that “final” conclusions can be drawn and verified. Qualitative data can be reduced and transformed in many ways: through selection, through summary or paraphrase and so on). Data displays (Generically, a display is an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action. Looking at displays helps us to understand what is happening and to do something-either analyze further or take action-based on that understanding. As with the data reduction, the creation and use of displays is not separate from analysis, it is a part of analysis). Conclusion drawing/verification (The last stream of data analysis activity is conclusion drawing and verification. From the start of data collection, the qualitative analyst is beginning to decide what things mean-is noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations and propositions. Final conclusion may not be appear until data collection is over. Conclusion is verified as the analyst proceeds).

Marshall and Rossman (1999, p.150) states: [Qualitative] data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and interpretation to the mass of collected data. It is a messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative, and fascinating process. It does not proceed in a linear fashion: it is not neat.

The researcher used tables and histogram on this thesis. The researcher coded all the responses, given by the respondents due to the thesis questionnaire, based on Likert coding system, as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. Each item was answered on a four point Likert scale ranging from strong agreement (4 points) to strong disagreement (1 point) in order to find out the respondents’ responses percentage due to the variable of the questionnaire. (Denscombe, 2007, p.168).

The researcher used Normal Curve when analyzing data of the respondents’ perceptions on using CLT due to the variables mentioned above.

Table 2. The table of Normal Curve analyze category.

No.	Score	Category
1.	75-100	Very good
2.	50-74.9	Good
3.	25-49.9	Poor
4.	0-24.9	Very poor

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

In this study, an attempt has been made, to describe Engineering Faculty English language lecturers’ (13 lecturers) knowledge and understanding about CLT, attitudes towards the communicative approach, along side the possible challenges they face in implementing it in the Engineering Faculty English language teaching context. In this research the findings are: the questionnaire displays and interview transcripts.

Next finding is from the interview data of respondents (audio recording of one to one

semi-structured interview). In interview the researcher tried to find out about teachers' understanding and knowledge about CLT, attitudes toward CLT, and their difficulties and challenges while applying CLT in their classroom. The data displayed the form of interview transcription based on key questions mentioned above. One of the reasons of conducting one to one interview is that it is relatively easy to arrange. Only two people's diaries need to coincide. Another advantage is that the opinions and views expressed throughout the interview stem from one source: the interviewee. This makes it fairly straightforward for the researcher to locate specific ideas with specific people. A third advantage is that the one-to-one interview is relatively easy to control. The researcher only has one person's ideas to grasp and interrogate, and one person to guide through the interview agenda. And a fourth advantage of conducting one-to-one interviews becomes evident when the researcher embarks on transcribing the interview tape: it is far easier to transcribe a recorded interview when the talk involves just one interviewee. There is only one voice to recognize and only one person talking at a time. (Denscombe, 2007, p.177)

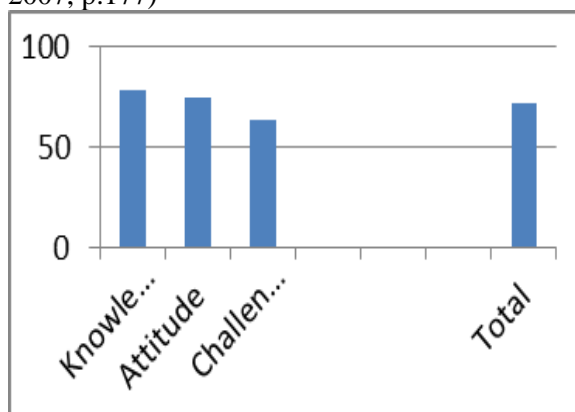


Chart. Teachers' perceptions on percentages based on Normal Curve analyze.

Based on the degree of agreement and disagreement questionnaire results, measured on Likert scale (Chart) and analyzed on Normal Curve category analyze (Table 2), the researcher concluded: the respondents responses in term of knowledge and understanding about CLT approach is 78 %. It means that they have very good understanding and knowledge about CLT; In term of the attitudes toward CLT, the respondents' responses show 75 %. It means that they have positive attitudes toward CLT; In term of the difficulties and challenges in implementing CLT, the respondents' responses show 63 %.

It means that the respondents have sufficient difficulties and challenges in implementing CLT approach.

The researcher summarized the findings of this study, has shown that the respondents of this thesis have very good understanding on using CLT approach, however they do not use the CLT approach in their classroom. They have positive views toward CLT. But, they faced a number of challenges and difficulties due to the circumstances that hamper them from effective implementation of communicative language teaching in the English classrooms in Engineering Faculty.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

### Conclusion

To sum up the respondents understanding and knowledge about Communicative Language Teaching, according to their perceptions CLT is an approach in language teaching, which the teachers motivate and encourage the students to target language as much as the students can. CLT focuses on building a communication by the students giving them activities that encourage them to interact with each other. CLT focuses on learners fluency rather than their accuracy. It is the students-centred approach. In CLT teachers encourage the students to be more active in a class, with more communication and more activities. CLT is an approach that mostly emphasizes communication. CLT procedures often require teachers to acquire less teacher-centered classroom management skills.

It's the teacher's responsibility to organize the classroom as a setting for communication and communicative activities, means to apply learner-centered approach (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.168).

Most of the respondents' attitude is positive toward CLT. Because, according to their perceptions, the teacher facilitates the students to speak up without caring about grammar when the teacher applies for CLT approach. And the respondents think that, in this globalization era, many foreigners are coming to Indonesia. In that case, of course the students need to know to be able to speak English fluently. The respondents think that it is a suitable approach for language teaching. It requires more efforts, to think about the situation of the class, to think about the topic, the activities but the lecturers still think that for the students, it works. Based on their opinions, it is better than traditional method.

According to the respondents opinion that it is not difficult to conduct CLT in a class, but it is challenging. They faced number of challenges and difficulties due to the circumstances that hamper them from effective implementation of communicative language teaching in the English classrooms in Engineering Faculty. The lecturers think that a large number of students in a class makes it challenging. Other difficulties that the respondents faced when attempting CLT in their classroom are different level of proficiency of the students. Lots of preparation requires by teachers for applying this approach. According to the respondents' opinions, if the teachers really want to implement CLT in their classrooms, they think it will take a long time. Some of the respondents used ESP materials in English for Engineering Faculty students. In fact, they developed the syllabus from the source, from that reference book. Because the respondents think that the English materials for Engineering Faculty students are not strictly for Engineering students. Therefore they supplied their own materials related to Engineering field.

The respondents stated following aspects to overcome the challenges in implementation of CLT approach in Engineering Faculty of YSU: First, they wish that the students would specify their goal in learning English. Because there are so many goals based on the respondents thinking: the students want to get a better job by being fluent in English during an interview time; they want to pass the TOEFL test; they want to use English for their field of the study. The lecturers wish that the students choose one and the lecturers are going to concentrate on it when developing a syllabus and English learning materials to implement EFL teaching in Engineering Faculty of YSU. The respondents of this thesis wish that they have the only one syllabus that can be used by all lecturers of English for all Department students to teach English. The respondents gave a suggestion that the difficulties that they faced during applying CLT in their classroom could be overcome if they could have an input from the Engineering Faculty itself. Because they know what the students' needs and some lecturers have already experienced, graduating from the Engineering Faculty and using English outside. If only they would give them what students' needs are, then the English lecturers could probably make the English class more useful for the students.

According to Richards (2006,p.12), many learners needed English in order to use it in

specific occupational or educational settings. For them it would be more efficient to teach them the specific kinds of language and communicative skills needed for particular roles, ( e.g., that of nurse, engineer, flight attendants, pilots, etc.) rather than just to concentrate on more general English and this is similar to ESP approach.

### **Suggestions**

The researcher summarized based on the findings of this study, has shown that the respondents' understanding and knowledge about CLT is very good. They have positive attitudes towards CLT. However, they faced a number of challenges and difficulties due to the circumstances that hamper them from effective implementation of communicative language teaching in the English classrooms in Engineering Faculty. Based on the findings of this study, the following suggestions on implementing CLT were given by the researcher: The implementation of the communicative approach may become more successful if all lecturers come together and discuss the importance of this approach in order to develop a new syllabus. Since the students of the Engineering Faculty students' goal is not only about to pass from the local TOEFL test, but being able to communicate in English in order to get a better job in the future. And according to the respondents' perceptions, CLT is a good approach for making them fluent in speaking English. Therefore, it is important that the English lecturers should know about the features of the communicative language teaching approach in order to be able to conduct in their classroom; As the findings define the respondents have number of difficulties and challenges due to the large number of the students in a class. In order to have effective implementation of an innovation (the communicative approach), it is important to consider: The large number of the students in a class. Hence, the Ministry of Education and other concerned bodies should give a look to the circumstances in the Faculty. So, the number of the students in a class should be divided into 3 or 4 groups, in order that they could have effective learning and being involved in communicative approach easily. The lecturers then face less challenges when they will have 10-15 students in a class while they apply to the CLT in order to implement the approach in their teaching English. B) that the lecturers of the

Engineering Faculty should come up with the new syllabus design in Engineering faculty in order to avoid from the traditional teaching methods and apply for the new approaches. The syllabus of the Faculty for the English classes, can not be applied to all the Departments in Engineering Faculty. It is only about the grammar teaching and reading. However, as the researcher mentioned above, the goal of the Faculty students is not only about developing reading skills or mastering structures.

Next reasearch in English Education field which is going to be placed in Engineering Faculty in the future, should be about developing module of the English language teaching in Engineering Faculty based on the scientific approach. And it includes developing new syllabus adopted to the new approaches and developing learning materials, such as, ESP learning materials for Engineering Faculty students by collecting their learning needs.

## REFERENCES

- Brown, H. D.(1994). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Brown, H. D.(2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Denscombe, M. (2007). *The good research guide*. New York: The Open University press.
- Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, attitude, intention and behavior: An introduction to theory and research*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company
- Harmer, J. (2006). *The practice of English language teaching*. London: Longman.
- Isaac, S & Michael, B. (1981). *Handbook in research and evaluation*. California: EdITS publishers.
- Karavas-Doukas, E. (1996). Using attitude scales to investigate teachers' attitudes to the communicative approach. *ELT Journal*, 50(3), 187-196.
- Koosha, M & Yakhabi M. (2013). *Problems Associated with the Use of Communicative Language Teaching in EFL Contexts and Possible Solutions*. International Journal of Foreign Languages Teaching and Learning. Accessed on the date of 1-st April 2014, from [http://jfl.iaun.ac.ir/article\\_4185\\_0.html](http://jfl.iaun.ac.ir/article_4185_0.html)
- Li, D. (1998). "It's always more difficult than you plan and imagine": Teachers' perceived difficulties in introducing the communicative approach in South Korea. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32 (4), 677-703.
- Littlewood, W. T. (1981). *Communicative language teaching: An introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Miles, B. M & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. London: International Educational and Professional Publisher
- Patel. M.F & Jain. P.M. (2008). *English language teaching. (Methods, Tools and Techniques)*. Jaipur: Sunrise publishers and distributors.
- Richards, J. C & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Sadoughvanini, S & Shamsudin, S. *Communicative approach to language teaching and learning in EFL context*. Accessed on the date of 5-th May 2014 from <http://www.aessweb.com/journaldetail=5019>
- Savignon, J. S. (2002). *Interpreting communicative language teaching*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press