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Learning english through communicative language teaching for elementary school students

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ABSTRACT

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method encompassed four methods: such as Communicative English Teaching, Practice Questions, Question and Answer Sessions, and Guessing Game. Additionally, the learning environment was designed to involve communicative activities, such as games, to avoid student's boredom. This learning process offered students opportunities to enhance their language skills through communicative English teaching methods. This research was conducted at SDN Kolpajung Pamekasan, East Java. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed to examine the teaching and learning process via CLT to students in grade three to six. The results indicated that teachers should convey the right method in addressing student challenges and create enjoyable learning experiences. The students actively participated in the teaching and learning process. They seemed following teacher's instructions cooperatively. Hence, learning occurs when the appropriate methods are applied, resulting in an engaging and running well of learning process. The present research contributes valuable experiences for researcher, enhancing his understanding and proficiency in teaching methodologies.



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Introduction

Concurrent with the progression of time, contemporary industry and the workplace are characterized by intense competition. In order to equip and cultivate human resources (HR) to confront swift technological advancements, social, cultural, and occupational transformations, the Indonesian government is endeavoring to enhance the quality of education. In line with this, English language becomes fundamental factor to face global competitions due to it is widely regarded as a crucial tool for communication, utilised and embraced globally. Proficiency in the English language serves a crucial foundation for improving educational prospects, job opportunities, and elevating social status (Al Zoubi, 2018)

Considering the significance of the language, it is necessary to provide the younger generation the chance to learn English properly. This is because mastering this language will serve as a competitive advantage in the future. Utilising English as a global language will facilitate the ability of upcoming generations to effectively compete on a worldwide scale. However, the younger generation currently attending elementary school has not yet been exposed to communicative language learning during their education. In line with that, it should be noted that SDN Kolpajung is the primary school which has not yet implemented a curriculum for teaching communicative English to its students. The school is located in Kelurahan Kolpajung, Kabupaten Pamekasan, East Java. Looking at the conditions for learning English, the researcher thought it was necessary to introduce a communicative method of learning English to teachers.

Education is an integral component of the cognitive development undertaken by every individual (Barham et al., 2019) It is also defines as the act or process of educating or applying discipline on the mind or a process of character training (Adesemowo & Ogunsanwo, 1999). The objective of education is to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively navigate an ever-evolving future. According to Article 20 of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, learning is defined as the interactive process between students, educators, and learning resources within an educational setting. In line with this, Association for Education Communication and Technology (AECT), learning resources refer to various sources, including individuals and materials, that learners can utilize either on their own or in combination, typically in informal settings, to facilitate the learning process (Lesia et al., 2022)

Additionally, the data analysis revealed that a significant challenge encountered is the lack of methods in English subject. English, being a topic that focuses on local content, should have its own way to be taught. SDN Kolpajung lacks an English teacher skills, which hampers the quality of education provided by the teachers. In other words, the process and the suitable methods in English teaching are not well. Consequently, English grammar continues to be taught separately and lacks adequate integration with the four language skills: speaking, listening, writing, and reading. In addition, it is noted that the majority of English teachers instruct English by presenting a specific aspect of English grammar rules, elucidating these rules, offering illustrative sentences, and instructing students to construct sentences based on the established grammar rules, followed by translating the sentence into Indonesian (Yulianti et al., 2019)

In order to address the aforementioned issues, the most suitable course of action is to implement the communicative approach in teaching English to the students at SDN Kolpajung. The communicative approach, often known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), is a teaching method for foreign or second language instruction that focuses on promoting interaction as both a method and objective for language learning (Handayani, 2017). By employing this method, language acquisition is influenced not only by the instruction of specific language components, but also by the inclusion of diverse tasks that facilitate the enhancement of students' linguistic abilities. The objective of CLT is to transform the traditional teacher-centered learning approach into a student-centered learning approach, wherein students are empowered to freely engage with and discuss all accessible learning resources. In addition, Rizqi (2020) proposes that active communication cannot take place solely through the memorization of phrase patterns (Rizqi, n.d.). Therefore, it is necessary to provide students with training to actively comprehend and interpret the meaning of the sentences they are studying.

Moreover, based on the aforementioned argument, it can be inferred that communicative language teaching is regarded as more suitable as an approach rather than a method. While there is some theoretical coherence in language and learning theory, there is more flexibility for individual interpretation and diversity in design and technique than most methods allow (Hartati, 2017). One of the proposed syllabus models, kind of exercises, and classroom activities may receive broader acceptance in the future, elevating Communicative Language Teaching to the same level as other teaching approaches. Conversely, diverse interpretations could result in uniform subgroups.

Communicative Language Teaching arose during a period when the teaching of English was on the verge of a significant change in approach. The efficacy of Situational Language Teaching as an approach for the seventies and beyond was deemed inadequate (Indrilla & Ciptaningrum, 2018). CLT attracted individuals who want a teaching method that emphasized the interactive process of communication and had a more human-centered approach. The widespread acceptance and application of the communicative approach can be attributed to its rapid establishment as the prevailing belief in English language teaching communities. This approach gained approval and endorsement from influential British applied linguists, linguists, publishers, and organizations like the British Council (Sholah, 2019)

Currently, there is a more critical examination of some of the assertions made by CLT, since the initial surge of excitement has subsided (Indriyanti & Prasetyo, 2018). The implementation of the communicative approach presents significant considerations for teacher education, the creation of instructional materials, and the process of testing and assessment. Questions have been raised regarding the applicability of the communicative approach in language programs across all levels, its suitability in both ESL and EFL situations, whether it necessitates the abandonment or revision of existing grammar-based syllabi, the evaluation of such an approach, its suitability for non-native teachers, and its implementation in situations where students are required to take grammar-based tests. If the communicative movement in language teaching continues to gather steam in the future, these types of questions will undoubtedly demand consideration. Hence, our current investigation aims to examine the

utilization of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the instruction of English to primary school students.

Syllabus in CLT Method

The examination of the essence of syllabus has been essential in the field of Communicative Language Teaching. One of the initial syllabus models offered was referred to as a notional syllabus. This syllabus outlined semantic-grammatical categories such as frequency, motion, and position, as well as the communicative functions that learners needed to be able to articulate (Dos Santos, 2020). The Council of Europe elaborated on and expanded this into a syllabus that encompassed the objectives of foreign language courses for European adults, the specific contexts in which they would likely need to utilize a foreign language (such as travel or business), the various topics they would need to discuss (such as personal identification, education, and shopping), the specific language functions they would require (such as describing something, seeking information, and expressing agreement or disagreement), the fundamental concepts employed in communication (such as time, frequency, and duration), as well as the necessary vocabulary and grammar). The findings were released under the title "Threshold Level English" and aimed to ascertain the necessary criteria for attaining a satisfactory degree of communicative proficiency in a foreign language, encompassing the linguistic components essential for reaching this "threshold."

Teacher's Role in CLT Method

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) assigns instructors various roles, with the significance of specific roles being determined by the perspectives that CLT espouses. The following are the definitions of expert and teacher roles (Putri et al., 2015) The instructor is primarily responsible for two functions: firstly, he/she must facilitate communication among all class participants, and secondly, between these individuals and the diverse array of activities and texts. The second responsibility is to participate autonomously in the teaching-learning group. This latter function emerges from and is intricately connected to the objectives of the former. This position entails a series of supplementary responsibilities for the instructor: initially, serving as a resource organiser and resource itself; secondly, providing guidance on classroom activities and procedures. The last, teacher assumes the additional responsibilities of a researcher and learner, contributing significantly in terms of pertinent expertise and capabilities, practical experience, discerned learning dynamics, and organisational prowess ((Taufikurohman, 2018)

Objectives of Communicative Language Learning

The following levels of objectives are outlined in the communicative approach's stated objectives of the CLT in Teaching English (Ramadhani & Lestiono, 2015) Content-oriented and integrative (language as an instrument of communication): 1) Linguistic and instrumental levels (language as an object of learning and a semiotic system); 2) Affective dimension of interpersonal behavior and relations (language as a means of communicating one's self-perception and evaluations of others); 3) The degree to which an individual requires remedial learning (as determined by error analysis); 4) The extent of extra-linguistic objectives for general education (language instruction in the curriculum).

These are suggested as overarching objectives that are relevant to all pedagogical contexts. Beyond the level of specification, it is impossible to establish precise objectives for CLT, since this methodology presupposes that language instruction will correspond to the unique requirements of the intended recipients. The aforementioned requirements could pertain to the areas of comprehension, expression, aural perception, or literacy, and could be approached in a communicative fashion (Sumarsono & Mbato, 2021). Specific elements of communicative competence will be incorporated into the curriculum or instructional objectives of a given course, in accordance with the ability levels and communicative requirements of the learners.

Method

This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the teaching and learning process via Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) with students in grades three to six at SDN Kolpajung. The CLT method is comprised of the following four components: the guessing game method, the practice question method, and the question and answer session method (Babayev, 2023). In addition, researcher strives to incorporate communicative exercises, such as games, into the learning process to prevent students from becoming fatigued.

Detailed explanations of the method's stages are provided below: (1) Communicative English Instruction: At this juncture, researcher employed a communicative methodology to elucidate the subject matter by utilizing a target language that is modified to suit the proficiency level of elementary school pupils. (2) Providing practice

questions: In the subsequent phase, researcher administered practice questions that were pertinent to the explained material. The objective is to instruct pupils in the target language (TL) in accordance with predetermined standards. Third Stage (3): During the third phase, researcher conducted a question and answer session. The objective is to discipline them to speak up when they do not comprehend the explanation of the provided material. This is another component of the communicative approach to teaching English. (4) Conducts a guessing game: As the final activity, researcher administered a guessing game to the students. Before returning home from school, students participate in this activity to encourage them to consider the correct and appropriate responses. Additionally, it assists students in developing the confidence necessary to present their answers.

Results and Discussions

This section provides an account of the results obtained from the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in elementary schools pertaining to the teaching and learning process. In addition, this phase explains the material through the use of a communicative approach in teaching English to elementary school students using a target language that is tailored to their proficiency level. The key point is that the instructor employs a communicative approach to clarify the material at this stage, ensuring that students feel ease and connected during the learning process (Kuwat & Ghozali, 2018). To ensure that they do not become bored while researcher is explaining the material, researcher makes an effort to engage them by, for instance, making direct eye contact, paying closer attention, and making the learning experience as enjoyable as feasible (Abrejo et al., 2019).

In order to facilitate enjoyable learning, they are occasionally encouraged to chant, joke, and share humorous anecdotes. Thus, educators and students are able to develop a sense of security and attachment, which lightens the learning experience and relieves students of their burdens. Furthermore, during the learning process, English materials should be presented in a manner that maximizes comprehension through the use of translations and gradual explanations. In addition, employing targets for English instruction that are modified to suit the proficiency level of elementary school pupils. This is accomplished by adapting to the capabilities of pupils, recognizing the challenges they encounter while learning English, and comprehending their capabilities.

During this phase, the instructor also presented the material in a progressive manner, commencing with the most fundamental concepts and progressively expanding upon them during subsequent meetings. When delivering a presentation on animals, for instance, researcher will begin with an explanation of the various species of animals. Researcher will then describe the classification of animals at the following meeting, including those that are domesticable and those that are not, as well as untamed animals. I will then describe the characteristics and appendages of animals at the following meeting. This method of education is highly effective for pupils as it affords them opportunities to engage in critical thinking and venture into their imaginative realms.

Students and Teacher's Interaction

During the second step, researcher administered practice questions that were directly relevant to the previously stated content. The objective is to educate pupils in instructing the target language (TL) in accordance with predetermined guidelines. During this subsequent phase, researcher provides the subject to the students and subsequently pose questions pertaining to the content.

Within practice assessments, there are questions designed to elicit students' memory recall, enabling them to accurately complete the questions. The primary focus of this method lies in the act of responding to the question itself, rather than being reliant on the outcomes. Students are encouraged to derive pleasure from the various learning processes in order to approach tasks with wholehearted dedication and execute them proficiently, irrespective of the outcomes. It can be asserted that students are habituated to acquiring knowledge while maintaining a sense of self-assurance in their capabilities. Students will get instruction on the significance of integrity and the effort required to independently address their own inquiries without external assistance. This will foster pupils' self-confidence and enhance their engagement in responding to the supplied questions.

Furthermore, during the third stage, the teacher conducted a question and answer session. The objective is to cultivate their willingness to articulate any aspects of the material explanation that they find unclear or incomprehensible. This is also a component of the communicative approach methodology in English language teaching. Hence, my objective is to conduct a question and answer session after my earlier explanation of the content. This session is a crucial component of English language acquisition and other educational endeavors. The question and response session prompts students to articulate their perplexity over the offered subject. This session is also highly beneficial for teachers to identify the sources of uncertainty and difficulties that hinder pupils from comprehending the provided subject in its entirety. As a result of these issues, teachers will become

more concentrated and inclined to prioritize elements that facilitate learning, ensuring effective transmission of knowledge.

The primary objective of this question and answer session stage is to cultivate their courage in articulating their uncertainties regarding the presented topic. This is also a component of the communicative approach methodology in English language teaching. As educators, it is essential for us to create an environment where students feel comfortable sharing their uncertainties, difficulties, and inquisitiveness during the question and answer session. At this level, it is crucial for instructors to address any inquiries and instruct students to comprehend and grasp the discourse of the subject matter being taught. At this level, it is advantageous for students to cultivate a collaborative relationship with educators. This fosters a sense of trust in educators, as they assist students in resolving challenging questions.

Giving a Simple Learning Game

During the last phase, researcher presented a game to the pupils, namely a guessing game. This game is completed before students leaving school, serving as a source of motivation for them to contemplate and provide accurate responses. Additionally, it assists students in developing the bravery necessary to enhance their self-assurance when delivering their responses. At this final level, researcher provides a game that involves guessing the content of the information which previously shared. This is highly beneficial for enhancing pupils' memory and facilitating their ability to retrieve the vocabulary they have acquired. Upon completion of this game before leaving the school, pupils will strive to respond promptly, since those who answer questions swiftly and accurately will be granted permission to leave for home ahead of others. At this stage, it is really advantageous for pupils as it fosters motivation for them to contemplate the accurate and appropriate responses.

Furthermore, this final phase also empowers students to develop the courage necessary to enhance their self-assurance when presenting their responses. When students provide incorrect answers, they will make an effort to persistently search for and commit to memory the correct response. Conversely, if there are pupils who correctly answer the question, they will have a sense of pride in their willingness to take risks.

Students' Language Skills

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach is a popular method preferred by English language instructors in many language institutions, particularly those focused on English-speaking countries. Practically, CLT endeavors to enhance and develop students' language skills in accordance with the contexts and circumstances that arise in actual life. Teachers must prioritize two key components in order to enhance students' communication abilities, particularly in oral expression: fluency and accuracy (Miranda & Wahyudin, 2023).

Fluency

The fluency component include students' fluency in pronunciation, intonation, and structuring the rhythm of verbal expression. Prior to achieving fluency, it is important to expose pupils to specific scenarios and teach them the right expressions to use in such settings. After students have acquired the ability to memorize and establish a sense of familiarity, they commence their training in accurately articulating the term.

At this phase, certain pupils may experience timidity, fear, or discomfort due to their unfamiliarity with verbalizing the expression. The teacher can enhance this speaking practice by including partnering group strategies, interactive games such as hot potato, or engaging presentations. Advise the students not to experience any feelings of shame in the event that their pronunciation is inaccurate or incorrect. This would instill in them a feeling of assurance and drive to persistently strive towards their objective.

Certain students may require additional time to internalize the vocabulary necessary for effective communication. The teacher can employ the scaffolding technique by writing a portion of the expression on the board and allowing them to finish the remaining section. Students have the option to transcribe the expression into their books. Once the students become accustomed to it, the writing will be eliminated.

Accuracy

Following fluency, the subsequent aspect is accuracy. When students have a sense of security, motivation, and familiarity with the instruction of specific expressions, they initiate the process of enhancing their language accuracy by studying sentence structure. The objective of acquiring sentence accuracy is to familiarize pupils with the accurate pronunciation of sentence structures. If students choose to abbreviate words or employ colloquial language or slang at a later stage of their educational journey, their proficiency and recollection of fundamental sentence structure remains intact.

Students will acquire knowledge on the intricacies of English structures, including the utilization of subject and predicate, the application of tenses, and the elucidation of the context of increasingly complex sentences

based on their purpose. Additionally, they possess the ability to discern the intonation employed in specific utterances.

Teachers may encounter the difficulty of boredom and lack of interest stemming from the seriousness of the language structural material. Consequently, educators should have the ability to create tasks during this phase utilizing games such as word scrambles, completing missing words, or other common games, and instruct pupils to record information. By including these two variables into the English learning process, it is anticipated that students would have the ability to independently cultivate their language communication skills (Apsari, 2018)

Based on these results, it can be inferred that effective and effortless learning can be achieved by following the appropriate stages. This aligns with the research carried out by Wijayatiningsih & Yuniarti (2019). It provides continual alignment with the supplied theory (Wijayatiningsih & Yuniarti, 2019). By employing this approach, language learning is influenced not only by the methods used to teach specific language components, but also by incorporating diverse exercises that enable students to enhance their linguistic abilities. The learning method employed here is a communicative language approach that encompasses a range of exercises aimed at enhancing students' language skills, rather than focusing just on certain components of the language.

CLT prioritizes the holistic development of language skills, encompassing all communicative abilities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in an interconnected manner. According to the idea proposed by Sumarsono & Mbato (2021) and Tuan (2010), this technique enhances students' communicative skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This enables students to effectively acquire and apply the language in authentic contexts. CLT enhances the learning experience by offering authentic and enjoyable communicative scenarios, hence fostering a more engaging and captivating learning environment for students (Sumarsono & Mbato, 2021; Tuan, 2010). Furthermore, CLT offers pertinent context by incorporating information that is connected to real-life situations, encompassing social, political, economic, and cultural subjects. This approach enables students to acquire language skills within a meaningful and applicable framework.

Furthermore, the implementation of CLT enhances students' proficiency in both fluency and accuracy in acquiring English language skills. Learning activities foster student engagement by emphasizing social interaction and active participation, hence promoting a more active approach to learning. Moreover, integrating the CLT approach in the classroom can enhance students' communicative abilities, enhance the enjoyment and engagement of learning, offer relevant contexts, foster a comprehensive development of language skills, and promote active student participation in the learning process. Consequently, the implementation of CLT yields significant advantages for both educators and learners during the teaching and learning phases (Octaviana, 2017)

In addition, Tuan (2010) proposes that active communication cannot take place solely through the memorization of sentence patterns. Instead, students must be instructed to actively search for and comprehend the meaning behind the words they are learning (Tuan, 2010). Utilizing the communicative approach method is known to be highly beneficial in fostering successful and efficient learning outcomes for students. Utilizing this communicative strategy to learn English has demonstrated its efficacy in facilitating substantial and specific transformations. This is demonstrated by the augmentation in the lexicon retained by pupils, as well as the enhancement in student receptiveness. Moreover, the success of this communicative approach method has a notable effect on the students' self-confidence, which is rapidly growing.

Conclusions

In summary, this research offers students the chance to enhance their language skill through the implementation of communicative English teaching approaches. This research is highly beneficial for instructors as it provides guidance on the appropriate methods to assist students in addressing their current challenges and enhancing the enjoyment of learning. Furthermore, an enjoyable educational experience can serve as a catalyst for students to persist in cultivating their attitude and further augmenting their capabilities. This study on Communicative Learning encompasses all the desired outcomes of educators, which include creating a comfortable and well-guided learning environment for pupils. This communicative learning strategy facilitates a better connection between instructors and students.

This research also enables the researcher to acquire invaluable experiences that greatly contribute to their personal and professional growth. The researcher aims to disseminate his experiences as detailed in this study, stemming from his own involvement. Thus, it is expected that this study will not only assist educators but also inspire future educators to approach obstacles with confidence and enthusiasm, encouraging them to strive for their utmost potential.

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