Importance of CLT in teaching vocabulary to adult learners

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Abstract. The communicative idea is highlighted by Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which began in the 1970s. Communication is frequently hampered by lexical issues; communication fails when people use the wrong words. The ability to communicate is the ultimate goal of language learning. The purpose of this article is to clarify the value and necessity of the CLT application in teaching English vocabulary to adult learners. The goal of this study is to identify how the Communicative Language Teaching approach is employed in English classes as well as the methods and tools that teachers use to help their students develop their vocabulary skills. The participants are 10 pre-intermediate level students. In this investigation, a mixed method approach was used: a questionnaire and class activities were done to gather the data. It is crucial to emphasize that a range of tactics, in addition to those already described, can be used to give students more chances to use the language verbally in class. To help students develop their oral skills, teachers often offer other forms of feedback, such as elicitation and metalinguistic feedback.

1 Introduction

English language instruction methodology is currently undergoing steady change. Teachers sometimes disagree about the best approach to teaching foreign languages to various learner categories in their talks. The ability to talk, understand what is being read and heard, and write are the core linguistic skills that proponents of the traditional teaching style prefer to teach the language using. However, a strategy known as the Communicative Approach was put forth in the 1970s of the past centuries. All English language learners were then instructed to utilize the audiolingual approach, and they started to gripe that "they can comprehend the language, but they can't speak." Consequently, a new strategy emphasized language as a medium of communication. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)," one of the most popular and well-established foreign language teaching methods in many modern ELT applications, has been widely employed throughout the world in second language acquisition (SLA). Additionally, it is thought to be the most dependable and effective method of teaching languages, not just English but also other languages. 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

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teaching methodology is therefore as strong as ever. That is why many teachers and researchers want to find and test the ideal teaching approach that would be suitable and perfect for their students. Given the growing importance of the English language for meaningful communication, there is a great demand for high-quality English language instruction. English language teachers now have more responsibilities to help students learn effective communication techniques. The improvement of learners' English communication skills is emphasized by the CLT approach. Richards (1997) defines it as an approach that is used in learning a second language or foreign language that emphasizes the improvement of communicative ability (p.13). Also, in a case study undertaken by Sun and Chen in 2002, the communicative language teaching methodology was put into practice in the EFL classroom and throughout the College's curriculum at the Private Pui Ching Commercial College in China. Sun and Chen (2002) concluded that "the more we understand the context, the better we can fit the CLT approach to the program" at the end of their research. Additionally, academics have recommended that traditional and CLT approaches should be combined to meet students' demands in such a curriculum. In an experimental study conducted in Pakistan to determine the efficiency of the Grammar Translation and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method for teaching English, Ahmad and Rao (2013) found that "Pakistani learners lack in English language communication skills, and the use of old traditional methodology is one, among other, causes for this shortcoming" (1).

In terms of the CLT approach's implementation, Cheng (2006) looked at textbooks from Malaysia and Taiwan. The study found that "textbooks with the adoption of CLT have little effect on the teaching of grammar in both Malaysian and Taiwanese settings." The author also emphasized that effective communicative approach methods depend on teachers who are prepared to incorporate CLT principles into their courses.

2 Experiment

Which practice is best and most appropriate for adult learners to help them learn English language vocabulary and grammar is still up for dispute. The goal of this experiment was to evaluate the communicative approach's efficacy in vocabulary instruction for adult learners. Ten carefully chosen participants who are now studying English at the Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature will be required to help prove this notion (Figure 1).

	Age	Gender	English level proficiency	Academic Qualification	Period of experience in Learning English
Student A	25	F	Pre-Intermediate (B1)	BA	6 months
Student B	27	F	Pre-Intermediate (B1)	BA	7 months
Student C	30	M	Pre-Intermediate (B1)	BA	4 months
Student D	22	F	Pre-Intermediate (B1)	BA	7 months

Student E	25	F	Pre-Intermediate (B1)	BA	10 months
Student F	27	M	Pre-Intermediate (B1)	MA	9 months
Student G	30	M	Pre-Intermediate (B1)	A	5 months
Student H	23	F	Pre-Intermediate (B1)	BA	5 months
Student I	26	F	Pre-Intermediate (B1)	BA	8 months
Student J	29	M	Pre-Intermediate (B1)	BA	12 months

Fig. 1. Information about the participants

There are ten participants, as can be seen in the table above, and they will go by the names Student A, Student B, Student C, and Student J. The participants' average age of 29 is appropriate for the experiment's goal of evaluating the effectiveness of teaching vocabulary to adult learners via CLT. There are four male and six female subjects. Pre-Intermediate is the current level reached by all participants.

This experiment includes the following stages:

-Questionnaire

-Activity for learning new vocabulary

-Post activity

The pre-stage was first created using a survey that included 9 items of questions. Participants had to select one of three possible answers to the closed-ended questions, which were as follows: Yes, No, or I'm not sure. They were initially open-ended, but since there were some difficult questions on teaching methodology that participants probably did not know so some of the questions would be a little bit difficult for pre-intermediate students. The survey's questions were chosen to find out how respondents felt about learning a new language at their age as well as about their attitude toward the methods and results of learning English they experienced. Then, as it was anticipated, students were introduced to the definition of the word "traditional approach" of teaching since they were not familiar with it. The sixth question asked if there was a teacher whose teaching style pleased the attendees. The eighth question asked respondents to indicate how well they understood the link between successful teaching strategies and student performance. The final item sought information on how satisfied they were with their whole language learning experience, including whether they were happy with their current level of English language comprehension or thought it might have been done better.

The participants were divided into two groups of five for the main stage of the experiment, with Group 1 receiving new vocabulary instruction using a traditional approach, and Group 2 receiving the same instruction utilizing a communicative approach (CLT) activity. The activity was created using new terminology that is directly connected to current global issues like vaccination and health. The task itself was extremely simple to

finish; students only had to fill in the blanks with the words provided in the box. In the case of teaching Group 1, a teacher assumed the main role and taught new words using the traditional teaching methodology. For students to pronounce the new vocabulary words correctly, each term was described to them before having them repeat after the teacher. Then they were instructed to memorize these new terms so they may use them later in an activity. In the case of Group 2, it was decided to examine the efficacy of this strategy for teaching vocabulary by using a CLT-based exercise. After introducing the new topic "Health and vaccination," students were invited to participate in a role-play in which they were to assume the roles of the doctor and the patient and utilize all the new vocabulary related to the topic in their speech. After the role-play, they also were given an additional activity to examine how well they had retained the new terminology.

3 Results and discussion

Results of the questionnaire intended to reveal some crucial facts about students showed that learning a second language at a young age is preferable for them (Figure 2).
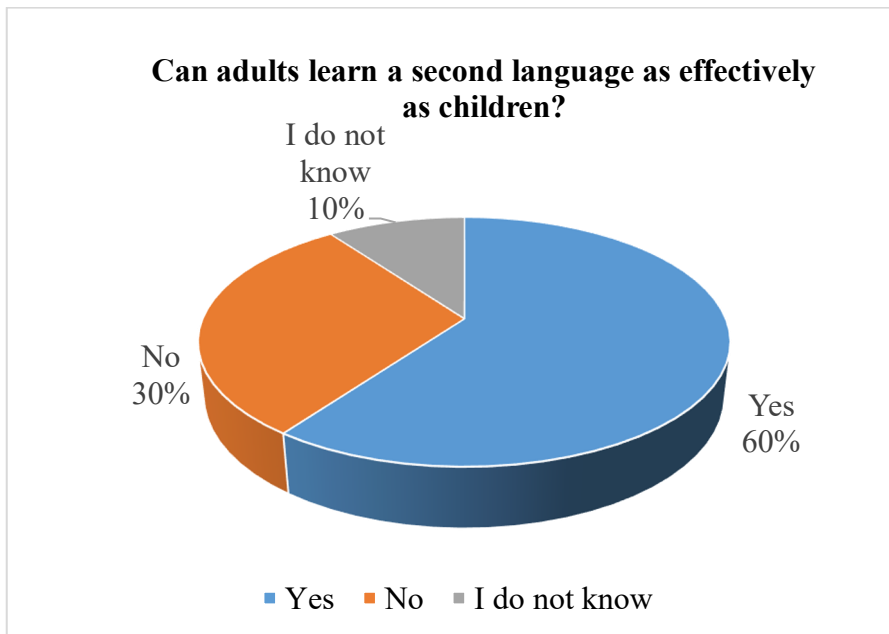

Fig. 2. Results of the questionnaire

When it comes to studying English language, the students' responses to questions No. 2, No. 3, and No. 9 showed that they are completely happy, but 3 of the 4 students still have some issues with their speaking abilities, particularly when they try to interact in English with their peers. Additionally, it was noted that most of them struggle with interlanguage problems that occur frequently (Figure 3).
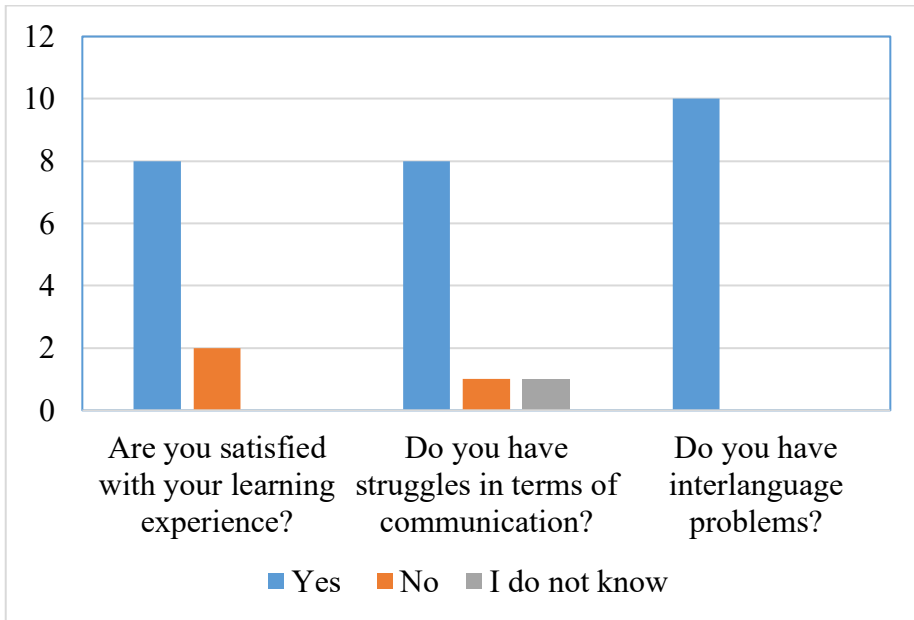
Fig. 3. Results of the questionnaire

The purpose of questions No. 6 and No. 7 and No. 8 was to specifically ascertain whether the participants knew any teaching approaches or at least could recall any teachers who profoundly influenced their process of learning English because this information has a direct impact on that process. As can be expected, the majority of participants did not know these ideas, hence they hesitated to respond.

Following the questionnaire stage, the students were separated into two groups of five, Group 1 (students A to E) and Group 2 (students F to J). As mentioned above, Group 1 received instruction in new health-related terminology using the traditional method, while Group 2 received instruction in the same vocabulary using the communicative method. Then Group 1 was told to memorize new words, and Group 2 was told to act out a role-play using new vocabulary words. Following that, both groups engaged in a knowledge-testing activity called "filling in the gaps". The outcomes were both amazing and unexpected.
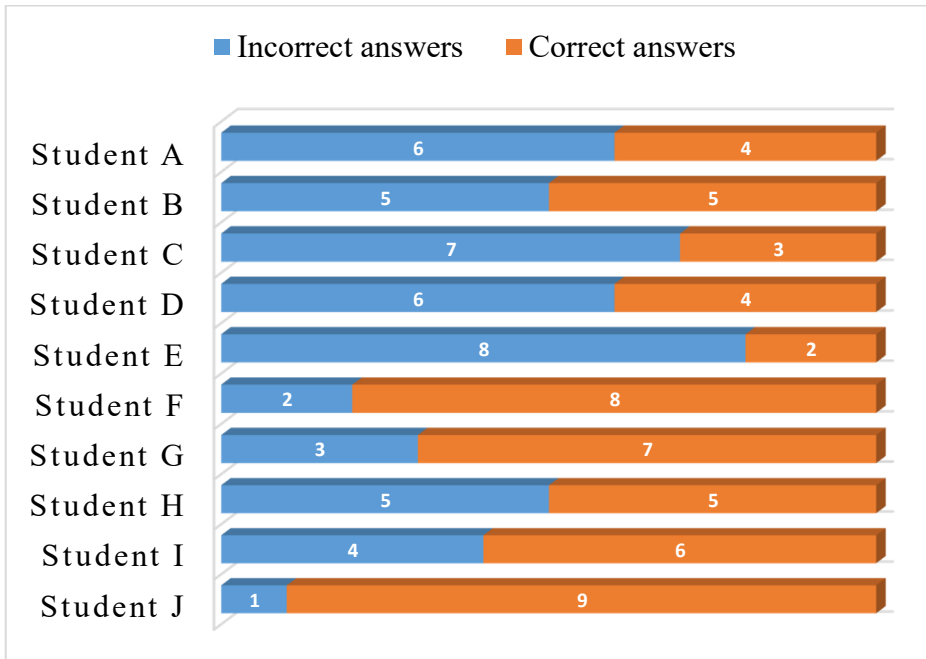
Fig. 4. Results of the activity

Figure 4 illustrates how Group 1 made a lot of errors while Group 2 had a far more spectacular overall result with fewer mistakes.

First and foremost, it is clear from the responses of the participants that our educational system still mostly uses the traditional method of instruction, in which teachers are held to be students' primary information sources and are solely in charge of the learning environment. Therefore, the overall performance of Group 1 was not as effective as Group 2, since the method of memorization did not help them greatly to remember all new terms.

Secondly, students in Group 2 had a relatively high affective filter when asked to participate in a role-play-based CLT activity, which prevented them from taking the lead or being actively involved in learning English. Students C and D felt uncertain, anxious, and a little stressed performing in front of other students. As Krashen (1981) states "low motivation, low self-esteem, anxiety, introversion and inhibition can raise the affective filter and form a 'mental block' that prevents comprehensible input from being used for acquisition".

Thirdly, CLT-based approaches may be more effective and valuable for teaching vocabulary if they are used with intermediate, upper-intermediate, or advanced-level students as low-level students found it difficult to actively participate in oral communicative activities.

Lastly, students from Group 2 were a little perplexed during a role-play and kept looking at the teacher to see if they were expressing words or sentences correctly. But the correction of errors is unusual for CLT-based activities, where the key attention is focused on learners' performance. Therefore, they were encouraged to simply talk clearly without any pauses. It can be explained in a way that they had only ever encountered the traditional system, in which the teacher plays the primary role. So, it came as a surprise to them, but in a good manner, to learn about this new CLT technique.

4 Conclusion

While conducting this experiment, I discovered that numerous obstacles could complicate the successful application of the Communicative Language Teaching technique, even though it can be very beneficial and effective for teaching vocabulary to adults. For example, Richards (2006) notes that "communicative language teaching today refers to a set of generally agreed upon principles that can be applied in different ways, depending on the teaching context, the age of the learners, their level, their learning goals, and so on" (p.22). By conversing, students acquire communication skills (Nunan, 2004; Willis & Willis, 2007). So regardless of how much we speak, mastering a target language teaches us how to communicate. Furthermore, according to Larsen-Freeman (2000), the activities should be structured so that students can produce sentences that are meaningful, consistent, and effective. This is because students' communicative competence can be increased by using role-playing techniques, picture stories, and properly designed language games. Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) claim that CA is a student-centered activity that fosters confidence through genuine communication. They claim that this is because when people interact frequently, their self-confidence increases, and they also gain the ability to speak clearly. Language proficiency and communicative competence are crucial components for second language learners to have to function in a range of contexts, according to Hymes (1972). The idea of becoming proficient in negotiating with speakers of the target language constitutes the essence of language teaching (East, 2012). Fluency and accuracy are achieved by second language acquisition (SLA) students after extensive practice and by using a variety of evaluation strategies, such as teacher corrections or self-monitoring. To learn any second language, students need to communicate and practice. Every person learns something gradually through trial and error, practice, and feedback from their teachers. Overall, it can be concluded that the communicative approach to learning vocabulary was successful.

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