

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING APPROACH IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN SURABAYA

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ABSTRACT

This study is a qualitative study aimed to know the principles of CLT implemented and problems faced by a teacher in an English conversation class of eighth grades in S Secondary School. The data was taken through observation and interview. It was analyzed using Larsen-Freeman' (2000) and Brown's (2001) theories and supported by Li (1998) as cited in Ozsevik (2010). The findings revealed that out of sixteen principles, five principles were unachievable, namely using discourse language, being a facilitator, setting social context, having communicative interaction, and producing different utterances. Moreover, the main problem in implementing CLT comes from students' side, such as students' low English proficiency, passive style of learning, resistance to participate in communicative classroom activities, and lack of motivation for developing communicative competence. It can be concluded that CLT is a suitable approach in promoting communicative competence for learners as long as the teacher and the students are prepared.

Keywords: Approach, Communicative Competence, Communicative Language Teaching.

English is seen as an important language to be mastered this day, especially in communication. One of many approaches taught to learners to master English is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. According to Richards (2006), CLT is the way to achieve communicative competence when learning second or foreign language. Larsen Freeman (2000, p. 121) also stated that the aim of CLT is "broadly to apply the theoretical perspective of the Communicative Approach by making communicative competence the goal of language teaching and by acknowledging the interdependence of language and communication". This approach has been known as the dominant approach to promote communicative competence (Ansarey, 2012 and Kobo, 2013); furthermore, it has been implemented in many countries including EFL (English as a foreign language) countries. Since Indonesia is an EFL country which used 2013 Curriculum that contains CLT characteristics (learner-centered, interactive way of teaching, autonomous learner, and group work), the writer wanted to know how this approach which emphasized in communicative competence was implemented. Moreover, the teacher might face problems to apply it; therefore, the writer needed to know the kinds of problems he or she had.

For that reason, the writer chose a national secondary school, S Secondary School which applies National Curriculum and has an English conversation class which aims to promote English communication in class. This school only has one class for each level, thus the writer would observe one class and one teacher.

In analyzing the data, the writer used Larsen-Freeman's (2000) theory to find out the principles of CLT implemented by the teacher and Brown (2001), supported by Li's (1998) theory as cited in Ozsevik (2010) to know the problem faced in implemented it.

Based on Larsen-Freeman's (2000) theory, there are sixteen important principles in applying CLT approach. These principles are using authentic materials, being communicatively competent with the speaker's or writer's intention, becoming target language as a vehicle for classroom communication, emphasizing the process of communication rather than mastery language forms, working with language at the discourse or suprasentential, playing games as an important activity, giving an opportunity to express learner's ideas and opinion, tolerating errors, promoting communication, having communicative interaction, providing social context, using language forms appropriately, being a facilitator teacher, having a choice how to say, teaching grammar and vocabulary follow the material, and listening to the language used as authentic communication.

Furthermore, the problems faced by the teacher can be divided into four categories, namely by teacher, students, educational system, and CLT itself (Li, 1998). The first category was divided into five major problems which are deficiency in spoken English, lack of training in CLT, deficiency in strategic and sociolinguistic competence in English, misconception about CLT, and little time and expertise for developing communicative materials. Then, the students' generally low English proficiency, passive style of learning, lack of motivation for communicative competence, and resistance to participating in class are difficulties from students' side. The third category is the difficulties from educational system, such as large classes, grammar-based examinations, insufficient funding, and lack of support. Lastly, the fourth category includes CLT's inadequate account of EFL teaching and the lack of effective and efficient assessment instrument in CLT.

METHODS

This study used qualitative method in which the data was taken by observation and interview. The participants of this study are the eighth graders of S Secondary School and one teacher of an English conversation class. In collecting the data, the writer took several steps. Firstly, she contacted the teacher of English conversation class to ask her permission as a participant in this study. Secondly, she asked *Tata Usaha* of English Department to make a reference letter to give to the principal of the school. Thirdly, the writer gave the letter to the principal and asked her permission to use one class in this school as her object of study. Lastly, she got the permission and met the teacher to plan the schedule for observing the classroom which is eighth grade.

Then, the writer recorded the activities and conversation in the class between teacher and the students. In this observation, the writer only recorded the classroom activities and did not participate in it. After that, she transcribed the video recording and made personal notes to help the readers know all activities in the class while the transcript focused on the conversation in the class. Finished with those activities, she analyzed the observation and continued to interview the teacher.

The interview was a semi-structured interview with twelve questions. The questions were divided into three main focuses, such as background of the teacher, the activities relating to the observation analysis, and the problem in implementing CLT. The questions asked were, for example, "Have you ever joined English training for English teacher?" (background of the teacher); "Do you have some activities which are related to teach grammar or vocabulary in the conversation class?" (the activities relating to the observation analysis); and "Do you have some difficulties to encourage them to speak in English?" (the problem in implementing CLT). This interview was recorded for further analysis.

As for the analysis, the writer gave some codes in the transcripts of the observation: T for teacher's utterances, S for student utterances, and AS for all students' utterances to identify who is talking, such as S3.1. This code means that it was said by the third student who spoke the first utterance. Moreover, the writer classified sixteen principles of CLT by Larsen-Freeman to four groups which are materials, teacher's role, teaching/learning process and activities, and communicative class and made a table to illustrate them. She divided the group based on the similarities of principles' explanation based on Larsen-Freeman's (2000) theory. The writer also made another table based on Li's theory (1998) of difficulties in implementing CLT in South Korea.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

These tables below showed the result of observation and interview. Table 1. is the result of CLT implementation in the class.

Table 1. The analysis of CLT principles

No	Principles	Check	Notes
Material			
1	Authentic materials	√	Teacher used English article for students' homework
2	Students should work with language at the discourse or suprasentential	–	

3	Grammar and vocabulary follow the material	√	Teacher taught grammar for the students in the conversation form
4	Listen to the language used as authentic communication	√	Teacher played English song for listening section
Teacher's role			
5	Teacher has to promote communication	√	Teacher spoke in English with her students
6	Teacher as a facilitator	–	
Teaching/learning process and activities			
7	The speaker's or writer's intention is part of being communicatively competent	√	Students presented their own video presentation
8	Student should be given an opportunity to express their ideas and opinion	√	Students gave comments of their friends' work
9	The process of communication is emphasized rather than mastery language forms	√	Teacher encouraged her students to give an information in English
10	Games are important	√	They played language games
11	There is social context	–	
12	Errors are tolerated	√	Teacher did not correct student's error directly
13	A speaker has a choice how to say	√	A student announced an information in English
Communicative class			
14	Target language is a vehicle for classroom communication	√	Teacher communicated in English with her students
15	Using language forms appropriately	–	
16	Communicative interaction	–	

The table showed there are five principles that are unachievable, such as using discourse language, being a facilitator, setting social context, having communicative interaction, and producing different utterances. This might happen because of the lack of activities which is related to those principles.

On the other hand, for the principles that were successful to achieve, the teacher had conducted some activities related to the principles well. She provided authentic material for her students in the classroom during listening section with English songs and articles for their homework. She also played her role to promote English communication through speaking English in the class. She used English to talk with her students and explain the material, not focused on teaching grammar. However, grammar is still important to learn, thus she put grammar material through conversation in the class. When the students made grammatical error, she would ask them when the mistakes occurred so the student could rethink by themselves whether they already used the right tenses or not. Sometimes, the teacher told the right answer directly to make them realize.

1.S9.40 : *And I'm sorry, not all of you will cho, chosen*

1T.59 : *Eh? Not all of you will be*

1.S9.41 : *not all of you will be chosen*

From the example above, after the student made a mistake, the teacher tried to tell the student that she already made a mistake and gave the right pattern of the sentence. The student realized it and restated her utterance with the correct one.

Since the English conversation class emphasizes students to be able in English communicative competence, teacher encouraged her students to speak in English and tolerated their mistake in producing utterances. There is an example of teacher's tolerance toward error.

1.S9.41 : *.....Br is cannot play very well.....*

1.T.60 : *So you see have a rule, okay, you will have a hold competition is that*

The correct statement from the utterance above is "Br cannot play very well." Here, the student made a mistake by putting "to be (is)" before "auxiliary (can)". In this condition, the teacher ignored the student's mistake and continued the conversation because she still could understand the student's utterance.

Moreover, she always provided games, especially word games in every meeting. Based on the interview, she stated this activity would help students to learn in a fun way. This is also in accordance with Wang's (2010) opinion in which games will motivate the students to learn and improve their vocabulary.

The second table below is the result of the problems faced by the teacher in implemented CLT in the class.

Table 2. The analysis of teacher's difficulties

No	Difficulties	Check	Notes
Teacher			
1	Deficiency in spoken English	—	
2	Lack of training in CLT	√	The teacher never followed CLT training
3	Deficiency in strategic and sociolinguistic competence in English	—	
4	Misconception about CLT	√	The teacher did not have deep understanding about what CLT is
5	Little time and expertise for developing communicative materials	√	The teacher prepared the material spontaneously
Student			
1	The students' generally low English proficiency	—	
2	The students' passive style of learning	√	The teacher has a main role in the class
3	Lack of motivation for communicative competence	√	Only some students who are active to start conversation in English
4	Resistance to participating in class	√	Most of the students talked when the teacher asked them
Educational system			
1	Large classes	—	
2	Grammar-based examinations	—	
3	Insufficient funding	—	
4	Lack of support	—	
CLT itself			
1	CLT's inadequate account of EFL teaching	—	
2	The lack of effective and efficient assessment instrument in CLT	—	

According to the teacher, she felt that she did not face any problem in implementing CLT; however, the result of the observation and interview showed there are some difficulties in implementing CLT. First, it is about CLT itself. The teacher stated that she only implemented CLT occasionally.

"Sometimes I do that to my students also but..... it's depend on the situation actually"

However, based on the observation, most activities in the classroom were related to CLT principles. This might happen because the teacher did not have a clear understanding about what CLT is. She could run the activities well because the aim of the class is to promote communication as similar as CLT aim even though she did not know the principles of CLT. Because of that reason, in this study, the concept CLT was not seen as a major problem.

Next, the students' response about the way teaching of the teacher also gave big impacts. As the subject of study, the students have to be active to achieve the goal of study, whereas the teacher only becomes the facilitator in the class. In this case, students' lack of motivation to participate in the class influences the success of CLT implementation in the class. In addition, the students' lack of English proficiency also hinders them from communicating in English. The teacher stated there is a gap between the smart students and the other students in the class.

".....we have almost, only, almost half of it, half the students in grade eight are not as good as, let see, we have Dn, we have A1, and we also have Rn, and then these three are very outstanding students compare to the other students, and the rest is average, we have half of it is average, and then another half is not that good so that I want to make the strong one, the one with the strong,

strong background have to help the weak one. So in that case, the weak one want to communicate otherwise they don't want to communicate at all. There is a gap. We tried not to make a gap but try to make them help each other in a team."

From the interview above, it could be assumed that the gap among students' proficiency gave impact to the implementation of CLT in the class. Students who have low English proficiency did not feel confident to have an English conversation in the class, even though the teacher tolerated their mistake as long as the meaning of their utterances could be understood. Perhaps CLT can work better if the students are at least in the intermediate level of English. These are why CLT cannot be well implemented in this class. From the analysis, the problems that happened in the class mostly come from the students.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The finding showed the teacher has conducted activities that are related to principles of CLT in the class. Out of sixteen principles, she has conducted eleven principles in the class and there are five principles that cannot be fulfilled. The five principles are using discourse language, being a facilitator, setting social context, having communicative interaction, and producing different utterances. Moreover, the problems faced by the teacher mostly come from the students' side. The problems are the students' low English proficiency in general, passive style of learning, and resistance to participate in communicative classroom activities, as well as their lack of motivation for developing communicative competence.

It might happen because there are many factors that teacher has dealt to promote communicative class in English for her students. For that reason, she has to find the activities that are suitable with students' needs which are related to CLT's characteristics; therefore, this approach can run well in the class.

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