

# **Difficulties and challenges in implementing CLT In Bangladesh**

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**April 2012**



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In Bangladesh**

**Thesis submitted to the  
Department of English and Humanities of  
BRAC University**

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**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Bachelor of Arts in ELT**

**April, 2012**

## **Acknowledgement**

Firstly, I would like to thank Almighty Allah for giving me the opportunity to study this B.A program. Secondly, I would like to thank my thesis supervisor S.M. Mohibul Hasan who inspired and guided me in doing this thesis. Special thanks to Dr. Firdous Azim and all the faculty members for their unconditional support and guidance throughout the preparation of this paper. Last but not the least I would like to express my gratitude to my parents who gave me love, support and encouragement throughout my life.



## **Abstract**

Communicative Language Teaching has been introduced in language teaching in 1970's as a new language method. Since then it is being practiced worldwide. Even in our country NCTB (National Curriculum and Textbook Board) has designed syllabuses according to this method. The aim of this study is to find out the reasons for which it is still being difficult to implement CLT in our country. Besides, the feasibility of this method in our country will be investigated here. To perform this survey successfully ten respondents were surveyed with a written questionnaire. The findings from the survey show that teachers do face some problems when they try to apply the principles of CLT in our schools. The difficulties are emerging because of students, educational system and the method itself.



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# **Chapter 1: Introduction**

## **1.1 Research Topic**

English is studied as a second language in our country. It is taught as a compulsory subject from the primary level to higher secondary level to the students of our country. From the beginning of English language teaching, many methods were invented; teachers experimented with them; and old teaching methods were replaced by relatively newer ones. Of all the methods, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is one of the latest ones. It had been introduced in Bangladesh in the 1990s. The aim of this approach is to develop learners' two basic language skills: productive (writing and speaking) and receptive (listening and reading). To use the method many GTM-based old text books were changed and modified to make room for CLT-based instruction. Despite all these positive steps towards CLT methodology, in our classrooms, there seems to be a mismatch between classroom activities and the proposed CLT-based program patterns. Therefore, this study aims to find out the obstacles for implementing CLT in our classroom.

## **1.2 Research Question**

The aim of the research was to know the answers of following questions:

- How feasible is Communicative Language Teaching in Bangladesh?
- What are the difficulties and challenges that Bangladeshi ESL/EFL teachers face in implementing CLT in their English classrooms? Can these difficulties be overcome? How and to what extent?



### **1.3 Rationale behind conducting this Research**

English is an international Language. In this age of globalization, everyone needs to know English to communicate with the world. For this reason English had been made a compulsory subject on the school curriculum of Bangladesh. It is being taught from play group to Higher Secondary level. But despite of studying English as a compulsory subject from the beginning of school life, students of our country were failing to use English effectively in different situations. This scenario remained the same for both for primary, secondary and tertiary level students. For that reason, to change the scenario Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was introduced in 1990s in Bangladesh. As we all know, this method wants to not only develop 'communicative competence' of ESL and EFL learners but also focus on their 'communicative performance'. From then this method is supposed to be used in every level for teaching English. But till now most of the students fail to communicate using English. The root of this problem is CLT is not being used properly in our country. Grammar Translation Method (GTM) still seems to have a major role in our language teaching and learning process. What factors are posing as obstacles for the implementation of CLT?

If we take a careful look we can see that after introducing CLT in this country NCTB (National Curriculum and Textbook Board) redesigned the Textbooks thoroughly to fit the approach of CLT. The contents of every chapter cover integrated skills though there are not many chapters focusing on only one skill (productive or receptive). In spite of the changes the classrooms have not become fully communicative.

If we think about the students then we can see that the students lack communicative competence also. They are not being the outcome of learners taught through CLT method. But if they practice



by themselves and motivate themselves intrinsically then they can contribute a little but significantly to help implementing CLT in our Context.

Then comes the role of a teacher. We know that a teacher plays an important role in any ESL/EFL classes. No matter what the material is, if teachers use authentic material including the main textbook and design the class tasks in an interesting way then students would have enjoyed their learning process and get interested to learn more. For this reason a teacher has to be well motivated and enthusiastic. If a teacher is not motivated well then no matter how rich the material is and how strictly the method is being followed, students will not find any interest in learning. Even the teacher has to make sure that his/her students will have the same interest outside the class towards learning English. But the problem is most of the teachers are trained on GTM. Then when they come to teaching situation they tend to apply their old traditional method rather than applying the new one. Some teachers get offended to replace GTM with CLT. It is true that once GTM was the best method and many people who learned English through GTM are very good in English reading, writing, listening and speaking. But the context has changed a lot. English language teaching is much more different in Bangladesh after the liberation war compared to the pre liberation times. So, it is necessary to take the context in mind and adopt a new method for teaching English in this new context. Another problem is if some teachers want to apply CLT in their teaching they cannot have access to appropriate teaching aids and materials.

So, we can see students need to be a bit responsible with their learning and appropriate situation and arrangements should be adopted for implementation of CLT. My research will try to find out more problem areas and their solution to investigate the real situation that hinders the implementation of CLT in our Context.

#### **1.4 Methodology:**

This is a primary research. That means the data collected in this research are from the direct source not from any secondary sources. The methods employed for conducting this study are:

- Survey with teachers.
- Library and internet research to study the theoretical aspects for development of the study focusing on the topic.

#### **1.5 Limitations of the study:**

The research being a part of the academic requirement of an undergraduate degree in English, had time constraints. So the researcher had to limit the survey to few selected teachers from different schools of Dhaka city. The research findings would have been more representative if few more teachers could be included in the survey. However, the small samples were analyzed in details to present actual scenario of implementation of CLT in the real classroom situations.

The subsequent chapters include the existing literatures on this topic, the research methods used in the study and the presentation of the analysis of the results of the study. Chapter two describes what CLT is, a brief history, communicative competence and principles of CLT and the activities for CLT. In chapter three the methodology of the study has been described including the research design procedure, the participants, research instruments used for data collection and the methods of analysis.



## **Chapter 2: Literature review**

This chapter begins with the description of History of CLT; then, it describes what CLT is. Then it looks at aims of CLT, principles of CLT, communicative competence and activities that are required to teach in using CLT method.

### **2.1 History of CLT:**

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. According to Richards(2006), we may conveniently group 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)

The traditional approach gave priority to grammatical competence as a foundation of language proficiency. Deductive approach of teaching grammar was adopted by language teachers. Students were provided with detailed grammar rules and then given opportunities to practice those. Language learning meant knowing the grammar rules and producing them accurately and quickly whenever needed. The four skills- speaking, listening, reading and writing were sequentially introduced through controlled practice of oral drillings. Accuracy was given most priority in case of pronunciation and mastery of grammar rules and for that reason errors were not at all allowed as the belief was that errors could become a permanent part of learner's speech.

Two more methodologies were based on these assumptions, those are-Audiolingualism (initiated in North America) and Structural-Situational Approach (initiated in the United Kingdom).Syllabuses during this period consisted of word lists and grammaticalrule lists that were graded across levels.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) portrays a typical audio-lingual lesson where the following procedures are observed:

1. Students first hear a model dialog (either read by the teacher or on tape) containing key structures that are the focus of the lesson. They repeat each line of the dialog, individually and in chorus. The teacher pays attention to pronunciation, intonation, and fluency. Correction of mistakes of pronunciation or grammar is direct and immediate. The dialog is memorized gradually, line by line. A line may be broken down into several phrases if necessary. The dialog is read aloud in chorus, one half saying one speaker's part and the other half responding. The students do not consult their book throughout this phase.

2. The dialog is adapted to the students' interest or situation, through changing certain key words or phrases. This is acted out by the students.

3. Certain key structures from the dialog are selected and used as the basis for pattern drills of different kinds. These are first practiced in chorus and then individually.

Some grammatical explanation may be offered at this point, but this is kept to an absolute minimum.

4. The students may refer to their textbook, and follow-up reading, writing, or vocabulary activities based on the dialog may be introduced.

5. Follow-up activities may take place in the language laboratory, where further dialog and drill work is carried out. (p. 64-65)

Structural-Situational Approach or Situational Language Teaching involves three-phase sequence for teaching language. That is known as P-P-P cycle: Presentation, Practice and Production.

**Presentation:** The new grammar structure is presented, often by means of a conversation or short text. The teacher explains the new structure and checks students' comprehension of it.

**Practice:** Students practice using the new structure in a controlled context, through drills or substitution exercises.

**Production:** Students practice using the new structure in different contexts, often using their own content or information, in order to develop fluency with the new pattern (Richards, 2006, p. 8).

This P-P-P lesson structure has been widely used in language teaching materials and continues in modified form to be used today. However, the P-P-P lesson format and the associated assumptions have come under strong attack lately. Skehan (1996, p.18), for example, comments:

The underlying theory for a P-P-P approach has now been discredited. The belief that a precise focus on a particular form leads to learning and automatization (that learners will learn what is taught in the order in which it is taught) no longer carries much credibility in linguistics or psychology.

(Richards, p. 8)



In 1970's all these classic methods of language teaching were becoming unpopular. At that time it was felt that though grammatical competence is needed to know how to structure a language but to use that in a real situation communicative competence is needed. It was more extended concept than grammatical competence. Then to create a syllabus for teaching communicative competence led to the discovery of Communicative Language Teaching. CLT created a great deal of enthusiasm and excitement when it first appeared as a new approach to language teaching in the 1970s and 1980s. Then more or less throughout the world teachers have redesigned their teaching syllabuses and developed new materials according to the approach. In planning language courses within the communicative approach, grammar was no longer the starting point.

Rather than simply specifying the grammar and vocabulary learners needed to master, a syllabus should identify the following aspects of language use in order to be able to develop the learner's communicative competence (Van Ek and Alexander 1980):

1. As detailed a consideration as possible of the purposes for which the learner wishes to acquire the target language; for example, using English for business purposes, in the hotel industry, or for travel.
2. Some idea of the setting in which they will want to use the target language; for example, in an office, on an airplane, or in a store.
3. The socially defined role the learners will assume in the target language, as well as the role of their interlocutors; for example, as a traveler, as a salesperson talking to clients, or as a student in a school.

4. The communicative events in which the learners will participate: everyday situations, vocational or professional situations, academic situations, and so on; for example, making telephone calls, engaging in casual conversation, or taking part in a meeting.

5. The language functions involved in those events, or what the learner will be able to do with or through the language; for example, making introductions, giving explanations, or describing plans.

6. The notions or concepts involved, or what the learner will need to be able to talk about; for example, leisure, finance, history, religion.

7. The skills involved in the “knitting together” of discourse: discourse and rhetorical skills; for example, storytelling, giving an effective business presentation.

8. The variety or varieties of the target language that will be needed, such as American, Australian, or British English, and the levels in the spoken and written language which the learners will need to reach.

9. The grammatical content that will be needed.

10. The lexical content, or vocabulary, that will be needed.

This led to two important new directions in the 1970s and 1980s – proposals for a communicative syllabus, and the ESP movement.

(Qtd in Richards 2001, p: 9-10)

As well as rethinking the nature of a syllabus, the new communicative approach to teaching prompted a rethinking of classroom teaching methodology. It was argued that learners learn a

language through the process of communicating in it, and that communication that is meaningful to the learner provides a better opportunity for learning than through a grammar-based approach. The overarching principles of communicative language teaching methodology at this time can be summarized as follows:

- Make real communication the focus of language learning.
- Provide opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know.
- Be tolerant of learners' errors as they indicate that the learner is building up his or her communicative competence.
- Provide opportunities for learners to develop both accuracy and fluency.
- Link the different skills such as speaking, reading, and listening together, since they usually occur so in the real world.
- Let students induce or discover grammar rules.

In applying these principles in the classroom, new classroom techniques and activities were needed, and as we saw above, new roles for teachers and learners in the classroom. Instead of making use of activities that demanded accurate repetition and memorization of sentences and grammatical patterns, activities that required learners to negotiate meaning and to interact meaningfully were required. (Richards, 2001, p: 12-13)



## **2.2 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):**

Communicative language teaching is based upon the idea of building communicative competence among learners. It aims 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 (Larsen-Freeman, Diane, 2000, p.121). "There is no single text or authority on it, nor any single model that is universally accepted as authoritative"(Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.155). That means in this method "any device that helps the learners is accepted-varying according to their age, interest, etc." and "the teacher cannot know exactly what languages the students will use" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.156- 157). According to Richards & Rodgers, "CLT appealed to those who sought a humanistic approach to teaching, one in which the interactive process of communication received priority" (P: 172). That means the learners are given more importance in a CLT classroom to make them feel no difficulty in interacting with each other for communication process. For this reason CLT does not limit the learning process with limited syllabus. Teachers have more scope to make the learning process interesting and useful to the learners. It is more comprehensive than the other methods and the [...] comprehensiveness thus makes it different in scope and status from any other approaches or methods. (Richards & Rodgers, p: 155). That is why "It is viewed as an approach (and not a method) [...]" (Richards & Rodgers, p: 155)

Howatt distinguishes between a "strong" and a "weak" version of communicative language teaching:

There is, in a sense, a 'strong' version of the communicative approach and a 'weak' version. The weak version which has become more or less standard practice in the last ten

years stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and, characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching..... The 'strong' version of communicative teaching, on the other hand, advances the claim that language is acquired through communication, so that it is not merely a question of activating an existing but inert knowledge of the language, but of stimulating the development of the language system itself. If the former could be described as "learning to use' English, the latter entails 'using English to learn it.' (1984:279) (quoted in Richards and Rodgers)

So the communicative approach views language as a system through which the meaning is expressed perfectly. Its main function is to permit interaction and communication. The primary elements of language are not only grammatical and structural features but also the functional and communicative meaning.

### **2.3 Aim of CLT:**

Every method is invented to fulfill one particular intention to language learning. As GTM has an aim to teach English through translation, direct method's (DM) aim is to teach language directly in second language without any interference of mother tongue, Audio-lingual method intends to fossilize language learners because it encourages rote learning. Similarly CLT has an aim. The aim or objective of CLT is to make learners communicatively competent. In other words, CLT intends to make them capable of using the language in a real life context. This approach is viewed as an approach which aims to-

- (a) Make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and



- (b) Develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2001 p: 155).

Richards & Rodgers quotes Piepho in their book "Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching", where Piepho (1981) discusses the following levels of objective in a communicative approach:

1. an integrative and content level ( language as a means of expression)
2. a linguistic and instrumental level ( language as a semiotic system and an object learning)
3. an affective level of interpersonal relationships and conduct ( language as means of expressing values and judgments about oneself and others)
4. a level of individual learning needs ( remedial learning based on error analysis)
5. a general educational level of extra-linguistic goals ( language learning within the school curriculum)

So, communicative approach aims to make the learner understand the language. In it learners are allowed to realize what they are learning, why they are learning, what will be the use of that, and where will they use that. Learners will also be able to feel the need of language learning. Additionally, the curriculum of a course designed according to communicative approach reflects what specific aspects learners need to gain communicative competence.

## 2.4 Principle of CLT:

Savignon quotes Berns in "Communicative Language Teaching: *Linguistic Theory and Classroom Practice*:" where, Berns (1990, 104) provides a useful summary of eight principles of CLT:

1. Language teaching is based on a view of language as communication. That is, language is seen as a social tool that speakers use to make meaning; speakers communicate about something to someone for some purpose, either orally or in writing.
2. Diversity is recognized and accepted as part of language development and use in second language learners and users, as it is with first language users.
3. A learner's competence is considered in relative, not in absolute, terms.
4. More than one variety of a language is recognized as a viable model for learning and teaching.
5. Culture is recognized as instrumental in shaping speakers' communicative competence, in both their first and subsequent languages.
6. No single methodology or fixed set of techniques is prescribed.
7. Language use is recognized as serving ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions and is related to the development of learners' competence in each.
8. It is essential that learners be engaged in doing things with language—that is, that they use language for a variety of purposes in all phases of learning.

These principles elaborate the definition of CLT given by many linguists. These principles also reflect that CLT is a universal approach.



Richards & Rodgers also talks about some principles of CLT. Where some could be regarded as the summary of what Berns said. The principles include:

- Learners learn through using it to communicate.
- Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of class room activities.
- Fluency is important dimension of communication.
- Communication involves the integration of different language skills.
- Learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error.

(Richards & Rodgers, p: 172)

So the main Principle of CLT is communication focusing on the learners so that they may develop all of their language skills.

## **2.5 Communicative competence:**

Hymes considered Chomsky's monolithic, idealized notion of linguistic competence inadequate and he introduced the broader, more elaborated and extensive concept of communicative competence, which includes both linguistic competence or implicit and explicit knowledge of the rules of grammar, and contextual or sociolinguistic knowledge of the rules of language use in context.

In Hymes's view, a person who acquires communicative competence acquires both knowledge and the ability for language use with respect to-

1. Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible

2. Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available.
3. Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated
4. Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what it's doing entails

(Hymes 1972:281)

Communicative competence is thus viewed by Hymes as the interaction of grammatical (what is formally possible), psycholinguistic (what is feasible in terms of human information processing), sociocultural (what is the social meaning or value of a given utterance), and probabilistic (what actually occurs) systems of competence (Canale and Swain, 1980, p: 16)

Savignon (1997) promotes a classroom model of communicative competence that involves Canale and Swain's four components of competence. She defines communicative competence as "functional language proficiency; the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning involving interaction between two or more persons belonging to the same (or different) speech community" (Savignon, 1997, p. 272). In her book *Communicative Competence: Theory and Classroom Practice* (1997), Savignon portrays communicative competence as having the following elements:



1. Communicative competence is a dynamic rather than a static concept. It depends on the negotiation of meaning between two or more people who share to some degree the same symbolic system...
2. Communicative competence applies to both written and spoken language, as well as to many other symbolic systems.
3. Communicative competence is context specific. Communication takes place in an infinite variety of situations, and success in a particular role depends on one's understanding of the context and on prior experience of a similar kind...
4. There is a theoretical difference between competence and performance. Competence is defined as a presumed underlying ability and performance as the overt manifestation of that ability. Competence is what one knows. Performance is what one does.
5. Communicative competence is relative, not absolute, and depends on the cooperation of all the participants. (pp. 14-15)

Canale and Swain created a more detailed framework of Communicative competence-

Canale and Swain (1980) believe that the sociolinguistic work of Hymes is significant to the development of a communicative approach to language learning and teaching. Nonetheless, just as Hymes states that there are principles of grammar that would be useless without rules of language use; they uphold that there are rules of language use that would be useless without rules of grammar. Canale and Swain (1980) thus further developed the notion of communicative competence. They described communicative competence as consisting of four basic components, the total of which is assumed to enable a learner to acquire the target language to the extent that he/she can be an indistinguishable speaker of the target language:

**Grammatical or Linguistic Competence:** In a broader sense, the term refers to the grammatically appropriate usage of the linguistic structures of the language. It will enable learners to produce correct sentences that have appropriate grammar in it.

**Sociolinguistic Competence:** This term corresponds to the learner's ability to use the language properly in different social contexts. Sociolinguistic competence thus displays the learners' knowledge of going beyond the literal meaning of utterances, as well as recognizing intention beyond those utterances in particular social situations.

**Discourse Competence:** This competence deals mainly with the ability to organize the ideas in a coherent and smoothly flowing way to ensure unity in meaning. Discourse competence brings to our attention that learners must also be mindful of the discourse patterns of the language that they are learning.

**Strategic Competence:** to be strategically competent one has to acquire both verbal and non-verbal communication strategies. This type of strategy is used to handle breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence. ( Canale& Swain, 1980, p: 29-31).



## **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

This chapter presents an overview of the research methodology. The first part of this chapter will explain the research design. The other parts will describe the participants, the research instruments employed for data collection, the data collection procedure and the method of data analysis.

### **3.1 Research Design**

To make the research easier and the data collection more effective both qualitative and quantitative method were applied. Thus, I have used mixed method research approach for data collection and analysis. According to John Creswell, "Mixed methods research is a research design (or methodology) in which the researcher collects, analyzes, and mixes (integrates or connects) both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or a multiphase program of inquiry" (qtd. in Johnson, R. Bruke, Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, and Lisa A. Turner). Mixed method helps to analyze data in all possible ways. It provides a broader perspective of the study and helps the researcher to assemble a deeper understanding of the fact of interest. Thus it is becoming increasingly a part of research practice and also taking place of the third major research approach along with qualitative research and quantitative research. (Johnson, R. Bruke, Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, and Lisa A. Turner)

### **3.2 Participants**

To conduct the survey 10 participants were randomly chosen by the survey conductor. All the participants are English language teachers of different schools of Bangladesh. They teach

English at primary and secondary levels. They are from public and private schools of Dhaka city. The survey conductor visited all the participants and they were requested to complete a survey questionnaire.

Among the ten participants five are female participants and five were male. All of them are very mature and experienced as they have been in the language teaching industry for a while. The following table groups the teachers according to their age groups.

Age	Female	Male
30-40	1	1
40-50	2	1
50-60	2	0
Above 60	0	3
Total	5	5

Table 1: Age distribution of survey participants

Two of them, who are aged in between 30 and 40, have only five years of experience. The rest have already bagged more than ten years' of experience in their teaching career. The table below shows the experience level of the teachers.

Experience level	Female	Male
1-5years	1	1



5-10 years	1	0
10-15years	3	1
15-20years	0	3

Table 2: Teaching experience of survey participants

### 3.3 Instruments:

To administer the survey one questionnaire was used. The questionnaire was prepared taking into account the issues faced by the teachers. The questionnaire allowed them to identify the problem areas of our teaching system which pose a challenge to the implementation of CLT in the schools of our country.

#### 3.3.1 Written Questionnaire:

According to Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010), “Questionnaires are certainly most often employed data collection devices in statistical works [...]”. Brown also says, “Questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers” (Qtd. in Dörnyei Z., Taguchi T., 2010, p: 4). As mixed method is used for analyzing the data of the study, the questionnaire consists of both types of questions where respondents have to answer both open-ended and close-ended questions.

The written survey questionnaire used in this study was designed addressing the English Language teachers of public and private schools of Bangladesh. Questionnaires were given to the

participants to gather information about challenges and difficulties of implementing CLT in Bangladesh. They were also asked about their perception of CLT.

The survey questionnaire has four main parts. The first part of the questionnaire was designed to gather personal information about the participants. The questions asked in these sections were:

- Name
- E-mail ID
- Age
- Gender
- Academic degrees they achieved
- Universities and departments they graduated from.
- Time span of Teaching English

The second part of the questionnaire dealt with the school information of the participants. The questions were:

- What grade(s) are you presently teaching?
- How many classes are you teaching this year?
- How many hours of class do you teach a week?
- What is the average number of students in your class?

In the third part of the questionnaire questions were asked related to the Language teaching methodology, which was particularly CLT. In this section the participants were asked the following questions.

- What teaching methods are you implementing in your classes? (Please specify how frequently you are using a particular method.)



- What methods did you experience as a language learner?
- Have you tried Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in your classes?
- If no, then why didn't you try CLT?
- Or if you have tried CLT, how did you like using it in your classroom?
- Have you ever participated in any kinds of programs such as workshops, special training programs devoted to CLT?
- If yes, then when, where and for how long?
- How did you benefit from the program? What did you learn from it?
- How do you define CLT in your own words?
- What is involved in CLT methodology in your view?

(This section includes ten close-ended questions with options, which were ticked by the participants. The detail of this question is available in the appendix part. )

The fourth and final part of the questionnaire was designed with some close-ended questions to know about the opinion of the participants regarding the implementation of CLT in our country. The close-ended questions were divided into four parts to know about the difficulties and challenges. The four parts were teacher-related difficulties, student-related difficulties, difficulties related to the educational system, and CLT-related difficulties. The details of these four parts of the questions are given in the appendix.

### **3.4 Data Collection Procedure:**

As mentioned above, data were collected from both private and public school teachers.

For the collection of data the survey conductor contacted the teachers of those schools. The first school was a public school. The survey conductor took permission of the principle of the school to conduct the survey with the English Language teachers of that school. After getting the permission the survey conductor gave the questionnaire to the teachers. The teachers were given instruction about filling up the questionnaire. Everyone was given as much time as they needed. The survey conductor was present there while teachers were filling up the questionnaire for further help and queries about the questionnaire.

Then the survey conductor met two private school teachers by person for the survey purpose. There the survey conductor followed the same procedure for gathering information. Finally, the survey conductor met two other teachers from a public school. They also filled out the questionnaire in the same procedure.

All the teachers were very cordial and cooperative while the survey was being conducted. They were very busy with their own work but they were very careful and sincere with their responses.



## Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

### 4.1 Findings

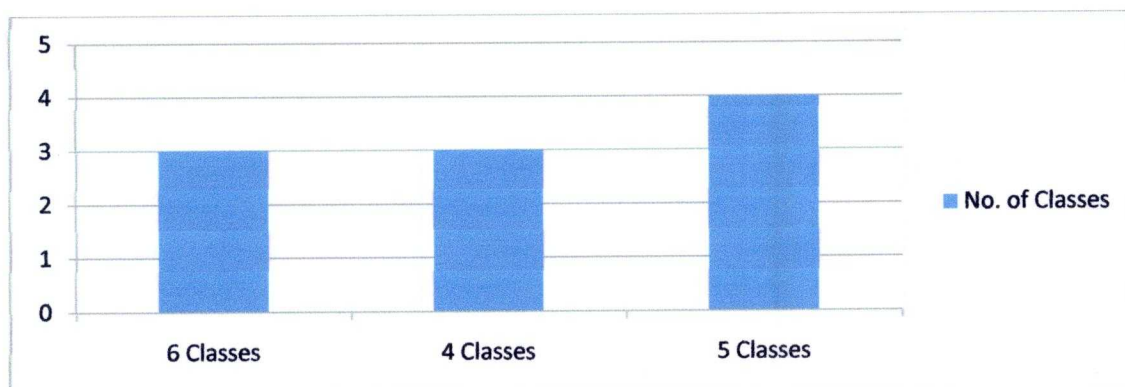
In the findings part the questionnaire will be discussed sequentially part by part. While discussing every part the evolving themes from the questions of the questionnaire will be explained. Mainly the first part of the questionnaire is involved with the information about the participants. So, the task of discussing findings starts from the second part of the questionnaire.

If we look at the questions of part two then two themes are found to be developed. Those are

- Work load and long working hours
- Dealing with huge number of students

#### 4.1.1 Work load and long working hours:

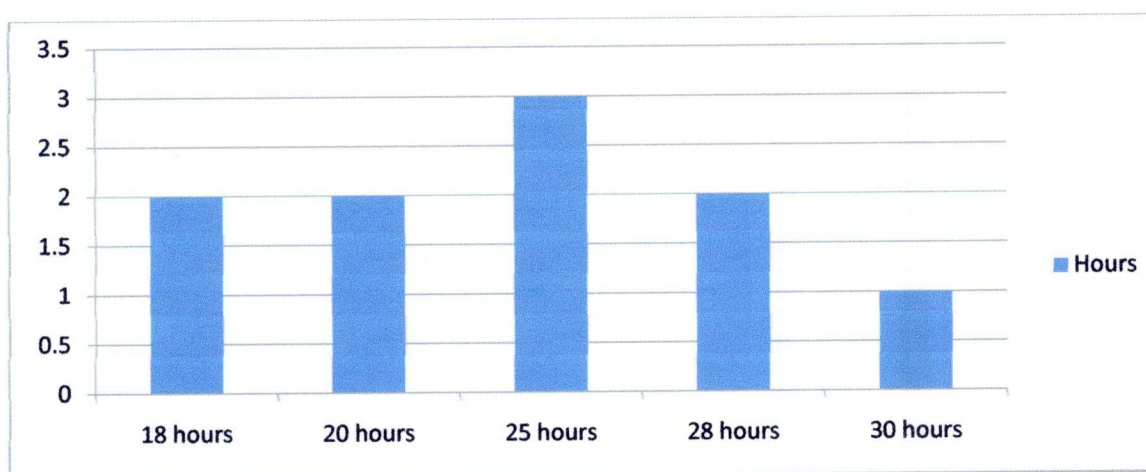
Most of the teachers responded that they are teaching more than two classes this year. The following graph shows the number of classes the participants have to take.



Graph 1: Number of classes taken by every participant each year

As we can see in the graph three teachers have to take 6 classes, four teachers take 5 classes and three teachers take 4 classes a year. As they teach both in primary and secondary levels, if they try to design authentic material for each class it would be a lot of pressure on them. That is why they lack interest in trying to do so.

The working hour of every participant exceeds 18 hours a week. The following graph presents the range of working hours of the participants.



Graph 2: The range of hours the participants have to work in a week

The working hours displayed in the above graph represent only the time they spend in their schools. Thus, the hours that are used for checking assignments and exam papers at home are not included here. This indicates that even if they have the intension to create or find authentic materials for their students of every class, they do not usually have ample time left. As a predictable result, they cannot explore anything beyond the textbooks.



#### 4.1.1 Dealing with huge number of students:

In the questionnaire teachers mentioned that most of them have to deal with 50 to 60 students. For example, three teachers said that they have to deal with 40-50 students in a class. Another three teachers said that they have 30-40 students in each class and only two teachers said that they have 20-30 students in each class.

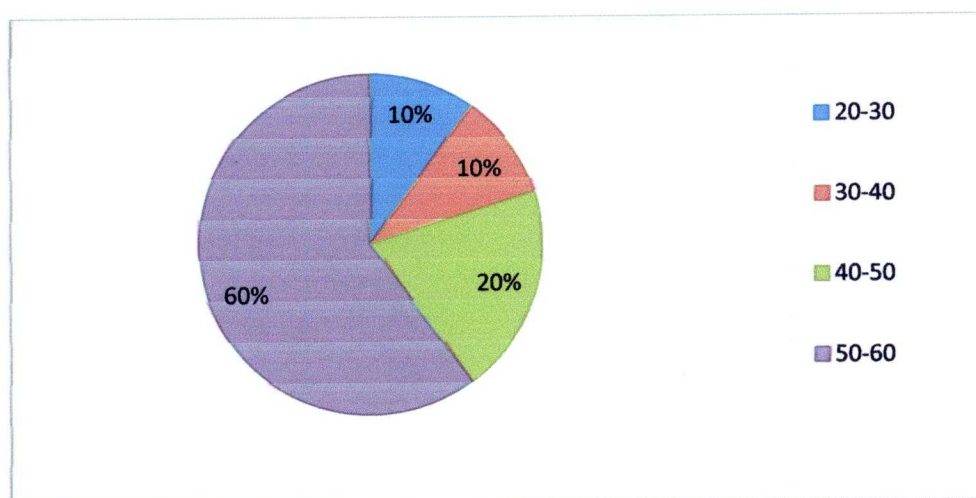


Chart 1: Number of students participants have to teach

#### 4.1. 2 Language teaching methodology:

In this part of the questionnaire participants were asked some questions related to CLT. There they had to write some information about them and also their view of CLT methodology. So the findings in this part are:

- Implementation of methods in real classes.
- Characteristic of CLT methodology from the viewpoints of teachers.

#### **4.1.2.1 Implementation of methods in real classes:**

Teachers were asked about their perception about the characteristics that CLT poses. Thus it elicited their understanding of CLT for English Language Teaching:

One of the questions in the survey questionnaire welcomes teachers view about CLT. The answers gathered from the participants in that section are:

- Most of the teachers agreed that CLT is a learner-centered approach.
- Majority of them also ticked on 'true' when it was asked that CLT emphasizes communication in the target language.
- That CLT emphasizes appropriacy over accuracy was another feature selected by most of the teachers.
- The participants also think that CLT relies heavily on speaking and listening skills.

Thus, it may be concluded that most of the teachers have the correct perception and understanding of CLT.

#### **4.1.3 Student-related difficulties and challenges:**

Teachers and learners need to be cooperative with each other for applying any new dimension in their classes. If the students are not ready teacher alone cannot move forward. So, students play a vital role for teachers and also for the implementation of CLT.

##### **4.1.3.1 Low proficiency in English:**

The survey result shows that most of the teachers find students' low-level proficiency in English as a vital problem for implementing CLT. Five teachers marked it as a major



challenge, three teachers marked it as a normal challenge, one teacher felt this is a very minor challenge and another teacher expressed that it is not a challenge at all. The two teachers who do not feel this fact as an obstacle for implementing CLT are teachers of English medium schools where the students have to use English language for communication.

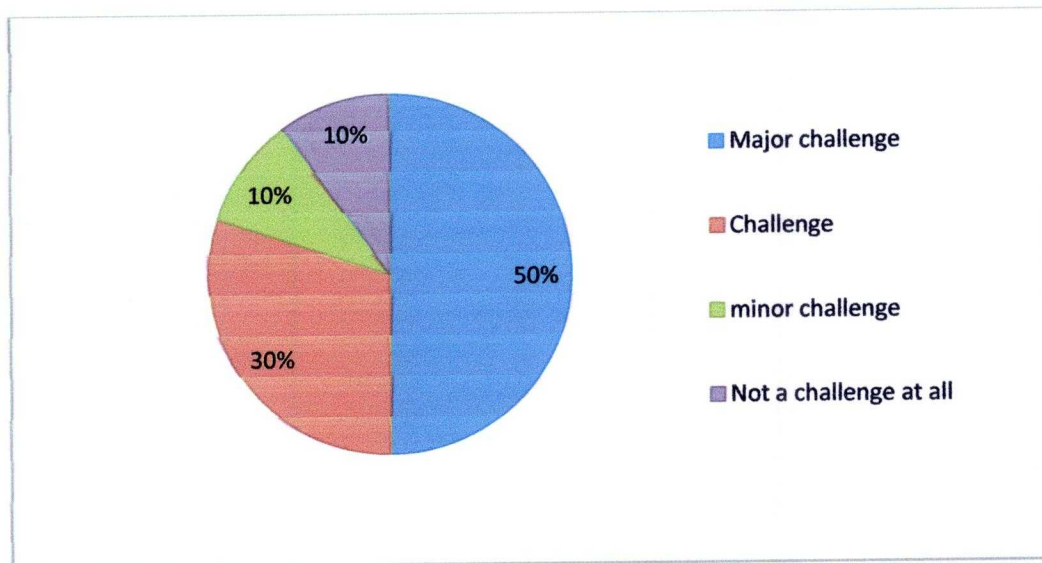


Chart 2: Low proficiency in English

#### 4.1.3.2 Students' lack of active interest in learning:

Students do have a set level of preferred style for learning a language which can hinder the activation or implementation of new method with them. The scenario in our country is reflecting this fact. Except one teacher, every participant considered it as a prior problem in implementing CLT.

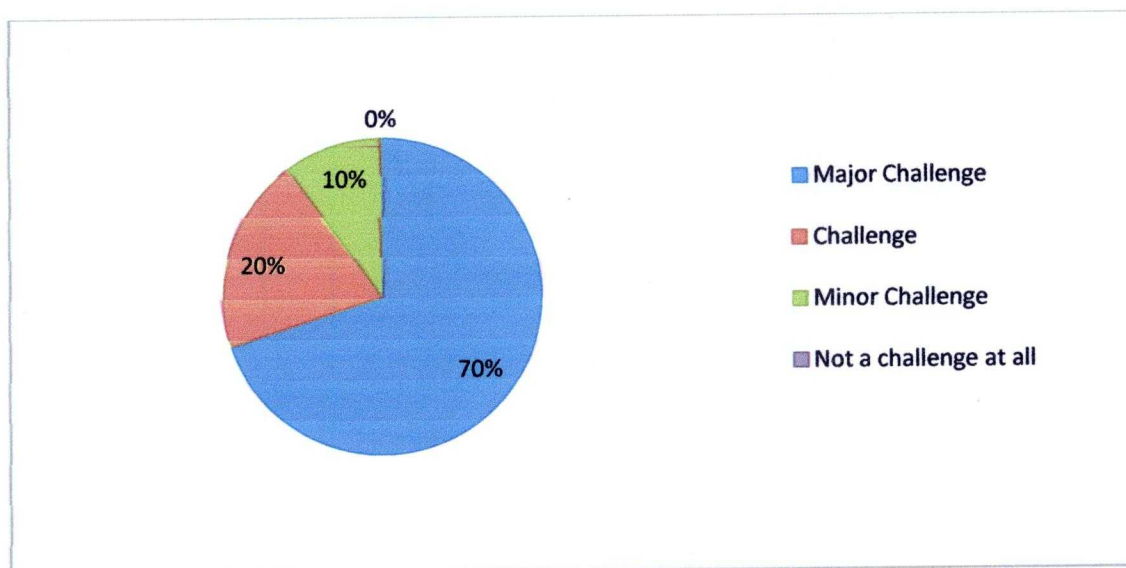


Chart 3: Students' lack of active interest in learning

#### 4.1.3.3 Avoiding participation in communicative class activities:

Most of the teachers feel that when their students are not cooperating it is difficult to carry out a method like CLT. Except two participants, six participants find this factor as a major challenge and two participants label this as a challenge.

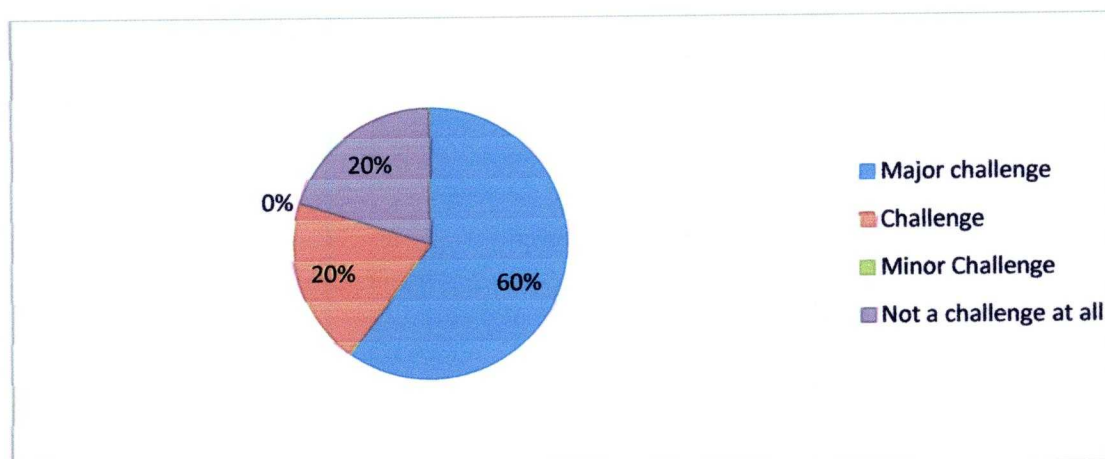


Chart 4: Avoidance in participating in Communication activities



#### 4.1.3.4 Lack of motivation in developing communicative competence:

Some teachers think that it is a major challenge but some teachers find it as a normal challenge in the implementation of CLT. In the survey it was found that only two participants think that it is a major challenge. Out of the remaining participants, only four think that it should be considered as an obstacle but not on a serious level. Two participants are close to that answer, they feel that it is a minor challenge that can be healed and only one teacher thinks that it is not a challenge at all.

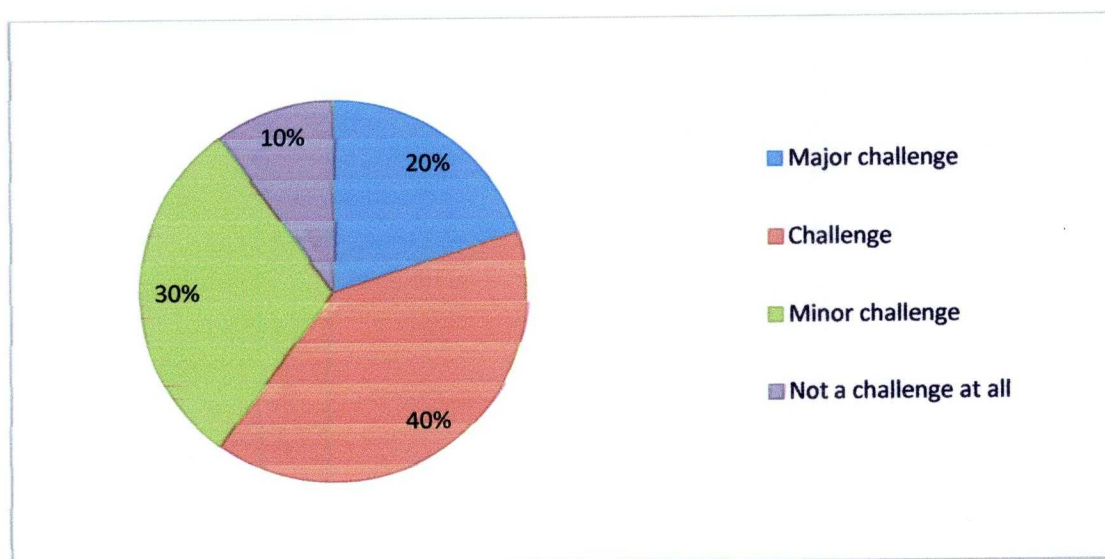


Chart 5: Students' lack of motivation

As students are the main focus of CLT-related difficulties, they should be given more importance than all other difficulties. If the students are not able to communicate in English at all then it becomes a challenge for a teacher to communicate with them. Moreover, because of low proficiency in English it is not possible to make the students communicate with each other. No

interaction could take place properly if students lack proficiency in English. However, it is necessary to have an interactive classroom for CLT to be successful.

Students' passive style of learning hinders the development of CLT method. If they prefer their own passive style over CLT then their intake of the language, taught using CLT, will not be effective.

Students' lack of motivation and avoidance to participate in communicative activities mainly occurs because of the set rules of examination that allows no creativity at all. They just think of passing the grammar-based examination rather than thinking about being able to communicate. Until the students change their mind about English language and be cooperative with their teachers in applying the communicative method it is not possible to make realize CLT even if the other challenges are removed.

#### **4.1.4 Difficulties and challenges related to educational system**

This part is concerned with the difficulties present in the educational system of our country. In this part four difficulties are discussed-

- Lack of Support
- Unavailability of authentic materials
- Large classes
- Grammar-based examination



#### 4.1.4.1 Lack of Support:

Lack of support from administration is the biggest problem that hinders the implementation of CLT in our country. Eight participants of the survey also agree with this thought. The other two participants think that it is a minor challenge.

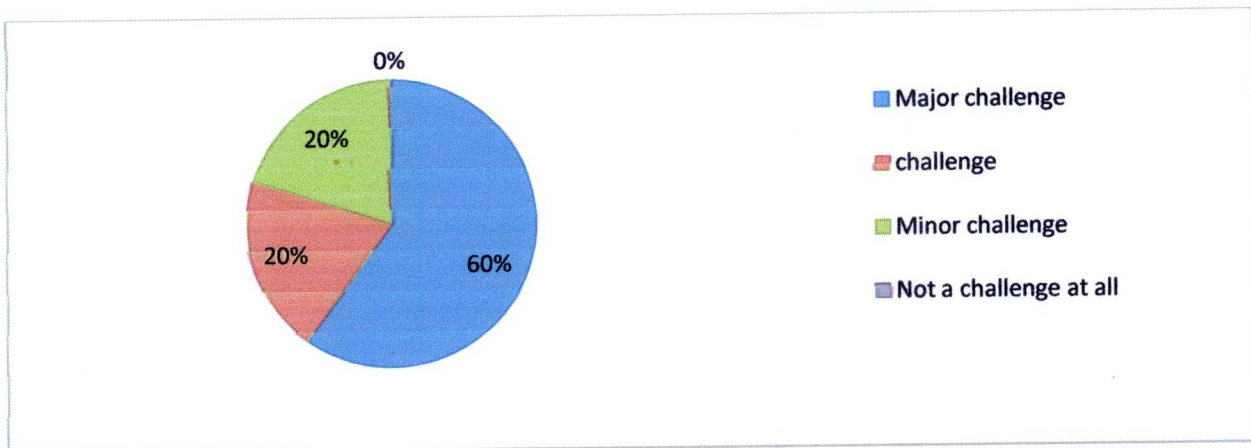


Chart 6: Lack of Support

#### 4.1.4.2 Unavailability of authentic materials:

Authentic materials are necessary to make CLT effective but in our country there is a lack of this type of materials. Four teachers have chosen this as a major challenge. One participant thinks that this is not a challenge at all but the rest have said this is more or less a challenge for teachers. Chart 7 in next page shows this data.



Chart 7: Unavailability of authentic materials

#### 4.1.4.3 Large classes:

Almost every teacher in a public school in our country faces the problem of large classes. Eight of the participants have chosen that the challenge of large classes is high for them. On the other hand two participants marked this as a minor challenge as they were teachers of private schools and they have to deal with smaller classes than the public schools.



Chart 8: Large classes



#### 4.1.4.4 Grammar-based examination:

Grammar-based examination is being followed in our country for a long time. Even now with the textbooks designed according to CLT, grammar-based exams are taken. This traditional exam system continues to stand in the way of the complete realization of CLT in our classrooms. Six participants have chosen this as a major challenge, two have chosen this as a challenge and only two of the participants, who are from private schools, marked this as a minor problem.

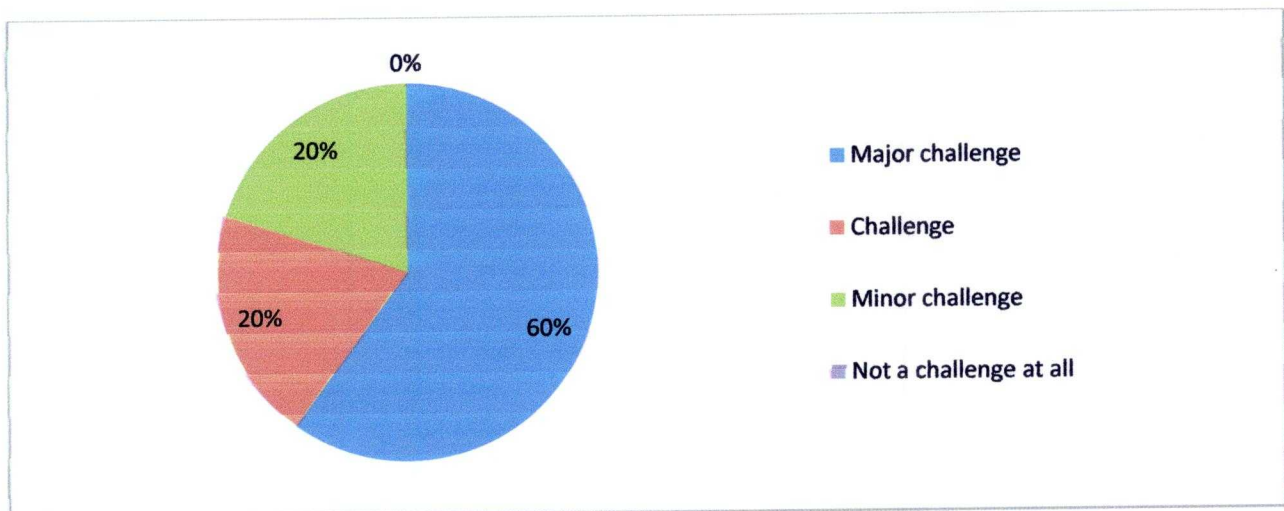


Chart 9: Grammar-based examination

When the teachers want to employ CLT in their classes, they do not get the necessary support in the form of instruments, funding. The colleagues often do not provide the moral support necessary for them. So, this is a major challenge for the teachers. As there is a lack of authentic materials and other effective materials, teachers do become able to apply CLT in their classes. This problem is because of the absence of financial and logistic support. Then the major problem area is large class. If the classes are too big and contains too many students teacher cannot perform the activities needed for a CLT-based class. Another factor is that if anyone tries to

apply any of the activities (for example a group work), it will be very difficult for him/her to monitor all the students effectively. Then the task will not be completed. Rather, it could turn the class into a chaotic place with a lot of confusions. The final problem is the grammar-based examination system. As they are taught in CLT but tested with GTM, they will not fully understand the effectiveness of CLT. Until and unless schools ban such backdated exam systems, learners will not even try to appreciate the possibilities that CLT can offer.

#### **4.1.5 CLT-related difficulties and challenges:**

This part tries to investigate whether CLT is the reason of difficulties and challenge for the teachers or not. This section includes two difficulty areas:

- Lack of efficient instruments of assessment
- Non-suitability of CLT in Asian context

##### **4.1.5.1 Lack of efficient instruments to assess CLT:**

There are no such assessment instruments in our country which will help to evaluate CLT. That is why seven respondents are found to choose this as a major challenge. One respondent thinks it is a challenge but not a major one and another respondent thinks that it is a very minor challenge which can be overcome.



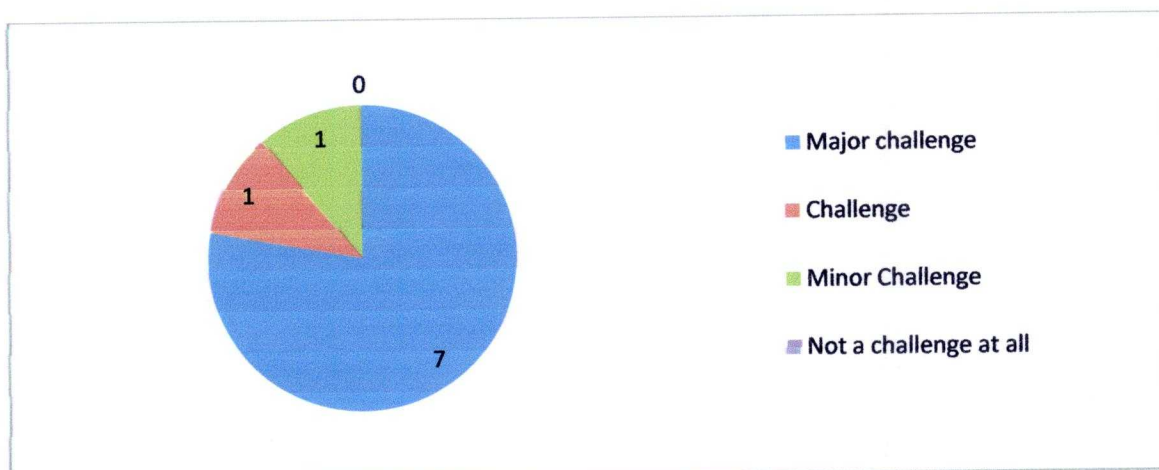


Chart 10: Lack of Instruments

#### 4.1.5.2 Unsuitability of CLT in Asian context:

Participants feel that CLT is developed and designed on western assumptions about learners and teachers. So, it does not go with our context. Six participants feel that it is a major challenge; two of them feel that this is a normal challenge. According to two participants, it is a minor challenge and not a challenge at all.

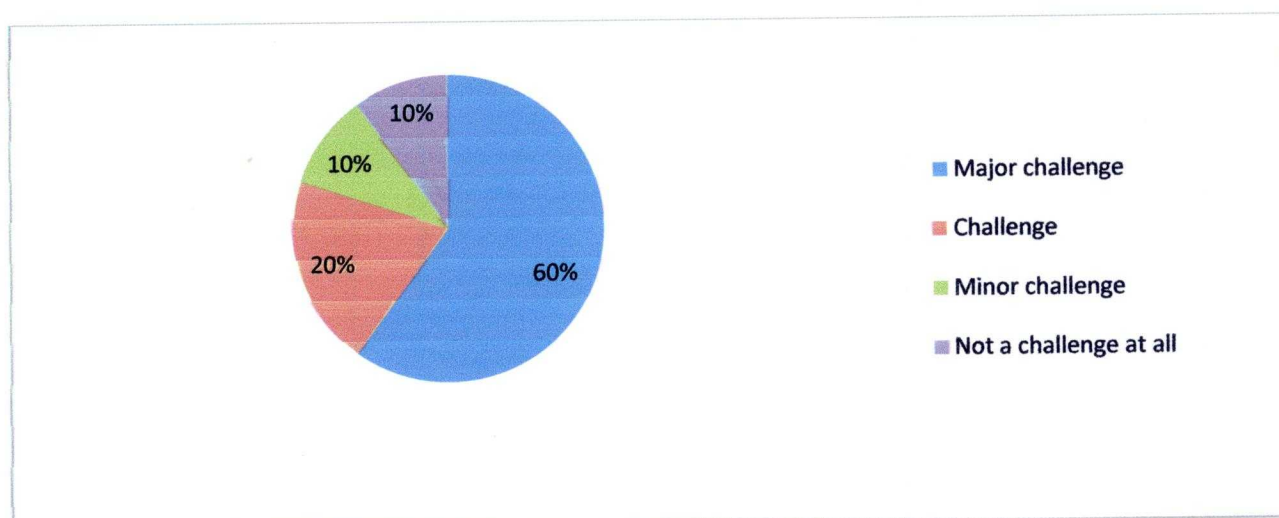


Chart 11: Unsuitability in Asian context

As it is seen above that in our country grammar-based examinations are still being used, teachers do not have any efficient instruments to assess CLT. If the authority does not take any steps to design or construct such instruments, teachers will continue to be helpless about this situation. Another problematic factor is that CLT cannot be adopted exactly as it is. There is a need to incorporate CLT according to our culture. For that more and more training sessions should be organized for the teachers.

#### **4.1.6 Other potential problems and difficulties:**

Teachers answered an open-ended question where they were asked to mention some other problems and difficulties that are becoming an obstacle for implementation of CLT. From the response of the participants it became clear that

- Family background of learners could be a difficulty. In Bangladesh there are many families where the parents are not that much educated. In those cases a learner would not be able to practice CLT at home. But after the school learners tend to stay at home for most of the time. So, this is really another major problem for our country.
- Another problem related to families is that the elders of most of the family are taught English in the traditional methods. This is why they might not understand the importance of CLT. And because senior members are influential, their perception can easily affect the way the learners of present generation think and feel about CLT.
- Economical crisis for a country like Bangladesh is an acute problem. As CLT requires relatively modern teaching aids and materials, sometimes money becomes an issue.

- Some students of our country are very weak in English. As many of them do not have the confidence necessary to be successful in a CLT class, they end up cutting a sorry figure. In this way they become victims of a vicious circle from which they fail to find an exit.
- Some teachers and learners are still depending on memorization. This notion is really difficult to remove and is really a major challenge for teachers.
- The setting of the classrooms in the schools of our country is not suitable enough to implement CLT. That is why teachers feel that they need an appropriate environment first, and then the other things could be done to implement CLT.

These problems are really very culture-specific because other countries may not have this type of situation in their country. So, again the Education board has to take some steps to check these problems.



## Chapter 5: Recommendations

This chapter includes the suggestions and recommendations based on my survey regarding the difficulties of implementing CLT in Bangladesh.

1. As some teachers are overloaded, their work-load should be reduced. To do that, school authorities should recruit more teachers. Because of too many classes teachers do not get any time to prepare authentic lessons or try new innovative tasks. So they do not get the time to create or find any authentic material for their students.
2. Another problem is that teachers are not paid according to the workload of their profession. Even though it takes a lot of energy and dedication teachers get relatively low salary in our country. For this reason they even do not show any interest to spend extra time for thinking about the classes of the schools they teach in. Even if any teacher gets extra time, they look for private tuitions and coaching centers to backup their regular salary. The school authorities should take proper measures regarding this fact. If this problem is not handled then youngsters will lack interest and motivation to start their career as a teacher. This will eventually continue the problem of heavy work load for the existing teachers.
3. Another problem is while teaching, English is not given any importance. Because it is being taught like other subjects which are designed in mother tongue. But English needs to be given extra care. It needs to be more planned.
4. School authorities should focus on creating a cultural specific learning situation for the learners of English of our country because; as the British methods are designed giving priority to the students of their country, these lack universality.

5. After studying English for so many years, students could not communicate in English effectively. This is because it is a new language to them. So it needs to be practiced more and more. For more practice more time and more resources are needed to make this language learning successful.
6. Large class is the core of all the problems. As there are too many students teachers could not give emphasis to listening and speaking skills. Instead of having one or two sections of 50 to 60 students, it is better to make four or five sections of one class consisting of a maximum of 20 to 30 students.
7. Examination system must have to be changed. In the survey it was shown that more importance is being given to the grammar based examination. The question pattern only focuses on the knowledge of reading, translation, vocabulary and grammar rules. Another thing is questions do not have any authenticity they are being repeated every year in the same way so students lack the interest of being creative. So, Examinations should be designed in ways which will make the students to think creatively and will also assess the listening and speaking skills of the students.
8. Lastly, it is recommended that more training to the teachers are needed. Though the teachers get training on CLT and skills development skills but they do not have the scope to use that in the real situation. Some lack the guidance to use it in real situation. So, if the teachers are given some practical training where they will teach students using CLT methods then it will help in their actual profession. There is also a need of teachers to be supervised whether they are implementing the learning of the trainings in their classes or not.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion**

This chapter summarizes the research and discusses answer to the research questions.

### **6.1 How feasible is Communicative Language Teaching in Bangladesh?**

The participants in this research survey were very much positive about CLT. Their perception and understanding is also quite clear about CLT. But they face a lot of challenges and difficulties to implement CLT effectively in our context. But removing the major problems (such as lack of administrative instruments, grammar-based and large classes) can make it possible to implement CLT in a very effective way in our country. Moreover, teachers need to be trained to adopt CLT according to our culture.

### **6.2 What are the difficulties and challenges that Bangladeshi ESL/EFL teachers face in implementing CLT in their English classrooms? Can these difficulties be overcome? How and to what extent?**

The major difficulties consist of student-related difficulties, educational system-related difficulties and CLT-related problems.

Students' low English proficiency and avoidance to participate in the communicative activities makes it very much difficult. This problem is there because the students are not motivated well. If extra care to improve the proficiency of English of the students is taken and they are motivated with interesting activities and positive reinforcement then this problem could be lessened.

Educational system related difficulties are lack of support, large classes and use of grammar-based exams. School authority and educational board needs to get together to take necessary



steps to solve this problems. More financial funding and division of one class into more sections can solve the problem a little.

Then finally comes the difficulties that are caused by the method itself. As there is lack of assessment tools, it is a bit difficult to develop such things very easily and early. It would take a lot of time to overcome this problem. Another difficulty is that CLT is very much culture specific. Teachers have to devote themselves a lot to take this situation under control. But the problem is English language teaching system is changing day by day. Maybe when our teachers will be able to handle this situation the scenario of English language teaching could be something else then.

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## Appendix

### Survey Questionnaire

#### About the Survey:

This survey questionnaire is designed for Bangladeshi EFL teachers teaching in public schools in Bangladesh. This survey aims to explore the appropriateness as well as the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the Bangladeshi context.

This survey is composed of four parts. Part I asks for personal information. Part II asks for information about your school and the classes you are teaching. Part III asks questions pertaining to English teaching methods, and Part IV asks for your opinions with regard to the perceived difficulties in implementing CLT as a methodology.

#### Part I – Personal Information:

1. Name: .....

2. E-mail ID (if available): .....

3. Age:

4. Gender-

☐ Female

☐ Male

5. Academic Degree:

6. University and department you graduated from:

.....

.....

7. Time span of Teaching English:

**Part II – School Information:**

**8.** What grade(s) are you presently teaching?

.....

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**9.** How many classes are you teaching this year?

.....

.....

**10.** How many hours of class do you teach a week?

.....

.....

**11.** What is the average number of students in your class?

**Part III – Questions related to language teaching methodology, particularly CLT:**

**12.** What teaching methods are you implementing in your classes? (Please specify how frequently you are using a particular method.)

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rare	Never
Grammar Translation method					
Audio lingual method					
Direct method					
Communicative Language Teaching					
Silent Way					
Total physical response					

**20.** What methods did you experience as a language learner?

.....

.....

.....

**21.** Have you tried Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in your classes?

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No



**22.** If no, then why did you or why didn't you try CLT?

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**23.** Or if you have tried CLT, how did you like using it in your classroom?

.....

.....

.....

**24.** Have you ever participated in any kinds of programs such as workshops, special training  
(before-joining & after-joining) programs devoted to CLT?

☐ Yes      ☐ No

**25.** If yes, when:

.....

.....

Where:

.....

.....

.....

How long:

.....

26. How did you benefit from the program? What did you learn from it?

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.....  
.....  
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27. How do you define CLT in your own words?

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.....

28. What is involved in CLT methodology in your view? (*Please check one.*)

a. CLT is student/learner-centered approach.

*True      Not True      Don't know*

b. CLT emphasizes appropriacy over accuracy.

*True      Not True      Don't know*

c. CLT emphasizes communication in a second language (L2).

*True      Not True      Don't know*

d. CLT relies heavily on speaking and listening skills.

*True      Not True      Don't know*

e. CLT requires teachers to have a high proficiency in English.

*True      Not True      Don't know*

f. CLT involves only group work or pair work.

*True      Not True      Don't know*

g. CLT requires higher knowledge of the target language culture.

*True      Not True      Don't know*

h. CLT involves no grammar teaching.

*True      Not True      Don't know*

i. CLT involves teaching speaking only.

*True      Not True      Don't know*

j. CLT is basically an ESL methodology, not EFL.

*True      Not True      Don't know*



Did you come across to any difficulties or do you think there might be some difficulties for you in implementing CLT in Bangladesh?

Please indicate how big an issue these challenges are by circling the following response scale:

*4 = Major challenge; 3 = Challenge; 2 = Mild challenge; 1 = Not a challenge at all.*

### **30. STUDENT-RELATED DIFFICULTIES & CHALLENGES**

i. Students have low-level English proficiency.

4    3    2    1

ii. Students have a passive style of learning.

4    3    2    1

iii. Students resist participating in communicative class activities.

4    3    2    1

iv. Students lack motivation for developing communicative competence.

4    3    2    1

### **31. DIFFICULTIES & CHALLENGES RELATED TO EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

i. There is a lack of enough support from administration.

4    3    2    1

ii. Teachers lack authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines, movies etc.

4    3    2    1

iii. Traditional view on teachers' and learners' role is not compatible with CLT.

4    3    2    1

iv. Classes are too large for the effective use of CLT.

4    3    2    1

v. Grammar-based examinations have a negative impact on the use of CLT.

4    3    2    1

### **32. CLT-RELATED DIFFICULTIES & CHALLENGES**

i. There is a lack of effective and efficient instruments to assess communicative competence.

4    3    2    1

ii. CLT doesn't take into account the differences between EFL and ESL teaching contexts.

4    3    2    1

iii. Western educational assumptions are not suitable within Asian contexts.

4    3    2    1

**33. Please list any other potential problems and difficulties you might encounter in adopting CLT in Bangladesh.**

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Thank You

