A STUDY OF THE ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS TOWARDS COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

This paper reports the attitudes of teachers in Jamnagar District, Gujarat towards implementing the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). A brief review of the teaching methods and approaches to ELT is presented with an objective of underlining the relevance of CLT. Teachers' feelings and beliefs about the Communicative Approach are ascertained from their statements in response to an attitudinal questionnaire reflecting the principles of this approach. Teachers' behavior is observed and described to compare with what they reported to be the effective implementation of the principles of the approach. This study provides analyses of the phenomenon of teachers' attitudes towards the effective implementation of the Communicative Approach in ESL classrooms. The findings can be used to complement studies on teachers' attitudes towards CLT.

Introduction

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) views language as a tool for communication. It insists that interactional speaking activities in classrooms provide fine opportunities to create a real communicative environment. It ensures that students have sufficient exposure to the target language. Thus, application of CLT in classrooms would bring about positive outcome to the

students as well as the teachers. By introducing CLT, teachers are able to catch up with the modern development of English teaching methods in the world. They are able to realize that teaching English is not only teaching grammar, and that true mastery of language involves communicative competence. As CLT aims at communicative competence, students will be more competent in the use of English for communication. A good level of English will help them adequately to graduate from universities; to obtain jobs, to read technical and scientific materials; and to study abroad.

It has been observed that in spite of many years' efforts to acquire the communicative competence in English and learning of English in schools and colleges, students are not competent enough to do the communication in English. Majority of the secondary and higher secondary English teachers receive graduate and post-graduate education in English. In spite of that, English teaching standards could not make any successful and effective contribution to the learning and use of English. Improved curriculum design that incorporates new and effective approaches to language instructions is fundamental to developing the quality of English language learning and teaching. CLT, the language teaching approach that has got worldwide recognition and use as an ELT method was introduced to cope with the world English learning scenario. But, there was resistance from teachers against its implementation.

It is clear that teachers' attitudes are important in their decision to implement CLT. Since teachers' attitudes reveal teachers' thinking about teaching language, the investigation of teachers' attitudes serves as a starting point to identify the possible contradictions between teachers' beliefs and CLT principles. Littlewood (1981) suggests that the idea of the communicative approach may conflict with EFL teachers' existing thoughts about teachers' roles and teaching methods. Thus, to implement the relatively new communicative approach in Gujarat, it is important to investigate Upper Primary teachers' attitudes toward CLT in Jamnagar District.

The Communicative Approach

The theory of communicative competence attempts to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences in a natural setting. "This competence is integral with attitudes, values, and motivations concerning language, its features and uses, and integral with competence for, and attitudes toward, the interrelation of language with the other code of communicative conduct" (Hymes 1972:277-78). Hymes's view requires developing the components of

communicative competence into a teaching approach and method. Communicative competence enables learners to convey and interpret meaningful messages within specific contexts. Hymes makes a distinction between the use of 'linguistic competence', that is, knowledge of the language forms and rules to form grammatically correct sentences, and 'communicative competence', that is, knowledge that enables learners to form grammatically correct sentences and to use the rules of speaking in different situations appropriately (Brown 2000:246 and Richards et al. 1992:65). Hymes rejects structuralism based on behaviorism, which measures learners' competence by testing their knowledge of underlying grammatical rules. The Communicative Approach is also a rejection of Chomsky's generativist based on mentalism which measures learners' competence in the TL by their cognitive abilities to generate utterances which are governed by grammatical rules of the TL (Brown 2000:10). Hymes's notion of competence is more extensive than Chomsky's linguistic competence (grammatical knowledge). Chomsky (1965 in Hymes 1972:283) admits, "Grammaticalness is only one of the many factors that interact to determine acceptability".Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983 in Brown 2000:247) developed a model that further refined communicative competence into other components:

1) Grammatical competence, which comprises the lexicon, morphology, syntax, sentence-structure, semantics, and phonology.

2) Discourse competence, which is needed to connect sentences in order to establish and maintain logical coherence in expository prose (written or spoken). This competence focuses on the use of inter sentential relationships to produce coherent conversations and written texts (Brown 2000:247).

3) Sociolinguistic competence, which is exemplified in observing sociocultural rules in conversation, requiring clear awareness and correct interpretation of social situations and relationships between parties connected (Sauvignon 1983 in Brown 2000:247).

4) Strategic competence subsists in a repertoire of verbal and nonverbal communication mechanisms or techniques to which a speaker can resort to resolve or repair a breakdown in communication that may be attributable to a lack of conversational skill (Canale and Swain 1980 in Brown 2000:247). Among these techniques or strategies are paraphrasing, repeating, and avoiding utterances. Swain (1984 in Brown 2000:248) identified strategic competence as a repertoire of techniques used to account for the communication strategies that may be called to

enhance the effectiveness of communication (i.e. besides repairing breakdowns).

The Prominent Features of CLT

a) CLT is learner-centered.

b) CLT emphasizes on learning communication rather than grammar.

c) CLT's objective is the development of communicative competence

d) CLT encourages 'fluency and appropriacy' rather than 'accuracy'.

e) CLT syllabi are specified more in terms of language functions rather than in terms of language forms.

f) CLT tolerates grammatical errors at an early stage of the learner, but expects them to master the language at a later stage and produces correct sentences.

g) CLT is task-based.

h) CLT encourages individualized learning trades more on the message than meaning.

Content of materials

Communicative textbooks have to provide different topics that include a variety of linguistic registers for different kinds of social interactions, so that learners can "distinguish between formal and informal language and determine the appropriateness of a particular style used in a piece of writing; form an opinion about what they read, such as whether they like it or not, or why" Strategic competence refers to the ability to make the most effective use of available skills to carry out a given task. It is perceived "as a set of metacognitive components, or strategies, which can be thought of as higher order executive processes that provide a cognitive management function for language use, as well as in other cognitive activities".Communicative strategies help learners create genuine communicative discourse in their classrooms and prepare them to use these strategies in situations outside the classrooms. These strategies enhance the acquisition, storage, retention, recall and use of new information. Inferring the meanings of new words from the contexts, summarizing, paraphrasing, skimming, taking cues from the texts, memorizing and retrieving to create a mental link are part of the strategies that help learners to use language communicatively. Teachers have to encourage their learners to recognize and internalize the strategies available to them as partners in the learning process.

Conclusion

It is clear that the Communicative Approach represents a significant departure from the Grammar-Translation and Audio-lingual methods of teaching in terms of its theoretical paradigm

and principles. It has been shown that the Communicative Approach "can be much more effective than grammar-translation, audio lingualism, or other earlier methods in promoting students' confidence and their fluency in speech and writing, and in accelerating the early stages of their language development" (Pica 2000:5).

Teachers' Attitudes:

Since this study explores teachers' attitudes to the Communicative Approach, it is important to explain the definitions and dimensions of the attitudes that determine the evaluative reaction towards a person, a thing or a phenomenon: beliefs, feelings and behaviors. The relationship between attitudes, beliefs and behaviors is examined. The situational factors that influence teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of ESL teaching methods are explored. Finally, the scale for measuring attitudes is discussed. According to Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991:178-79), teachers' attitudes are decisive for L2 learning. Considerable research has been conducted on the role of attitudes and motivation in ESL learning from the point of view of the learner. Prominent in this regard are the works of Lambert (1955), Lambert (1985), Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972), Gardner and Smythe (1981) in Gardner and MacIntyre (1993:2).

Definitions of attitudes

Attitude is defined as a "predisposition to perceive, feel or behave towards specific objects or certain people in a particular manner. Attitudes are thought to be derived from experience, rather than innate characteristics which suggest that they can be modified". This definition includes beliefs, feelings and behaviors as dimensions of attitudes. It is through experience and maturation in the teaching process that teachers consolidate their feelings and beliefs consciously and unconsciously about a person, object or event (Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg 1988:26).The basic concern of the aim, research questions and hypothesis of this study is to discover whether or not teachers' behaviors in their ESL classrooms are congruent with their attitudes, comprising their beliefs and feelings (cf. 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3).

The situational factors in ESL teaching environments

Situational factors in teaching environment can lead to differences in teachers' implementation of the Communicative Approach. According to Prabhu (1990:162-63) some situational factors arise from the teaching environment (e.g. the language policy, linguistic and cultural attitudes towards the language, ideological and economic factors that influence the teaching processes itself, educational policy concerning teaching approaches and instructional objectives, time and

resource constraints, administrative inefficiency, and class-size). Some factors are related to the teacher (e.g. training, beliefs and skills). Learner-related factors include age, prior learning experience, attitudes to learning, personality, psychological processes, and different learning styles. All of the above factors may have "an effect of limiting or extending opportunities for desired forms of pedagogic action" (Prabhu 1990:166).The following conclusions can be drawn: Attitudes are tendencies to react favorably or unfavorably to something (therefore also to a teaching approach). Attitudes comprise various components: beliefs, feelings and behaviors, which influence a person to act in a certain way. Attitudes can be learnt and modified from experience of a teaching approach, with the possible result that teachers' classroom practice may improve.

Measurement of attitudes

Kiesler et al. (1969:9-10) identify five types of attitude measurement including self reported beliefs and behaviors from which inferences can be drawn and measurement premised on inferences of the performance of objective tasks. The Likert scale is used in this study as part of a summated ratings method and a means of self-report measurement. The Likert technique presents a set of attitude statements, according to which subjects are asked to express agreement or disagreement on a five-point scale. Each degree of agreement is given a number value from one to five.For example: Pair and group-work activities help to provide opportunities for developing genuine interaction among learners.

5. 'Strongly agree' 4.'Agree' 3.'Undecided' 2.'Disagree' 1. 'Strongly disagree'

Likewise, the observation instrument is designed to validate the stated attitudinal responses by comparing whether what teachers say is consistent with what they do in their classrooms with regard to Communicative Approach activities (Appendix B).

Conclusion

Teachers' attitudes are evident from their evaluative reaction to a teaching approach. Attitudes comprise three dimensions: beliefs, feelings, and behaviors which are the integrated mental constructs that interactively produce an attitude that is manifest in observable behavior.

Teachers' feelings and beliefs about the Communicative Approach are ascertained from their statements in response to an attitudinal questionnaire reflecting the principles of this approach. Teachers' behavior is observed and described to compare with what they reported to be the effective implementation of the principles of the approach. Effectiveness of implementation may

be inhibited by extraneous factors such as lack of time, training, etc.Malley&Chamot1990; Richards&Rodgers2001; Rivers,1987). The main concept of the CLT is expressed by the desire for developing the communicative competence among learners. The development of communicative competence is vital to real L2 learning.

Analysis and Interpretation

The Teacher

The teachers who are participants in this research are fifty in number. They have been teaching the course for the last five to sixteen years. They have graduate degree (B.A.) in English Literature. Some of them had a few modules in English Language Teaching. They have the theoretical knowledge of CLT. They have been using the textbook written in CLT for the last 5 years.

The Course book

The primary ELT education spreads over three years of the Upper primary program, i.e. class6,7 and 8. As the focus is on the communicative functions of language, the main aim of the textbook is to provide ample opportunities for students to use English for a variety of purposes in interesting situations. The book is divided into units. Each unit is based on a theme, has several lessons that contain reading texts and a range of tasks and activities of designed to enable students to practice the different skills, sometimes in pairs or groups. It is very often seen that though the course book contains communicative activities for interactional activities in the classroom, the classes are rather non-communicative or teacher centered where the traditional 'teacher initiation-learner response-teacher follow up' interaction patterns happen. They do not ultimately lead to communicative environment in the classroom. In Gujarat ELT teachers still follow the grammar explanation, lecture based, memorization-oriented ELT pedagogy. The same is true about the ELT classes in the upper primary level.

Communicative Activities in the Course book

The course book is replete with plenty of communicative activities. In each lesson there are three to four communicative activities, such as pair work, group work, problem solving and communicative games. For the convenience of classroom management which is, however, a practical reason because in Gujarati ELT classes, there are sometimes as many as two hundred students in a class, there is more pair work than group work. It is seen from this section that course book is written following the communicative Language Teaching approach .There are

communicative activities in very lesson of this course book.

Delimitations of the study

Yet, inevitably, despite these outstanding characteristics, CLT also have weaknesses. Schmitt (2000) argued that CLT needs supportive vocabulary for functional language use but it gives little guidance about how to handle vocabulary. However, it has been now realized that mere exposure to language and practice with functional communication will not ensure the proficiency in language learning, so current best practice includes "both a principled selection of vocabulary, often according to frequency lists, and an instruction methodology that encourages meaningful engagement with words over a number of recycling" (p.14). Stern (1992) also pointed out that CLT approach puts an excessive emphasis on the single concept "communication" so that "in order to account for all varieties and aspects of language teaching we either stretch the concept of communication so much that it loses any distinctive meaning, or we accept its limitations and then find ourselves in the predicament of the "method" solution" (p. 14). Some people criticized that as CLT focus on learner-centered approach, while in some accounts of CLT, learners bring preconception of what teaching and learning should be like, which when unrealized can lead to learner confusion and resentment (Henner-Stanchina & Riley, 1978, cited by Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Limitation and Significance of CLT

Lindsay and Knight (2006, p. 23) commented that "CA is very widely used all over the world. It has shifted the focus in language teaching from learning about the language to learning to communicate in the language.However, there are problems associated with it. The most serious criticism of CA is that it is not as effective as it claims to be". ELT practitioners' in countries such as India should not forget the fact that CA was developed in Britain, the United States and other English-speaking countries. Therefore, its application in countries such as India will not be an easy task. Teachers and learners should be flexible enough to follow the practices implicit in CLT. However, they should not abandon CLT altogether. Teachers have to realize that they can meet the requirements of their learners better by adopting the principles of CLT in their classrooms.

Summary, Findings, and Recommendation

Research Methodology

Any research report includes information about respondents, types of data, techniques of data

collection, sample type and its selection method, and mathematical and statistical techniques and analysis on collected data etc.On the basis of it the study should conceptualized, moreover from the accuracy and consistency of data; reliability of data should also identify. In this chapter scope the study, type and techniques of data collection, sample type and its selection method, and mathematical and statistical techniques and analysis of collected information presented.

Scope of the study:

This study includes only language teacher's as respondents who are working in government and granted Upper Primary School of Jamnagar District. Teachers are included in present study only. In sample selection respondents of government upper primary schools and of granted upper primary schools Jamnagar district were included. Total responses were included for the analysis of the data. Details of the respondents depicted in table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Characteristics of sample's respondents

Types of schools		Gender		Experience	
Government	Granted	Male	Female	More than 5 years	Less than 5 years
40	09	14	36	18	32

Table 5.2 states that respondents were classified by two types of schools.

Methodology for Research

This is an empirical study done on primary data collected from the 50 language teachers respondents working in different upper primary schools of Jamnagar district.

Population of the study

The population of the study was the language teachers of upper primary schools of Jamnagar District, Gujarat state.

Sample of the study

The selection of sample has done by random cluster method. The target group was 50 English language teachers respondents of different government and granted upper primary schools of

Jamnagar District.

Tool of the study

Communicative Language Teaching is a widely practiced language teaching approach. But, there is mixed feeling and reaction to it among people in various socio -educational contexts. In view of the requirements that CLT places on learners as well as teachers, there is much to be asked about the ability to adapt this approach to EFL settings. Teachers have widely different perceptions of the features of CLT for curriculum and instruction. The issues which facilitate or hinder the implementation of that methodology are different from one national context to another. The attitudes and experience of teachers about CLT are not consistent as well. So, it is important to know about the perceptions and feelings of the primary teachers to investigate attitude of teacher's in implementing Communicative Approach in Classroom.

Findings and Outcomes

Activities for developing genuine interaction among learners.

There are many activities which helps students as well as teachers to increase interactions among themselves. Pair and group work activities help in

developing interaction among learners.
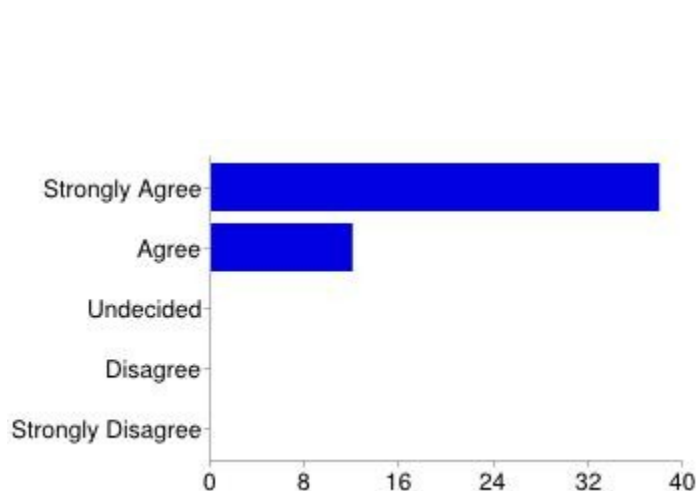
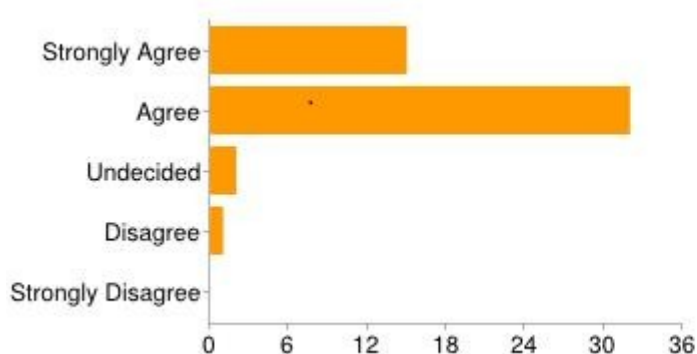|		
Strongly Agree	**38**	76%
Agree	**12**	24%
Undecided	**0**	0%
Disagree	**0**	0%
Strongly Disagree	**0**	0%

Graph No 5.1	**Table 5.2**

Outcome of the survey:

The above survey shows that most of teachers strongly agree that Pair and group activities can

be used to develop genuine interaction among learners.

Focus on Selected English Forms

|		
Strongly Agree	**15**	30%
Agree	**32**	64%
Undecided	**2**	4%
Disagree	**1**	2%
Strongly Disagree	**0**	0%

Graph No 5.2   **Table 5.3**

Outcome of the survey:

Most of teachers believe selected English forms can also lead to development of genuine interaction among learners.

Errors in Learning Process

Errors are natural part of any learning system. But it depends on the way how they are being handled for developing interest among learners.
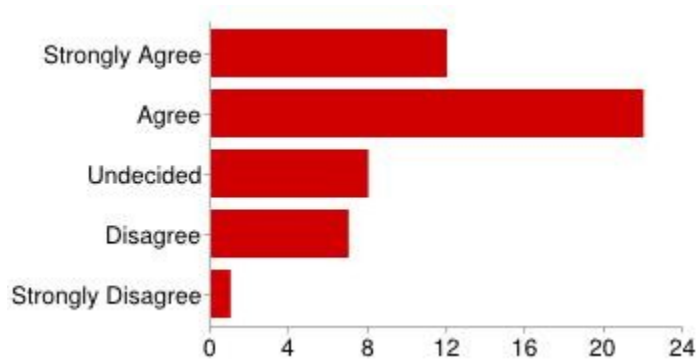
Strongly Agree	**12**	24%
Agree	**22**	44%
Undecided	**8**	16%
Disagree	**7**	14%
Strongly Disagree	**1**	2%

Graph No 5.3   **Table 5.4**

Outcome of Survey

Most of the teachers think agree that less correction in English could led to good interaction among various learners.

Teacher is the only speaker throughout

During any learning process, the teacher is considered to be only speaker. He or she should be the one who dominates all the activities related to learning process.
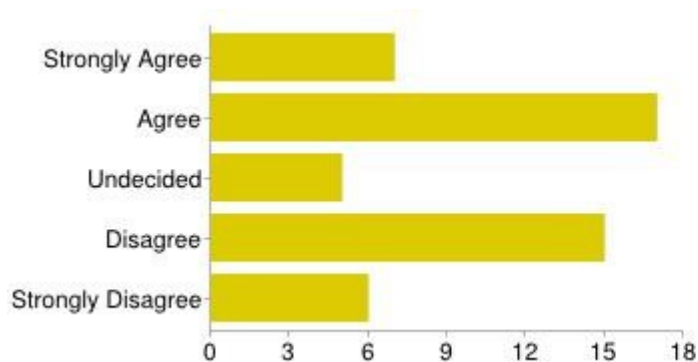
Strongly Agree	**7**	14%
Agree	**17**	34%
Undecided	**5**	10%
Disagree	**15**	30%
Strongly Disagree	**6**	12%

Graph No 5.4   **Table 5.5**

Outcome of the survey:

Most of the people are on the above fact. But there is close fight between those who are agreeing and disagreeing.

Effective English is suited for variety of situation and purposes
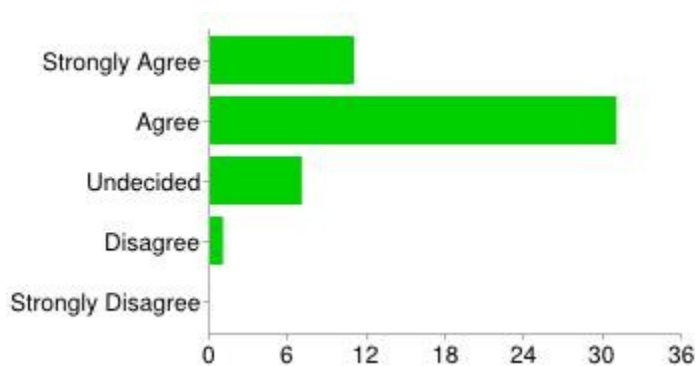
Strongly Agree	**11**	22%
Agree	**31**	62%
Undecided	**7**	14%
Disagree	**1**	2%
Strongly Disagree	**0**	0%

Graph No 5.5   **Table 5.6**

Outcome of the survey:

Teachers think that effective English i.e. formal and informal is suited for variety of situation and purposes.

Methods used for teach English

Basically there are 3 methods which are used for teaching English. They can be listed as:

1. Grammar Translation Method
2. Audio Lingual Method
3. Direct Method (CA)
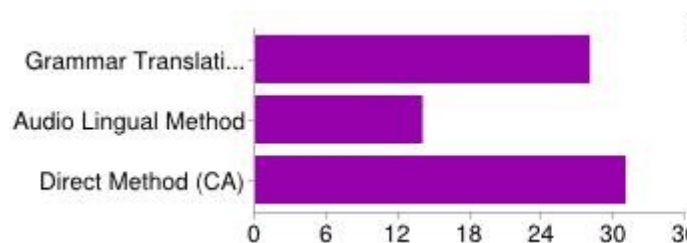
| Grammar Translation Method	28	38%
Audio Lingual Method	14	19%
Direct Method (CA)	31	42%

Graph No 5.6   **Table 5.7**

Teachers were multiple choices for this question. They can choose combination of any methods given above for teaching English.

Outcome of the survey:

Most of teachers are adopting a combination of Grammar Translation and Direct Method for teaching English. But still most of teachers use Direct Method.

Communicative Approach for Teaching English
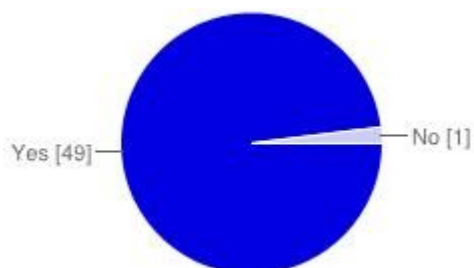
Yes	49	98%
No	1	2%

Graph No 5.7   **Table 5.8**

Outcome of the survey:

Most of efficient way of teaching English is Communicative Approach as suggested by most of the Teachers.

Commons Activities used in Class for Teaching English using CA

Many activities are being adopted by teachers to teaching English in classroom. These activities make English Learning easy and understandable with fun. Some of the activities are given below in the graph.
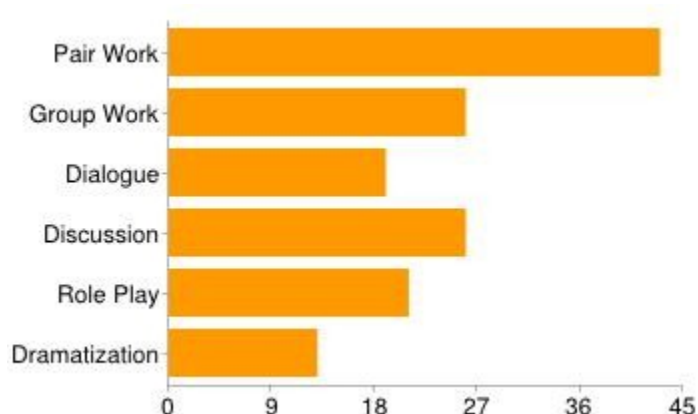
Pair Work	**43**	29%
Group Work	**26**	18%
Dialogue	**19**	13%
Discussion	**26**	18%
Role Play	**21**	14%
Dramatization	**13**	9%

<div align="center">

Graph No 5.8   **Table 5.9**

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Outcome of the survey:

Teachers use multiple activities to teach students. Here also multiple choices were given to students.

Most of the teachers used Pair Work with combination of Group Work and Discussion for teaching English.

Student Response for above Activities
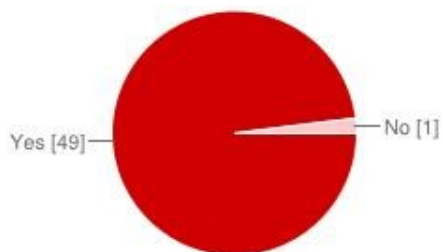
Yes	**49**	98%
No	**1**	2%

Graph No 5.9   **Table 5.10**
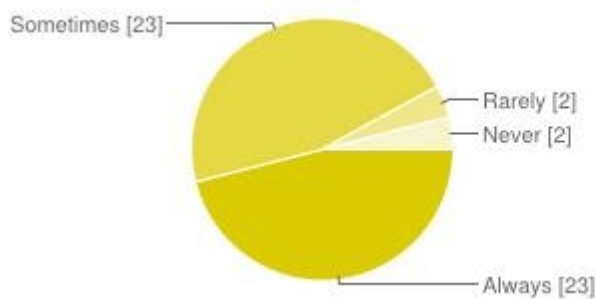
Outcome of the survey

Most of the students are getting output from the mentioned activities.

Activities in the Classroom

Always	**23**	46%
Sometimes	**23**	46%
Rarely	**2**	4%
Never	**2**	4%

Graph No 5.10   **Table 5.11**

Outcome of the Survey

Most of the teachers are used the activities in the Classroom while teaching English Language.

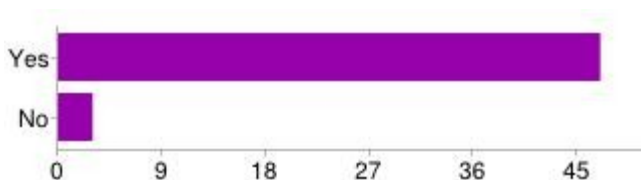**Communicative Language for developing skills**

   1. Listening
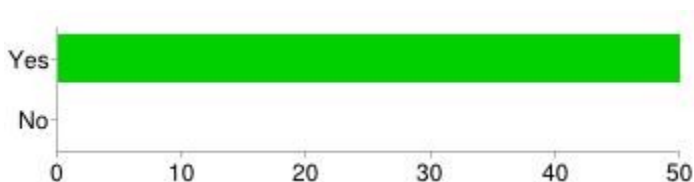
Yes	50	100%
No	0	0%

Graph No 5.11   **Table 5.12**

   2. Speaking

Yes	47	94%
No	3	6%

Graph No 5.12   **Table 5.13**

Graph No 5.13

   3. Reading
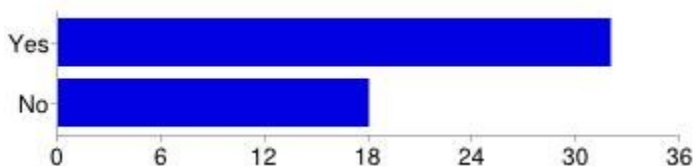
Yes	32	64%
No	18	36%

Table 5.14

4. Writing
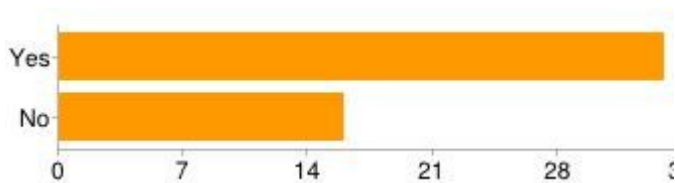
Graph No 5.14

Yes	34	68%
No	16	32%

Table 5.15

Outcome of the Survey

Most of the teachers think that Listening skill is the developed by using Communicative Approach. Then comes speaking, writing and finally reading.
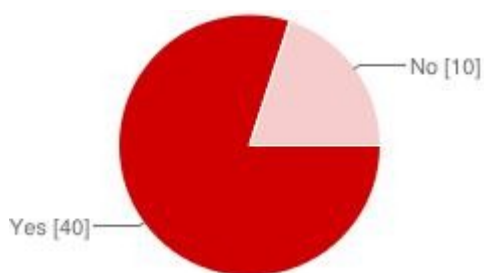
Training for Communicative Approach

Government is providing pre service training to implement Communicative Approach in the classroom.

Most of the teachers are getting the advantages of such trainings. There are two types of trainings:

1. Pre Service Training
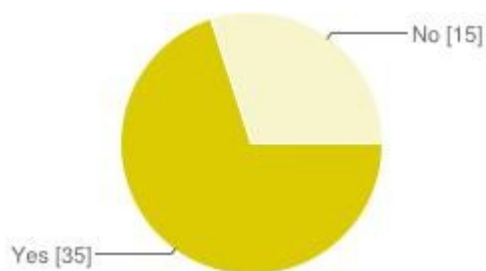2. In Service Training

1. Pre Service Training

Yes	40	80%
No	10	20%

Graph No 5.15   **Table 5.16**

Outcome of the Survey

Most of the teachers are getting pre service trainings provided by College, as a part of their college circular.

Is it Adequate?

Yes	**35**	70%
No	**15**	30%

Graph No 5.16   **Table 5.17**

Outcome of Survey

Most of the teachers feel that the pre services provided by College, is adequate.

2. In Service Training

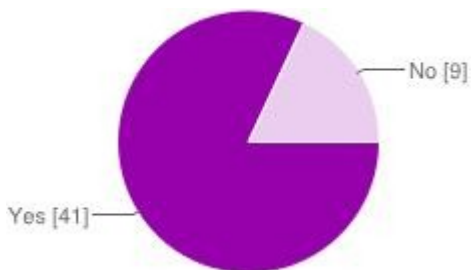|		
Yes	**43**	86%
No	**7**	14%

Graph No 5.17   **Table 5.18**

Outcome of the Survey

Most of the teachers get in service training as a part of regular job schedule. They think the training provide is quite regular.

Is the Trainer Adequate?

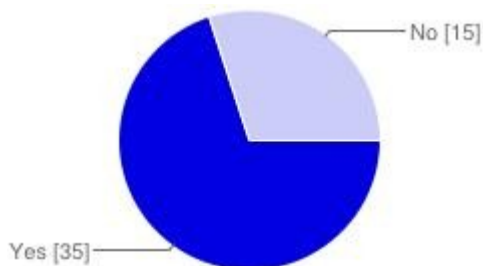|		
Yes	**41**	82%
No	**9**	18%

Graph No 5.18   **Table 5.19**

Outcome of the Survey

Most of the teachers think that trainer providing training is adequate and provide a useful training which can be implemented in the classroom.

Textbook used in CLT

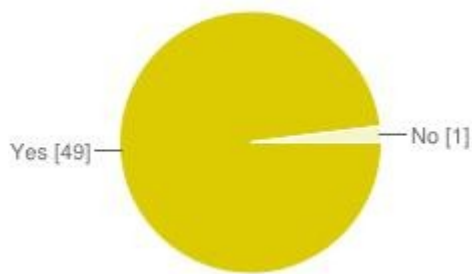|		
Yes	**35**	70%
No	**15**	30%

Graph No 5.19   **Table 5.20**

Outcome of the survey

Most of teachers think that the textbook available are efficient or good for teaching English.
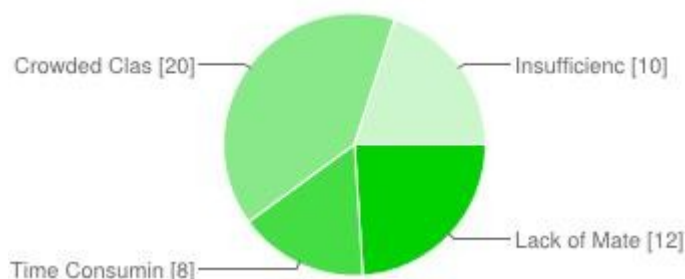
Teacher's View on English Teaching

Yes	49	98%
No	1	2%

| **Graph No 5.22** | **Table 5.23** |

Outcome of the survey

All teachers like to teach English in the Classroom.

Commons Difficulties by Teacher's in using CA

Lack of Materials	12	24%
Time Consuming	8	16%
Crowded Classes	20	40%
Insufficiency of Support	10	20%

| **Graph No 5.23** | **Table 5.24** |

Outcome of Survey

Most teachers think that crowded classes are hindrance in implementation of CLT in classrooms. Then it is followed by lack of materials and then insufficiency of support and finally it is time consuming.

Conclusion

This study provides analyses of the phenomenon of teachers' attitudes towards the effective implementation of the Communicative Approach in ESL classrooms. These findings can be used to complement studies on teachers' attitudes from other disciplines such as education

and psychology. There is still plenty of scope for further investigation into the various aspects of the research issues dealt with in this study and the implications that follow from them.

From the above research we can conclude that communicative approach is a one of the best methodology which can be implemented to use the language teaching for English language learner. With the availability of teaching method this communicative approach can be used extensively with an effective language teaching. Language teachers are ready to use or implement it in their classroom.

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