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Stakeholders' Perspectives: Teachers and Students on CLT Implementation in Bangladesh

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Abstract

This article explores the perspectives of teachers and students on the implementation of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach at the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) level in Bangladesh. Drawing on a qualitative case study, data were collected from 100 students and 20 teachers across diverse institutions. The findings highlight both the perceived strengths of CLT in enhancing communication skills and the challenges faced in practice, such as large class sizes, exam-driven practices, and insufficient teacher training. The study underscores the gap between policy intentions and classroom realities, calling for context-sensitive reforms in curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching; Bangladesh; Teachers' Perspectives; Students' Perspectives; ELT; HSC Level

1. Introduction

The adoption of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in Bangladesh aimed to shift English education from rote memorisation under the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) toward the development of communicative competence. The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) designed the *English for Today* textbooks to align with CLT principles, aspiring to prepare learners for global communication. However, despite these reforms, Bangladeshi learners at the HSC level often struggle with practical language use, raising questions about the effectiveness of CLT in real classrooms.

This article specifically investigates the voices of key stakeholders—students and teachers—since their perspectives provide invaluable insights into the successes and shortcomings of CLT implementation.

2. Methodology

This study employed a quantitative method of data collection. For this, two survey questionnaires were developed to collect data from the learners and the teachers of H.S.C. level in Bangladesh. The survey was conducted through survey tool in which the informants expressed their opinion.

- **Participants:** 100 students and 10 English teachers were purposively sampled from five higher secondary institutions across Bangladesh.
- **Instruments:** Semi-structured questionnaires were used, focusing on perceptions of textbook design, classroom activities, teacher practices, and learning outcomes.

Analysis: Responses were thematically analysed and presented using descriptive statistics with tables for clarity. In this regard, the research used Likert scale for measurement which is a psychometric testing to measure

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beliefs, attitudes and opinion of the respondents relating to the statements – “When responding to a Likert item, respondents specify their level of agreement or disagreement on a symmetric agree-disagree scale for a series of statements. Thus, the range captures the intensity of their feelings for a given item.” (Likert scale - Wikipedia) The responses are labeled as -

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. Research Findings and Discussion

The study aims to show the findings from the result of analysis of data about ELT materials which is the most significant and integrated part of teaching and learning of English language at the H.S.C level in Bangladesh. Since, the two questionnaires for students and teachers incorporated queries relating to the goals and objectives of ELT textbook *English for Today* for classes XI-XII and Alim by NCTB, incorporation of four basic skills in the book, English language teaching method, assessment format, learners’ motivation, audio-visual aids English in language class room, class size, class duration, incorporation of four basic skills in board examination and so on, discussion on findings subsequently reflect upon the real scenario of the teaching and learning of English language following CLTA at the H.S.C. level in Bangladesh.

3.1. Findings and Discussion on the Questionnaire for Learners

The questionnaire for students includes information about related aspects of English language teaching and learning. At the H.S.C level against which the informants responded. As mentioned earlier, the survey intended to get 100 data from students and 10 data from teachers of the five colleges of Bangladesh.

Table 1 Learners' Questionnaire

Characteristics	Statement									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
The aim and objective of learning English language in Bangladesh is to develop communicative competence in the language	0	0.0%	10	10.0%	19	19.0%	58	58.0%	13	13.0%
English language is being taught following CLTA in Bangladesh	09	9.0%	41	41.0%	70	75%	75	5.0%	02	2.0%
Textbook contains practice of 4 basic skills of English language	44	44.0%	21	21.0%	05	5.0%	17	17.0%	13	13.0%
English language classroom is interactive with learners and teacher	12	12.0%	58	58.0%	10	10.0%	16	16.0%	04	4.0%
Satisfied with speaking skill	17	17.0%	49	49.0%	14	14.0%	18	18.0%	02	2.0%
Speaking in English outside the classroom with peers and family members	37	37.0%	48	48.0%	10	10%	04	4.0%	01	1.0%
Satisfied with the English language teaching method we have in the classroom	11	11.0%	44	44.0%	17	17.0%	26	26.0%	07	2.0%
The current ELT materials are adequate for developing communicative competence in English language	11	11.0%	44	44.0%	13	13.0%	27	27.0%	05	5.0%
Ideal language class size of 30 students	37	37.0%	22	22.0%	10	10.0%	21	21.0%	10	10.0%
Duration of English language class is optimum for practicing during class time	18	18%	53	53.0%	12	12.0%	11	11%	06	6.0%
English language classroom contains audio-visual aids and equipment	50	50.0%	25	25.0%	09	9.0%	14	14.0%	02	2.0%
English language teacher uses audio-visual aids in the classroom	45	45.0%	39	39.0%	02	2.0%	12	12.0%	02	2.0%
Assessment of 4 basic skills is covered in the question paper of final board examination	40	40.0%	20	20.0%	12	12.0%	21	21.0%	07	7.0%

3.2. Findings and Discussion on Table 01

In the learners' questionnaire, there are 13 close ended points and set against which the learners responded expressing the extent they agree or disagree with the statements.

From the point the aim and objective of learning English language to develop communicative competence in the language, we can see that the maximum responded agree that is 58% whereas nobody 0.0 % disagreed with the fact that development of the learners' communicative competence in English language is the aim and objective learning this language in Bangladesh.

To respond to whether the English language is being taught following Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLTA) in Bangladesh, 41 of 1300 respondents (41%) disagreed that they are taught following the teaching method of Communicative Language Teaching Approach while a minimum of 2.0% strongly agreed with it. In this regard Richards and Rodgers (1986, p. 95) can be quoted, "As well as rethinking the nature of syllabus, the Communicative Approach to teaching prompted a rethinking of classroom teaching methodology."

The feedback gathered from the query that whether the book *English for Today* focuses on practicing the four basic skills of the English language: reading, writing, speaking, and listening, the majority of respondents expressed a negative opinion about the book's content, with 44% strongly disagreeing and 21.0% disagreeing. A small percentage, 5%, remained neutral and neither agreed nor disagreed. On the positive side, 17.0% agreed with the book's content, and 13% strongly agreed.

CLTA ensures an interactive atmosphere in the language classroom where both learners and teacher need to be engaged in learning and teaching process. In this stance Johnson (1995, p. xiii) can be quoted as he examines "the classroom as a unique communication context with highly regulated patterns of communicative behavior that are actively negotiated between teachers and students." But, the atmosphere of English language classroom of Bangladesh is totally deviated which is evident through the responses of the learners concerning this issue. All most all the respondents, the highest number of people – 58 (58%) and 12 (12.0%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively with the statement about interactive English language classroom and those who agreed is insignificant in number and percentage is– 16 (16.0%).

The results of a survey on individuals' satisfaction with their speaking skills, it can be observed that, the majority of respondents (49.0%) expressed a negative sentiment, with "Disagree" being the most selected option. Additionally, 17.00% of respondents strongly disagreed, indicating a high level of dissatisfaction. On the other hand, only 2.00% of participants agreed with the statement, suggesting that a very small proportion of respondents are content with their speaking abilities. The remaining 14.0% selected "Neither agree nor disagree," and 18.00% chose "Agree."

To respond to the point regarding English language usage outside the classroom with peers and family members, the majority of respondents, 37.0%, reported that they "Strongly Disagree" with speaking in English outside the classroom with peers and family members. A further 48.0% stated that they "Disagree," while 10.0% remained neutral and selected "Neither agree nor disagree." Only a small proportion, 4.0%, indicated that they "Agree" with this practice, and a mere 1.0% stated that they "Strongly Agree" with using English in these settings. The results suggest that the majority of participants are not comfortable using English in informal settings with peers and family members.

About the current ELT materials are sufficient enough in developing learners' communicative competence in English language, most of the respondents, around 44.0% disagreed and 11% strongly disagreed, while 27% respondents agree with it. So, it can be said that the current ELT materials need to be revised.

Leaning of a language in a non-native setting is very complicated and ideal language class size is an important aspect of successful learning. Hence, samples were asked whether their English language class size is ideal or not. Compulsory English language class is very often merged with the three groups- science, arts and commerce, so in most cases English language class contains over population and does not follow the ideal language class size of 30 students. On this issue, 37.0% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the notion of an ideal language class size of 30 students, while 22.0% disagreed. A smaller proportion, 10.00%, neither agreed nor disagreed. On the other hand, 21.00% of the respondents agreed with the idea, and the same percentage (10.00%) strongly agreed that a class size of 30 students is ideal for language classes.

Duration of English language class is very important for communicative language teaching and learning, because practice in target language is an indispensable part of class activity. But, about whether the duration of English language class is optimum for practicing during class time. 18.0% of respondents strongly disagreed that the duration of English

language classes is optimum for practicing during class time, while 53.0% simply disagreed. On the other hand, 12.0% of participants neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. About 11.0% of respondents agreed that the class duration is suitable for practicing, and 06.0% strongly agreed with the statement.

Audio-visual aids play a vital role in the language classroom since through audio and visual equipment native language situation can be created in a non-native setting for effective learning. In this regard, the learners reported strongly disagree and disagree 50.0% and 25.0% respectively which is significantly more than the percentage that strongly agreed and agreed – 2.0% and 14.0% separately. This trend remains similar in response to the statement relating to teacher's usage of audio-visual aids in language classroom.

The figure shows the results of a survey or feedback on the use of audio-visual aids by an English language teacher in the classroom. The majority of respondents (45.0%) responded "Strongly Disagree" that the English language teacher uses audio-visual aids in the classroom, indicating dissatisfaction with the current approach. Additionally, 39.0% disagreed on the issue. On the other hand, 12.0% of respondents agree that the teacher uses audio-visual aids, indicating some level of support for this teaching method. A smaller percentage (2.0%) responded "Strongly Agree" with this matter, expressing a high level of satisfaction with the teacher's approach. Only a small proportion of respondents (2.00%) chose "Neither agree nor disagree," which suggests that most of the respondents had a clear stance on the matter. Finally, it appears that a significant portion of the respondents have reservations or negative views regarding the usage of audio-visual aids by the English language teacher, but there is also a notable group that supports this instructional method. The feedback from the "Strongly Agree" group may indicate that some students find audio-visual aids beneficial in their language learning experience.

Participants were asked to express their level of agreement or disagreement with the statement that the assessment of these skills is adequately covered in the question paper. The majority of respondents (40.00%) strongly disagreed with the notion. Additionally, 20.0% disagreed, 12.0% neither agreed nor disagreed, 21.00% agreed, and only 7.0% strongly agreed with the statement. Overall, the data suggest that a significant portion of respondents expressed their concerns about the comprehensive evaluation of these skills in the examination.

Finally, the analysis indicates that some aspects of English language teaching in Bangladesh are perceived positively, such as the aim and objective of ELT, using the mother tongue in the classroom, and the need for teaching process reform. However, there are areas with lower perceptions, such as following CLTA, inclusion of basic skills practice in textbooks, interactive classrooms, use of audio-visual aids, and satisfaction with assessment criteria. These findings can be used to identify areas that require improvement and inform policy decisions in ELT in Bangladesh.

3.3. Findings and Discussion on the Questionnaire for Teachers

Like the questionnaire for the learners, the study conducted survey on questionnaire developed for the teachers since both the learners and the teachers are the stakeholders for teaching and learning of English language. The statements included in the questionnaire focus on ELT materials, teaching and learning procedure, teaching methodology, assessment strategy, use of audio-visual aids in the classroom etc. as well like the questionnaire for the learners. The result of the data analysis through Likert scale is presented in the table 02.

Table 2 The Teacher's Questionnaire

Characteristics	Statement									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The learners are motivated/like to learn English language.	0	0.0%	05	50.0%	0	0.0%	05	50.0%	0	0.0%
English language syllabus follows Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLTA).	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	04	40.0%	06	60.0%	0	0.0%
The book <i>English for Today for classes XI-XII and Alim</i> (textbook by NCTB) reflects CLTA.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	02	20.0%	08	80.0%	0	0.0%
The book <i>English for Today for classes XI-XII and Alim</i> contains practice of 4 basic skills of English language (reading skill, writing skill, speaking skill, listening skill).	04	40.0	01	10.0%	0	0.0%	05	50.0%	0	0.0%
The language classroom is equipped with audio-visual aids.	06	60.0%	01	10.0%	01	10.0%	02	20.0%	0	0.0%
The learners actively practice speaking skill in the classroom.	01	10.0%	05	50.0%	03	30.0%	02	10.0%	0	0.0%
The learners practice listening in the classroom through audio device.	06	60.0%	03	30.0%	3	10.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Ideal language class size of 30 students.	02	20.0%	04	40.0%	02	20.0%	02	20.0%	0	00%
English language class duration is optimum for practicing tasks during class time.	0	0.0%	08	80.0%	01	10.0%	01	10.0%	0	0.0%
I am satisfied with my students' progress in terms of English language learning.	0	0.0%	07	70.0%	01	10.0%	02	20.0%	0	0.0%
I received/have professional training on conducting English language class following CLTA.	02	20.0%	05	50.0%	0	0.0%	02	0.0%	01	10.0%
Learners listening and speaking skills are assessed in the final board examination.	06	60.0%	7	20.0%	0	0.0%	01	10.0%	01	10.0%

Distribution of marks in the question paper in Board Examination should be re-organized.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	02	20.0%	01	10.0%	07	70.0%
The authority should take necessary initiatives to change the current strategy of teaching and learning of English language.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	01	10.0%	07	70.0%	02	20.0%

3.4. Findings and Discussion on Table 02 of the Teacher's Questionnaire

The results of a survey that measures the motivation and attitude of learners towards learning the English language shows that half of the respondents (50%) disagreed with the statement, indicating that there is a significant portion of learners who do not feel motivated or do not like learning the English language. An equal percentage of respondents agreed with the statement, indicating that half of the participants believe that learners are indeed motivated and interested in learning the English language. The data on individuals' attitudes towards the English language syllabus, specifically concerning the adoption of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLTA) exhibits that the majority of the respondents (60.0%) expressed agreement with the English language syllabus following the Communicative Language Teaching approach.

To respond to the statement whether reflection of CLTA in the *English for Today* for classes XI-XII and Alim is evident or not, the majority of the participants (80.0%) agree that the book reflects the principles of CLTA. However, it is noteworthy that 20.0% of respondents neither agree nor disagree, suggesting some level of uncertainty or ambiguity in their perceptions of the book's alignment with CLTA. Interestingly, there are no respondents who strongly disagree or strongly agree with the statement.

The results highlight a mixed response to the effectiveness of the book *English for Today* for classes XI-XII and Alim in providing practice for the four basic skills of the English language. While a significant portion of respondents (50.0%) agree with the book's efficacy, a considerable number (40.0%) strongly disagree. This suggests that there may be room for improvement in certain areas to cater to a broader audience and meet the needs of those who feel the book falls short.

The respond to a statement about the availability of audio-visual aids in the language classroom shows that the majority of respondents, 60.0%, "Agree" that the language classroom is equipped with audio-visual aids. A small percentage, 10.0%, "Disagree" with the statement, while the same percentage neither agree nor disagree. About 20.0% of the respondents gave an "Agree" response. Interestingly, no respondents chose "Strongly Agree" for this statement, suggesting that while a significant portion agrees, there is no overwhelming endorsement of the presence of audio-visual aids in the language classroom.

From the results, it is observed that 10.0% of the learners strongly disagree that they actively practice speaking skills in the classroom, while 50.0% disagree, and 30.0% neither agree nor disagree. Surprisingly, no respondents strongly agreed that they actively practice speaking skills in the classroom. This suggests that there may be a need to improve and encourage more opportunities for learners to practice their speaking skills during classroom activities.

The survey data on the learners' preferences regarding practicing listening in the classroom through an audio device shows that majority of learners, approximately 60.0%, indicated that they "Strongly Disagree" with using audio devices for listening practice in the classroom. Another 30.0% of respondents expressed their disagreement but to a lesser extent by selecting "Disagree." A small portion, 10.0%, remained neutral and chose "Neither agree nor disagree." Surprisingly, none of the respondents showed a preference for using audio devices for listening practice, as indicated by the absence of responses in the "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" categories.

The results regarding the ideal class size for a language class shows that 20.0% of respondents strongly disagreed with an ideal class size of 30 students, while 40.0% disagreed. 20.0% of participants expressed a neutral stance, indicating neither agreement nor disagreement with the ideal class size. On the other hand, 20.0% agreed with a class size of 30 students, and none strongly agreed with this preference. The survey reveals that a significant portion of respondents are against the idea of having 30 students in a language class.

The majority of participants (80.0%) expressed disagreement which is indicating that they believe the current class duration is not sufficient for practicing tasks. A small percentage (10.0%) remained neutral and neither agreed nor disagreed, while 10.0% agreed that the class duration is appropriate for task practice. Notably, no participants strongly agreed with the statement.

The majority of respondents (70.0%) indicated that they "Disagree" with being satisfied with their students' progress. A smaller percentage (20.0%) "Agree" with being satisfied, and only a few chose the option "Neither agree nor disagree." Surprisingly, no respondents selected the extremes of "Strongly Agree" or "Strongly Disagree," with both options showing 0.0%. The participants were asked to rate their agreement with the statement of their having professional training on conducting English language classes following the CLTA (Communicative Language Teaching Approach), and the options ranged from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." The results show that 50.0% of the respondents

disagreed with the statement, 20.0% strongly disagreed, and 20.0% and 10.0% agreed or strongly agreed respectively. This indicates that the majority of the respondents did not receive or have professional training in conducting English language classes using the CLTA method.

The results of a survey on the assessment of learners' listening and speaking skills in the final board examination indicates that the majority of respondents, 60.0%, expressed that they "Strongly Disagree" with the statement that learners' listening and speaking skills are assessed in the final board examination. Additionally, 20.0% of respondents indicated that they "Disagree" with the statement. On the other hand, 10.0% of respondents "Agree" with the statement and an equal 10.0% "Strongly agree" with it. Interestingly, no respondents selected "Neither agree nor disagree" as their response.

The responses to a statement regarding the re-organization of marks in a Board Examination question paper shows that the majority of respondents, 70.0%, "Strongly Agree" with the proposal, indicating strong support for the idea of re-organizing the marks distribution. Additionally, 10.0% of participants "Agree" with the suggestion, further supporting the need for changes. However, 10.0% responded with "Neither agree nor disagree," suggesting some ambivalence or uncertainty about the proposal.

The responses to a statement regarding the authority's role in changing the current strategy of teaching and learning the English language indicates that the majority of respondents, 70.0%, indicated that they "Agree" with the idea that the authority should intervene and modify the current approach to teaching and learning English. A smaller percentage, 10.0%, expressed a "Neither agree nor disagree" stance, while the same percentage also chose "Strongly Agree." Notably, there were no responses in the "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" categories, indicating a lack of opposition to the proposed initiative.

The analysis underscores the importance of improving certain aspects of English language education in the non-native setting, such as enhancing learner motivation, refining textbook content and its alignment with communicative competence, and promoting more interactive and student-centric classrooms. Conversely, the positive perceptions regarding CLTA implementation, audio-visual aids, and effective assessment methods offer valuable points of strength that can be further emphasized and built upon in the educational context. By addressing the identified areas of concern and capitalizing on the existing strengths, a more thorough and efficacious approach may be adopted for teaching and learning of the English language in non-native settings.

To conclude, study has demonstrated the findings of the study regarding how far the ELT material, prescribed textbook *English for Today* for classes XI-XII and Alim developed by the NCTB, for the H.S.C. level in Bangladesh has incorporated lessons and tasks for developing the learners' communicative competency in English language. To bring out this fact respondents' responses have been scrutinized and then have been discussed on the findings. Eventually, from the findings and discussion, it is observed that the contents of the textbook, teaching methodology, assessment criteria are inconsistent to achieve the goal of communicative language teaching approach. As a result, learners are found incompetent in communicating in English language after having as many as twelve years schooling on this language.

Compliance with ethical standards

Statement of informed consent

The author affirms that the submitted manuscript is an original work and has not been published or submitted elsewhere. The author has reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript and consent to its submission to the International Journal of Science and Research Archive (IJSRA). Where applicable, ethical standards were followed, and informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in the research. The author accepts full responsibility for the content of the article.

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