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**| RESEARCH ARTICLE**

**Grade 9 English language teachers' perceptions, classroom practices, and challenges in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) at Amanuel Secondary School in 2018 E.C.**

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**| ABSTRACT**

This study investigated Grade 9 English language teachers' perceptions, classroom practices, and challenges in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) at Amanuel Secondary School. The study was guided by three specific objectives: to examine teachers' perceptions of CLT, to explore their classroom practices, and to identify factors influencing the implementation of CLT. A descriptive research design was employed, and data were collected through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, observation and document review with three teachers and 97 grade 9 students. The data were analyzed qualitatively and supported by simple descriptive statistics. The findings revealed that teachers generally held positive perceptions toward CLT. They understood that CLT emphasizes interaction, integration of language skills, and student participation in meaningful communication. However, some inconsistencies were identified in their understanding, particularly regarding immediate error correction and the dominance of teacher-centered instruction. Despite these inconsistencies, teachers generally valued CLT as an important approach for improving students' communicative competence. In terms of classroom practice, the results showed that teachers attempted to apply CLT principles through group work, pair work, discussions, and question-and-answer activities. However, both interview and observation results indicated that the implementation was not consistent. Traditional teaching methods such as lecture and grammar explanation were still dominant, and student participation in communicative activities was limited. Classroom observation further confirmed that teacher talk time was high, and opportunities for student-student interaction were relatively low. The study also identified several factors affecting the implementation of CLT. These included large class sizes, low student proficiency in English, lack of teaching materials, limited time, insufficient teacher training, examination-oriented assessment, and lack of administrative support. These challenges were found to significantly restrict the effective application of communicative activities in the classroom. Additionally, findings from Unit 4 methodology tools (questionnaires, interviews, observation checklist and document review) consistently supported these results. In conclusion, although teachers showed favorable perceptions of CLT, its practical implementation remained limited due to pedagogical, institutional, and contextual challenges. Therefore, the study recommends continuous professional development training, provision of adequate teaching materials, reduction of class size, and improved institutional support to enhance the effective implementation of CLT in English language teaching.

**| KEYWORDS**

Communicative Language Teaching, English Language Teaching, Formative Continuous Assessment, Summative Continuous Assessment.

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**1. Introduction**

Communicative language teaching (CLT) is an approach to the teaching of second and foreign languages that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language. It is also referred to as communicative approach to

the teaching of foreign languages or simply the communicative approach. The goal of most of the methods that have been practiced in second/foreign language pedagogy is for students to learn to communicate in the target language. CLT can be seen as a set of core principles about language learning and teaching; it can be applied in different ways in the processes of teaching and learning (Richards, J.C, 2006).

Canale & Swain (1980) and Van E. k, (1975) note that CLT was developed in the 1960s from the research and writing of applied linguistics in both Europe and North America. In Europe, this approach led initially to the institution of the notional functional approach. In CLT, the goal of language teaching should not be translating and learning a set of rules; it should rather be practiced based on the goal of communicative competence. Communicative competence is most frequently defined as the ability to create meaning when interacting with others in the target language. Thus, the focus in CLT is on communication in authentic situations.

As observed by some scholars in the field, by practicing previous methods of language teaching, students could produce sentences accurately in a lesson of the target language. But they could not use them appropriately when genuinely communicating outside of the classroom so being able to communicate required more than mastering linguistic structure, due to the fact that language was fundamentally social' (Holliday, 1973 ). In short, being able to communicate required more than linguistic competence; it required communicative competence (Hymes, 1971).

Communicative approach considered, as the most effective theoretical model in English language teaching since early 1970s and the underlying concept of this approach is that the language carries not only functional meaning, but it also carries social meaning as well (little wood, 1981).

CLT theories are different from the grammatical approach, which assumes that language consists of a finite set of rules and that these rules can be learned one by one, in an additive fashion (Nunan 1988). Wilkins 1972 points out that, in CLT, language learning emphasizes learning to communicate as opposed to learning a set of rules.

Studies conducted in African countries on CLT practices indicated that, teachers face much problems in implementing it in their classroom teaching (Adejimola, 2007; Barkhuizen, 1998; Lakachew, 2003). They found that teachers \_lack of knowledge and skills of CLT to be an important factor to hinder CLT implementation respectively in Naigeria, South Africa, and Ethiopia. Therefore, it is not only important to learn the linguistic forms but also to understand their potential communicative functions and social meanings. That is to say, the learners should be able to relate the linguistic form to appropriate non-linguistic knowledge in order to interpret the specific functional meaning intended by the speaker (little wood, 1981).

Teachers are considered to be the most influential factors in the students 'achievement. Thus, an examination of the practice of teachers (including how they absorb and employ curriculum policies based on their beliefs and educational philosophy) is viewed as an efficient method of improving the quality of education (Freeman & Richards, 1996). Perception, itself, is defined as the process of an individual thought about objects or a topic based on their experiences (Demuth, 2013). Therefore, teachers 'perceptions can be about why teachers apply particular teaching approaches, what they know about the teaching approach, and the nature of teacher 's role. Whatever approach teachers follow in their real teaching environment, their instructional decisions are supposed to be determined by their beliefs about teaching (Phipps & Borg, 2009). Among the various difficulties, the teachers 'teaching inability is the one most related to classroom teaching effectively.

Whatever CLT has important features in order to improve learner 's communicative competence, it mainly depend on teachers 'awareness, teacher 's belief and practice. Teachers should aware the principles and assumptions and features of communicative language teaching and they must have positive belief in order to implement it in to practice. Once they have awareness and belief they can practice in the classroom without any problems according to the text book designed based on the principles of communicative approach. Therefore, the most important thing is that, educational administrators should do the teachers training (Liao, 2000).

Finally, the motives for doing this research was to know about social thinking and awakening then to face the challenges in solving the unsolved problems. To that end, the present study will be focus on investigating EFL teachers 'awareness, beliefs and practices of using principles of communicative language teaching methodology.

### **1.1 Research Questions**

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. How grade nine (9) English language teachers perceive towards CLT in the class room?
2. What is the practice of grade nine (9) English language teachers using CLT in the class room?
3. What are the major challenges that influence the practice of English language teaching?

### **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.2.1 General Objective**

The main objectives of this study were to investigate Grade 9 English language teachers' perceptions, classroom practices, and challenges in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) at Amanuel Secondary School.

#### **1.2.2 Specific Objective**

The specific objectives of this study were:

1. To investigate grade nine (9) English language teachers' perception towards CLT in the class room.
2. To investigate teachers practice of communicative language teaching in the classroom.
3. To identify the challenges that influences the practice of English language teaching.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

### **2.1 Research Design**

This study employed a descriptive research design to investigate Grade 9 English language teachers' perceptions, classroom practices, and challenges in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) at Amanuel Secondary School in 2018 E.C. The descriptive design was considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to collect detailed information about existing conditions without manipulating variables.

The study used a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative approach helped to measure teachers' perceptions and practices using numerical data, while the qualitative approach provided deeper insights into the challenge's teachers face in implementing CLT in their classrooms.

The use of multiple data collection methods allowed for triangulation, which enhanced the validity and reliability of the findings by cross-checking information obtained from different sources. Overall, this research design was suitable because it provided a comprehensive understanding of teachers' awareness, actual classroom practices, and the challenges they encounter in applying CLT in a real school context.

### **2.2 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques**

#### **2.3 Sample Size**

The target population of this study consisted of 11 Grade 9 English language teachers and 322 Grade 9 students at Amanuel Secondary School in 2018 E.C. Since the number of English language teachers was small and manageable, all 11 teachers were included in the study using a census method. This ensured that every teacher's perception, classroom practice, and challenges in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) were fully represented without omission.

Regarding students, it was not practical to include all 322 students due to time and resource limitations. Therefore, a representative sample was selected. Using a common sampling principle (e.g., taking approximately 25–30% of the population), 97 students (about 30% of 322) were selected as the sample size. This number was considered sufficient to provide reliable data and reflect the characteristics of the whole population.

#### **2.4 Sampling Techniques**

In this study, different sampling techniques were employed to select participants appropriately. For the English language teachers, a census sampling technique was used because the total number of Grade 9 English teachers was small (11). Therefore, all teachers were included in the study to obtain comprehensive and accurate information about their perceptions, classroom practices, and challenges in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

For the students, a simple random sampling technique was applied to select a representative sample from the total population of 322 Grade 9 students. This method ensured that each student had an equal chance of being selected, thereby reducing bias and enhancing the reliability of the data. The selection was carried out using random methods such as the lottery technique. In addition, for classroom observation, a purposive sampling technique was used to select specific teachers and classes that were

relevant to the objectives of the study. This allowed the researcher to focus on classrooms where meaningful information about the actual implementation of CLT could be obtained. Overall, the use of these sampling techniques helped the researcher to gather relevant, reliable, and representative data for the study.

### **3. Data Collection Instruments**

For this study, different data collection instruments were used. Some of these were Questionnaire, interview, classroom observation and document review were used as data collection instruments. These instruments are employed to investigate the current practices and challenges about the issue under study. In this study, the questionnaire was the main instrument to collect data from English language teachers and grade nine students.

#### **3.1 Questionnaire**

Questionnaire was one of the main instruments used to collect data from both Grade 9 English language teachers and students. It consisted of close-ended and some open-ended questions designed to gather information about teachers' perceptions, classroom practices, and challenges in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The close-ended items were structured using a Likert scale to facilitate quantitative analysis, while the open-ended items allowed respondents to express their opinions freely. For students, the questionnaire focused on their classroom experiences, particularly the use of communicative activities such as group work, pair work, and interaction.

#### **3.2 Interviews**

The interview was another important instrument used in this study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected English language teachers to obtain in-depth information about their perceptions, experiences, and challenges in implementing CLT. This instrument allowed the researcher to probe further and ask follow-up questions, thereby generating detailed qualitative data that could not be captured through questionnaires alone.

#### **3.3 Classroom Observation**

Observation has always been considered as a major data collection tool in second language acquisition researches, because it allows the study of a phenomenon at close range with many of the contextual variables present (Shohamy, 1989; Koul 1984). Classroom observation was conducted using a structured observation checklist. This instrument enabled the researcher to gather firsthand information about actual classroom practices. It focused on key aspects of CLT, such as the use of communicative activities, student participation, interaction patterns, and the role of the teacher. Observation also helped to verify whether what teachers reported in the questionnaire was consistent with their actual teaching practices.

#### **3.4 Document Review**

Document analysis was used to examine relevant materials such as lesson plans, textbooks, and other instructional documents. This helped to assess how CLT principles were incorporated into teaching preparation and classroom implementation. It also provided additional evidence to support the data collected through questionnaires, interviews, and observations.

### **4. Data Collection Procedures**

First, a questionnaire was constructed and administered to the selected sample EFL teachers. Second, interviews were conducted to collect primary data from teachers and grade nine students. Third, observations were conducted to cross-check whether the problems forwarded by teachers exist or rather its purpose is to confirm how far the teachers' responses during the interview are serious enough to affect the teaching -learning process.

Lastly, the secondary data was also referred from students' rosters, documents, published journals through it helps the researchers to investigate the current practices and challenges about the issue under study.

### **5. Method of Data Analysis**

The collected data was analyzed properly using descriptive statistical knowledge both qualitative and quantitative procedures using data sources mainly the collected questionnaire with responses and the analyzed data was interpreted and presented in table of figure with frequencies and percentages. The data were analyzed using percentage and simple mathematical expressions and the results presented numerically. Finally, the result of the study was summarized, with setting conclusion and recommendations was also elaborated with critical points. Qualitative data was analyzed with descriptive analyzed and examined in percent and amount in (number). Quantitative data expressed in number and also tables of figure.

## 6. Results and Discussions

### 6.1 Finding from teachers the Questionnaire

Table 1. Teachers' conceptual understanding and Perceptions of Communicative Language Teaching

This section investigates the foundational understanding and pedagogical beliefs of grade nine English language teachers at Amanuel secondary school concerning Communicative Language Teaching, drawing exclusively from the data presented in Table 4

No	Questions	5 (F)	5 (%)	4 (F)	4 (%)	3 (F)	3 (%)	2 (F)	2 (%)	1 (F)	1 (%)
1	I understand that CLT considers four language skills	9	81.8	2	18.1						
2	I am aware that CLT focuses on the teaching of interaction and language usage	4	36.3	6	54.5	1	9				
3	I know CLT is not crucial for students because they are learning for benefit of exam.					2	18.1	3	27.2	6	54.5
4	I believe that group discussion, debate and cooperative learning are functional activities easier to promote in a communicative EFL classroom.	8	72.7	2	18.1	1	9				
5	I belief, in CLT classroom, activities plays best role to make meaningful communication	7	63.3	3	27.2	1	9				
6	In EFL instruction, I believe that content learning is best accomplished with a communicative method of teaching.	5	45.4	3	27.2	2	18.1	1	9		
7	The teacher should correct all the students' errors immediately. If errors are ignored, this will result to unsatisfactory learning.	10	90.9	1	9						
8	The teacher should act as direct participant within the learning teaching group.	6	54.5	3	27.2	2	18.1				

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9	I know that students' involvement is best promoted in communicative approach.							9	81.8	2	18.1
10	I am aware that Students' mastery of English proficiency is most effective in the context of a communicative approach	5	45.4	5	45.4	1	9				

The data in Table 1 showed that most teachers at Amanuel Secondary School had a strong basic understanding of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). A large majority (81.8%) agreed that CLT integrated the four language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing while the remaining teachers also showed agreement at a slightly lower level. Similarly, over 90% of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that CLT focused on interaction and actual language use. This indicated that teachers were generally familiar with the core principles of CLT, particularly its emphasis on communication rather than isolated grammar instruction.

However, the findings also revealed some contradictory beliefs among teachers. A significant number (81.7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that CLT was not crucial because students learned mainly for exams, which was a positive indication of their recognition of CLT's importance. Yet, another item showed that 90.9% of teachers strongly believed that all student errors should be corrected immediately. This reflected a more traditional, form-focused teaching mindset, which conflicted with CLT principles that typically tolerated errors as part of the learning process and prioritized fluency over immediate accuracy.

In terms of classroom practices and beliefs about teaching methods, most teachers demonstrated positive attitudes toward communicative activities. A high proportion (72.7%) strongly agreed that group discussions, debates, and cooperative learning were effective in promoting communication in the classroom. Likewise, 63.3% strongly believed that classroom activities played a major role in facilitating meaningful communication. These responses suggested that teachers valued learner-centered approaches and recognized the importance of interactive tasks in enhancing students' communicative competence.

Despite these positive perceptions, some gaps remained in fully understanding the communicative approach. For instance, a large majority (81.8%) disagreed with the idea that student involvement was best promoted through CLT, which directly contradicted one of its key principles. Additionally, while many teachers agreed that communicative methods supported content learning and improved language proficiency, the level of strong agreement was moderate compared to other items. Overall, the findings suggested that although teachers possessed a general awareness of CLT concepts and expressed favorable attitudes toward its practices, inconsistencies in their beliefs indicated the need for further professional development to ensure effective implementation.

**Table 2: Teachers' Practice of Using Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the Classroom**

No	Statements	5 (F)	5 (%)	4 (F)	4 (%)	3 (F)	3 (%)	2 (F)	2 (%)	1 (F)	1 (%)
1	I use group work and pair work activities in my English class	6	54.5	3	27.2	1	9.1	1	9.1	-	-
2	I encourage students to communicate in English during classroom activities	5	45.4	4	36.3	1	9.1	1	9.1	-	-
3	I use role plays, debates, and discussions to promote communication	4	36.3	5	45.4	1	9.1	1	9.1	-	-
4	I minimize teacher talk and allow students more time to speak	3	27.2	4	36.3	2	18.1	2	18.1	-	-
5	I use authentic materials (e.g., real-life texts, conversations)	3	27.2	3	27.2	3	27.2	2	18.1	-	-
6	I focus on fluency rather than accuracy during communicative activities	2	18.1	3	27.2	3	27.2	2	18.1	1	9.1
7	I integrate the four language skills in my lessons	4	36.3	4	36.3	2	18.1	1	9.1	-	-
8	I provide opportunities for students to practice real-life communication	3	27.2	5	45.4	2	18.1	1	9.1	-	-
9	I act as a facilitator rather than a lecturer in the classroom	4	36.3	3	27.2	2	18.1	2	18.1	-	-
10	I use communicative tasks regularly in my teaching	3	27.2	4	36.3	3	27.2	1	9.1	-	-

Source: The researcher's own survey (2025)

#### Key

- 5 = Strongly Agree
- 4 = Agree
- 3 = Neutral
- 2 = Disagree
- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- Total respondents (N = 11)

The data presented in Table 2 indicated that Grade 9 English language teachers demonstrated a moderate level of practice in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in their classrooms. A majority of teachers reported that they frequently used group and pair work activities, with 54.5% strongly agreeing and 27.2% agreeing. Similarly, most teachers encouraged students to communicate in English during classroom activities, showing that they attempted to create opportunities for interaction. This suggested that teachers were making efforts to apply some key principles of CLT in their teaching practices.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that teachers were relatively active in using communicative techniques such as role plays, discussions, and debates. About 81.7% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they used such activities to promote communication. In addition, a considerable number of teachers reported integrating the four language skills and providing opportunities for real-life communication. These practices aligned with the core features of CLT, indicating that teachers had begun shifting from traditional teaching methods toward more communicative approaches.

However, the results also showed certain limitations in the actual classroom implementation of CLT. For instance, only a small proportion of teachers strongly agreed that they minimized teacher talk and allowed students more time to speak, while a notable number remained neutral or disagreed. Similarly, the use of authentic materials was not consistently practiced, as responses were distributed across agreement, neutrality, and disagreement. Moreover, many teachers did not strongly

emphasize fluency over accuracy, suggesting that traditional grammar-focused teaching still influenced their classroom practices.

Overall, the findings suggested that although teachers demonstrated some effort to implement CLT, the level of practice was not fully consistent or comprehensive. While interactive activities were commonly used, important aspects such as promoting fluency, reducing teacher dominance, and using authentic materials were less effectively practiced. This indicated that teachers required further training and support to enhance their practical application of CLT and to ensure more effective communicative language teaching in the classroom.

Table 3: Teachers' Responses to Challenges in Implementing CLT

No	Statements	5 (F)	5 (%)	4 (F)	4 (%)	3 (F)	3 (%)	2 (F)	2 (%)	1 (F)	1 (%)
1	Large class size makes it difficult to implement CLT effectively	7	63.6	3	27.2	1	9.1	-	-	-	-
2	Lack of teaching materials hinders the use of CLT	6	54.5	3	27.2	1	9.1	1	9.1	-	-
3	Students have low proficiency in English which limits CLT practice	8	72.7	2	18.1	1	9.1	-	-	-	-
4	Time constraints prevent the use of communicative activities	5	45.4	4	36.3	1	9.1	1	9.1	-	-
5	Lack of training on CLT affects my classroom practice	6	54.5	3	27.2	2	18.1	-	-	-	-
6	Students are not motivated to participate in communicative activities	4	36.3	4	36.3	2	18.1	1	9.1	-	-
7	Classroom seating arrangement is not suitable for group work	5	45.4	3	27.2	2	18.1	1	9.1	-	-
8	Teachers' workload limits the use of communicative methods	4	36.3	5	45.4	1	9.1	1	9.1	-	-
9	Examination-oriented teaching affects the implementation of CLT	7	63.6	3	27.2	1	9.1	-	-	-	-
10	Lack of administrative support discourages the use of CLT	5	45.4	3	27.2	2	18.1	1	9.1	-	-

Source: The researcher's own survey (2025)

Key: Strongly Agree (SA) = 5, Agree (A) = 4, Undecided (U) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1  
F = Frequency    % = Percentage

The data presented in Table 3 revealed that teachers encountered several significant challenges in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in their classrooms. One of the most prominent challenges was large class size, with 63.6% of teachers strongly agreeing and 27.2% agreeing that it hindered effective implementation. Similarly, a majority of respondents indicated that students' low proficiency in English posed a serious barrier, as 72.7% strongly agreed with this statement. These findings suggested that both classroom conditions and student-related factors greatly limited the practical application of CLT.

Another major issue identified by the respondents was the lack of instructional resources and training. More than half of the teachers (54.5%) strongly agreed that insufficient teaching materials affected their use of CLT, while a similar proportion reported that lack of training limited their classroom practice. In addition, time constraints were reported as a challenge, with over 80% of teachers either agreeing or strongly agreeing that limited class time prevented them from effectively conducting communicative activities. This indicated that institutional and resource-related factors significantly influenced teachers' ability to implement CLT.

The findings also highlighted challenges related to student motivation and classroom environment. A considerable number of teachers reported that students were not sufficiently motivated to participate in communicative activities, which reduced the effectiveness of CLT. Furthermore, issues such as unsuitable classroom seating arrangements and heavy teaching workloads were

identified as barriers. These factors made it difficult for teachers to organize group work and interactive tasks, which are essential components of communicative teaching.

Finally, the results showed that systemic and administrative factors also played a role in limiting CLT implementation. A large proportion of teachers agreed that examination-oriented teaching negatively affected the use of communicative methods, as the focus on exams encouraged more traditional, grammar-based instruction. Additionally, lack of administrative support was reported as another constraint. Overall, the findings indicated that while teachers recognized the importance of CLT, multiple interconnected challenges—ranging from classroom conditions to institutional support—hindered its effective implementation.

Though, data from observation and interview supports this fact, positive beliefs about CLT's pedagogical effectiveness and the perceived ease of implementing communicative activities, a significant discrepancy between intention and action often emerges in educational contexts. Research consistently highlights a "mismatch" or "discrepancy" between teachers' stated beliefs and their actual classroom application of CLT. Teachers may intellectually declare their dedication to CLT but, in practice, revert to more traditional methods. This "intention-action gap" suggests that while teachers at Amanuel secondary school express strong positive beliefs, these may not consistently translate into their daily classroom practices. This phenomenon can be attributed to various influencing factors, which will be explored in the subsequent section, and indicates that addressing this gap requires more than just fostering positive attitudes; it demands practical skill development, strategies to overcome contextual barriers, and a critical examination of deeply ingrained pedagogical habits that might unconsciously override stated beliefs.

This positive disposition towards interactive tasks is central to task-based language teaching, a prominent offshoot of CLT. Willis (1996) argues that engaging learners in tasks that require them to use language for a specific outcome focuses their attention on meaning rather than form, thereby facilitating natural language acquisition. The teachers' belief that such activities are "easier to promote" is a significant asset. However, the slight hesitation regarding content learning reflects a common challenge identified by Littlewood (2011), who notes that teachers sometimes struggle to balance the need for communicative fluency with the pressure to cover specific grammatical or lexical content dictated by a syllabus.

#### Scale:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)
- 2 = Disagree (D)
- 3 = Undecided (U)
- 4 = Agree (A)
- 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

Table 4: Students' questionnaire Responses

No	Item	SD	D	U	A	SA	Total
1	<b>Our English teacher encourages us to speak English in class</b>	10	15	12	35	25	97
2	<b>The teacher uses group work during lessons</b>	12	18	10	32	25	97
3	<b>The teacher uses pair work activities</b>	14	16	13	30	24	97
4	<b>Students are given chances to express their ideas freely</b>	11	17	12	34	23	97
5	<b>The teacher focuses more on communication than grammar</b>	15	20	14	28	20	97
6	<b>The teacher uses real-life situations in teaching</b>	13	19	15	30	20	97
7	<b>The teacher uses only lecture method most of the time</b>	22	25	10	25	15	97
8	<b>Students actively participate in English class</b>	12	18	11	33	23	97
9	<b>Lack of time affects communicative activities</b>	10	15	12	35	25	97
10	<b>Large class size affects participation</b>	8	12	10	40	27	97

Characteristics of respondents of the student's response to Learning and Teaching Source: The researchers own survey (2025)

Key: F=frequency %=percentage

The data in the table 4 indicated that a considerable number of students agreed that their English teachers encourage them to speak English in the classroom. Specifically, 60 students (35 agree and 25 strongly agree) confirmed this practice, while a smaller number expressed disagreement. This suggests that teachers are making efforts to promote communicative competence, which

is one of the main principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Similarly, many students reported that they are given opportunities to express their ideas freely, indicating a shift from teacher-centered to student-centered instruction.

Regarding classroom practices, the findings showed that group work and pair work are used by teachers, though not consistently. For example, 57 students agreed or strongly agreed that group work is practiced, and 54 students confirmed the use of pair work. However, a noticeable number of students disagreed, which implies that these communicative activities are not fully or regularly implemented. This indicates partial application of CLT techniques in the classroom.

In terms of teaching focus, the results revealed that teachers still tend to emphasize grammar alongside communication. A relatively lower number of students (48) agreed that their teachers focus more on communication than grammar, while a significant number disagreed. In addition, many students indicated that teachers sometimes rely on the lecture method. This suggests that traditional teaching methods are still being used, which may limit the effectiveness of CLT implementation.

Finally, the data highlight several challenges affecting the implementation of CLT. A majority of students agreed that large class size and limited time negatively affect communicative activities. Specifically, 67 students agreed or strongly agreed that large class size is a major problem, and 60 students reported that lack of time is also a challenge. These findings indicate that contextual factors play a significant role in limiting the effective use of CLT in the classroom.

Table 5 Classroom Implementation Challenges: The Student Perspective on Learning and Feedback

The student responses in Table 5 provide a crucial lens through which to assess the practical realities and challenges of CLT implementation in the classroom.

**Table 5: Students' Responses on CLT Practices and Feedback**

No	Items	Yes (F)	Yes (%)	No (F)	No (%)
1	Objectives of each task are told before assessment	42	43.30	55	56.70
2	Teachers have enough time to give us feedback	37	38.14	60	61.86
3	CLT activities are explained to students	49	50.52	48	49.48
4	Feedback is given at the end of a semester	84	86.60	13	13.40
5	Feedback is given at the end of CLT activities	36	37.11	61	62.89
6	Teacher does not give us any form of feedback	24	24.74	73	75.26
7	I have enough time to give/take feedback	38	39.18	59	60.82
8	We assess each other's work at the end of each CLT	77	79.38	20	20.62
9	Group work is followed by discussion	47	48.45	50	51.55

Characteristics of respondents of the student's response to Learning and Teaching Source: The researchers own survey (2025)  
Key: F=frequency %=percentage

The data in the table 5 revealed that a significant number of students reported that task objectives are not clearly communicated before assessment. Specifically, 56.7% of students responded "No," indicating that teachers do not consistently explain the objectives of activities. This suggests a gap in implementing key principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), where clarity of purpose is essential for meaningful communication and student engagement.

Regarding feedback practices, the findings indicate that most students believe teachers do not have enough time to provide feedback. About 61.86% of respondents answered "No" to this item. Similarly, 62.89% reported that feedback is not given at the end of CLT activities. However, a large majority (86.6%) confirmed that feedback is given at the end of the semester. This implies that feedback tends to be delayed rather than immediate, which may reduce its effectiveness in improving students' communicative skills.

In terms of classroom interaction and student involvement, the results showed a relatively positive trend. About 79.38% of students reported that they assess each other's work during CLT activities, which reflects the presence of peer assessment practices. Additionally, around half of the students (50.52%) indicated that CLT activities are explained, though the nearly equal

percentage of disagreement suggests inconsistency in practice. Group work followed by discussion also showed mixed responses, indicating that interactive strategies are not uniformly applied.

Finally, the findings highlight some important challenges affecting the implementation of CLT. A majority of students (60.82%) indicated that they do not have enough time to give or receive feedback, suggesting time constraints in the classroom. Although most students (75.26%) disagreed with the statement that teachers do not give any feedback at all, the overall pattern shows that feedback is insufficient and not timely. These results suggest that while some elements of CLT are practiced, there are significant limitations related to time, consistency, and effective feedback delivery.

These student perceptions were largely confirmed by classroom observations and teacher interviews. An observation of a group work activity noted that:

*"The teacher set the task and monitored the groups but did not conduct a whole-class feedback session afterwards to discuss common errors or successful communication strategies. The bell rang, and the lesson ended abruptly."*

When asked about this, my informant explained, "With 50 students in one class and a 40-minute period, if I do a group activity, there is simply no time left for feedback. We have to cover the textbook."

This lack of timely, formative feedback is a critical impediment to effective CLT. Harmer (2007) emphasizes the importance of a clear lesson structure where activities are properly set up and concluded. Without a concluding feedback or discussion stage, the learning potential of a communicative task is severely diminished. The students' reports, supported by observations, indicate that the practical constraints of large class sizes and curriculum pressure two of the most commonly cited barriers to CLT in developing contexts (Littlewood, 2007) are preventing teachers from implementing key components of the methodology, particularly those related to feedback and lesson closure.

## **6.2 Analyzed from interview**

The interview data from the three Grade 9 English language teachers were presented and analyzed based on the three specific objectives of the study concerning Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

Regarding the first objective, which focused on teachers' perceptions toward CLT, Teacher 1 stated that CLT was "very important for improving students' ability to communicate in English," emphasizing that students learn better when they actively participate in speaking activities. Teacher 2 also noted that CLT helped students use language in real-life situations rather than only focusing on grammar rules. Similarly, Teacher 3 explained that CLT encouraged interaction among students and made the classroom more student-centered. However, Teacher 2 added that although CLT was beneficial, it was sometimes difficult to apply effectively due to large class sizes and mixed student abilities. This indicated that all teachers had positive perceptions of CLT, though they recognized practical limitations.

In relation to the second objective, which examined teachers' classroom practices, Teacher 1 said that he/she frequently used group work and pair work activities to encourage students' participation. Teacher 2 reported that he/she used discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and occasional role plays to promote communication. Teacher 3 also mentioned that he/she tried to involve students in interactive activities but often relied on explanation and lecture methods when students did not respond actively. Furthermore, Teacher 1 admitted that exam pressure sometimes forced him/her to focus more on grammar and written exercises rather than communicative tasks. Teacher 2 added that time constraints and large class size limited the regular use of CLT activities. These responses showed that although teachers attempted to practice CLT, their implementation was not consistent.

With regard to the third objective, which aimed to identify factors influencing the practice of CLT, Teacher 1 pointed out that large class size was a major challenge, making it difficult to manage group activities effectively. Teacher 2 emphasized that students' low proficiency in English discouraged participation in communicative tasks. Teacher 3 highlighted the lack of teaching materials and insufficient training as key barriers. In addition, Teacher 1 mentioned that classroom seating arrangements were not suitable for group work, while Teacher 2 noted that students were often not motivated to speak English in class. Teacher 3 further explained that the examination-oriented system pushed teachers to prioritize grammar teaching over communication. Overall, the interview findings revealed that despite teachers' positive perceptions and efforts to use CLT, several challenges significantly affected its effective implementation in the classroom.

### **6.3 Findings from Classroom Observation**

The classroom observation data were analyzed using a structured checklist to examine the actual implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Grade 9 English classes. The observations focused on key aspects such as teacher and student roles, use of communicative activities, interaction patterns, materials, and classroom environment. Overall, the findings indicated that although some elements of CLT were present, the level of implementation was limited and inconsistent across the observed lessons.

First, with regard to teacher roles, the observation revealed that teachers partially practiced their role as facilitators. In some instances, teachers encouraged students to participate by asking questions and organizing short pair or group activities. However, in most cases, teachers dominated the classroom through explanation and lecturing. The checklist results showed that teacher talk time was relatively high, which limited students' opportunities to actively use the language. This suggested that the shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction was not fully realized.

Second, in terms of student participation, the observation indicated that students' involvement was generally low to moderate. While a few students actively responded to teachers' questions and participated in discussions, the majority remained passive. The checklist showed that only a limited number of students were engaged in speaking activities, and many were reluctant to express themselves in English. This lack of active participation reduced the effectiveness of communicative teaching practices.

Third, concerning the use of communicative activities, the observation findings showed that activities such as group work, pair work, and discussions were used occasionally but not consistently. In some lessons, teachers organized pair or group tasks; however, these activities were often short and not well-structured to promote meaningful communication. Role plays, problem-solving tasks, and real-life communication activities were rarely observed. This indicated that the practical application of CLT techniques was limited.

Fourth, the observation also examined the integration of language skills and the use of teaching materials. The checklist results revealed that teachers focused mainly on reading and grammar, with less emphasis on speaking and listening skills. Although some attempts were made to integrate skills, they were not systematic. In addition, the use of authentic materials was minimal, as teachers relied heavily on textbooks. This limited students' exposure to real-life language use, which is a key principle of CLT.

Fifth, regarding classroom interaction patterns, the observation showed that teacher–student interaction was more common than student–student interaction. While teachers occasionally encouraged students to work together, most communication occurred between the teacher and individual students rather than among peers. The checklist indicated that opportunities for collaborative learning and peer interaction were insufficient, which hindered the development of communicative competence.

Finally, the observation identified several challenges affecting the implementation of CLT in the classroom. These included large class size, fixed seating arrangements, limited time, and students' low proficiency in English. These factors made it difficult for teachers to organize and manage communicative activities effectively. In general, the observation findings suggested that although some aspects of CLT were practiced, the overall implementation was weak, and greater effort, training, and support were needed to improve communicative language teaching in the classroom.

### **6.4 Analyzed Data from Document Review**

The document review data were analyzed in relation to Grade 9 English language teaching and the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) at Amanuel Secondary School. The reviewed documents included the English textbook, syllabus, lesson plans, and students' exercise books. The analysis focused on how far these instructional documents support or reflect the principles of CLT.

The analysis of the English syllabus and textbook showed that the materials generally support communicative activities. The syllabus includes objectives that emphasize developing students' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in an integrated way. In addition, the textbook contains some pair work, group discussion tasks, and communicative exercises. This indicates that, at the policy and material level, CLT principles are incorporated into the teaching resources provided for Grade 9 English.

However, the lesson plan review revealed a partial and inconsistent application of CLT principles. Most lesson plans were structured around grammar points and vocabulary explanation rather than communicative tasks. Although some plans included

group activities, they were often secondary to teacher-led explanation. This suggested that teachers were not fully translating the communicative objectives of the syllabus into classroom practice through their planning.

The review of students' exercise books also showed a strong emphasis on written grammar exercises and controlled practice activities. Most tasks focused on sentence construction, gap filling, and mechanical drills rather than open-ended communication. Very few activities required students to express ideas freely or engage in meaningful written communication. This indicated that output-based communicative practice was limited.

Overall, the document review findings revealed a gap between curriculum intentions and classroom implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). While the syllabus and textbook support communicative learning, lesson plans and student exercises still reflect traditional, form-focused instruction. This mismatch suggests that teachers require further guidance and training to effectively translate CLT principles from curriculum documents into actual classroom practice.

## 7. Conclusion

The conclusion of this study was drawn based on the three specific objectives and the findings obtained from the questionnaire, interview, and classroom observation regarding Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Concerning the first objective, the findings revealed that Grade 9 English language teachers generally had a positive perception of CLT. The majority of teachers demonstrated an understanding of its key principles, such as promoting interaction, integrating language skills, and encouraging student participation. However, some inconsistencies were observed in their beliefs, particularly regarding error correction and student involvement, indicating that their conceptual understanding was not fully aligned with CLT principles.

With regard to the second objective, which focused on teachers' classroom practices, the study found that teachers attempted to implement some aspects of CLT, such as group work, pair work, and classroom discussions. Despite these efforts, the overall practice of CLT was not consistent or fully effective. Teachers often relied on traditional, teacher-centered methods, especially when dealing with time constraints and examination pressure. Both interview and observation data confirmed that communicative activities were not regularly or effectively implemented, and student participation remained limited in many cases.

In relation to the third objective, the study identified several factors that influenced the practice of CLT in the classroom. Major challenges included large class sizes, students' low proficiency in English, lack of teaching materials, limited time, and insufficient training. Additionally, institutional factors such as examination-oriented teaching and lack of administrative support further constrained teachers' ability to apply CLT effectively. These challenges were consistently reported across questionnaire responses, interviews, and classroom observations.

Overall, the study concluded that although teachers had positive perceptions and some awareness of CLT, its actual implementation in the classroom was limited by various contextual and institutional barriers. The mismatch between teachers' knowledge and their classroom practices highlighted the need for continuous professional development, improved classroom conditions, and better support systems. Addressing these issues would enhance the effective implementation of CLT and improve students' communicative competence in English.

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