

## The use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach to develop L2 Speaking Proficiency at Vocational Students in South Aceh Polytechnic

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### ABSTRACT

Many information and knowledges delivered in English. To support students' skill, the vocational students in South Aceh Polytechnic are required to learn English in each semester. Learning English as a second or foreign language (L2) is so challenging for the students. They find problems in producing target language. A special challenging is oral communication. Difficult Speaking habits such as lack of grammar knowledge and vocabulary, poor pronunciation skills, lack of confident to start speaking with more competent speakers of English. Therefore, the researcher conducted the research in South Aceh Polytechnic to increase students' speaking ability by teaching them using Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. This study discussed the nature of L2 speaking with the development of communicative skills. The methodology of this study was an experimental research which used quasi experimental design. This research was conducted especially for computer engineering students which consisted of 39 students as a sample. There were two classes, one class as an experimental group and another class as a control group. The teacher gave treatment in experimental group by providing relevant context in learning target language, and the researcher also wanted to know their responses toward the CLT Approach. The instruments that used by the researcher in this study was pretest, posttest, and questionnaire. The result of this study showed that there are any significant differences between the students who are given treatment. It proved by the student scores in posttest. In essence, this approach effectively helped students in enhancing L2 speaking proficiency and encourage their confident in speaking.

### INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English has been appointed as international language that should be mastered by all the people around the world. Student is the main object in this case. They are as language learners encouraged to learn English in many ways. According to Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 096/1967 December 12, 1967, about English teaching in Indonesia. It is developed communicative skills students' English which includes listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The language teaching should be integrated between each skill. One of the purposes in learning language is for communication. Speech acts is one of pragmatics' basic ingredients arranging by words and corresponding to sentences and some ways to avoid kinds of misunderstanding in communication. This process needs to be understood by both speakers and listeners in order to get the expected output of the communication. If there is a misunderstanding or misinterpretation taking place within the process, the aim of communication can distort or even fails (Littlewood, 1981).

Particularly, the main problems which can be identified in speaking are lack of grammar knowledge and vocabulary, poor pronunciation skills, lack of confident to start speaking with more competent speakers of English. Based on previous study conducted by Rafiud et al., in 2022, its result showed that the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can adapt to new habit during the pandemic and this approach can discover learning strategies such as speaking practice, presentation, and discussion to improve students' speaking skills. Therefore, the researcher wanted to apply this approach in teaching speaking of vocational college. The researcher is also interest to analyze students' speaking ability in computer engineering of south Aceh polytechnic, and examine some problems that make students seldom speak English in their daily conversation. The researcher implemented Communicative Language Teaching method in teaching English. The purpose of this study was to find out whether any significant differences between the students who are trained through communicative language teaching and the students



who are not trained through communicative language teaching. It also wanted to know students' response toward the communicative language teaching implementation in enhancing their speaking competence.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Communicative Language Teaching Approach

According to Littlewood, 1981 Communicative language teaching is the most common understanding of the communicative approach in East Asia is that means 'providing the teachers with communicative activities in their repertoire of teaching skills and giving learners the opportunity in class to practice the language skills taught'. This approach emphasizes communication as a goal in language teaching. Communicative language teaching prioritizes developing students' communication and interaction skills. This ensures that students can communicate effectively and confidently in real-life situations through student-to-student interaction and student-to-teacher interaction. CLT essentially aims to have students learn a new language by actually using the language to communicate with those around them. In CLT having group together and pair is the way learners' practice L2. There are various benefits to CLT, such as it being holistic and engaging. Students who can discuss their favorite things may feel more passionate in speaking to others and out loud instead of speaking about something that is not as engaging to them. CLT is also a learner-centered approach, in which activities are focused on and driven by students instead of teachers (Burns, & Hill, 2016).

Important Contributing Elements to Classroom Learning is an Enhancement of the Learner's Own Personal Experiences. The students become more participative and active when they are given the chance to share their own experiences during class. In essence, because they know exactly what they are going to say. Also, their confidence was boosted because they were able to express themselves while sharing their own experiences. The experience of the learner occupies central place in all considerations of teaching and learning. This experience may comprise earlier events in the life of the learner, current life events, or those arising from the learner's participation in activities implemented by teachers and facilitators [6]. Experience-Based Learning (EBL) is based on a set of assumptions about learning from experience. These have been identified by Boud, Cohen and Walker (1993) as: experience is the foundation of, and the stimulus for, learning; learners actively construct their own experience; learning is a holistic process; learning is socially and culturally constructed; and learning is influenced by the socio-emotional context in which it occurs (Andresen et al., 2000).

The Communicative Approach encourages learners to use the target language in authentic contexts, promoting active participation and spontaneous communication. This research aims to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of CLT in improving students' speaking skills and its applicability within the unique context of vocational students in South Aceh polytechnic. Language Variety, Authentic materials expose learners to diverse dialects, accents, and language styles, fostering adaptability and comprehension across different contexts. key issues regarding the attitudes of a small group of students towards authentic materials and the effects of such materials on their confidence in class oral activities (Hoang, 2022).

### Teaching and Learning Activities in Communicative Language Teaching

During learning process of CLT, students are hoped to communicate orally and conquer all components of communicative competence and teacher is being motivator, assessor, facilitator, and corrector during students' discussion or speaking in front of the class. In addition, the teacher also should make their lesson interesting so the students don't fall asleep during learning English (Harmer, & Jeremy, 1998).

Learning activities in CLT focuses on real oral communication with variety of language without to focus on form of grammatical patterns if distinguished with non-communicative activities which only focus on how to construct the sentences that based on terms of grammatical during learning process of English.

### L2 Speaking Proficiency

L2 is designation for second or foreign language. L2 is learned by the students who first language is not English. The important of target language is speaking. Speaking as a product and process in communication. Speaking competence requires the mastery of various enabling skills, strategies, and types of knowledge, and developing speaking proficiency "involves increasing the ability to use these components in order to produce spoken language in a fluent, accurate and socially appropriate way, within the constraints of a speaker's processing" (Goh, 2016).

In terms of knowledge, learners need to understand grammar in relation to spoken language and different types of speaking genres (Goh, & Burns, 2012).



**Vocational Students**

Vocational student means a student who is enrolled in a department of education approved vocational program and for which the school district provides all state board approved vocational performance data to the department of education (Kurdghelashvili, 2015). The purpose of vocational education is to enable the students to become proficient in a vocational skill. In south Aceh Polytechnic, there are four departments of vocational education, namely computer engineering, informatics engineering, industrial engineering, and mechanical engineering. This study focused on computer engineering major, to know their ability in English.

**METHOD**

This research is an experimental research which use a quasi-experimental design. This research was conducted at Computer Engineering Students in South Aceh Polytechnic. The technique used to select the sample of the study by divided the class based on their own classroom which consist of 20 students in class A and 19 students in class B. The total number of the sample was 39 students. Class A is experimental group and class B is control group. A questionnaire was used as the instrument of the study. Finally, the SPSS was used to analyze the data.

**RESULT & DISCUSSION**

The aim of this study was to find out whether the use of communicative language teaching approach can develop L2 speaking proficiency of vocational students in south Aceh polytechnic. The lowest score was achieved by students in experimental group was 55 and in control group was 45. Meanwhile the highest score was achieved by students in experimental group was 90 and in control group student reached 70. There were slightly differences. Then the researcher analyzed the data by using SPSS program.

**The results of L2 Speaking Proficiency**

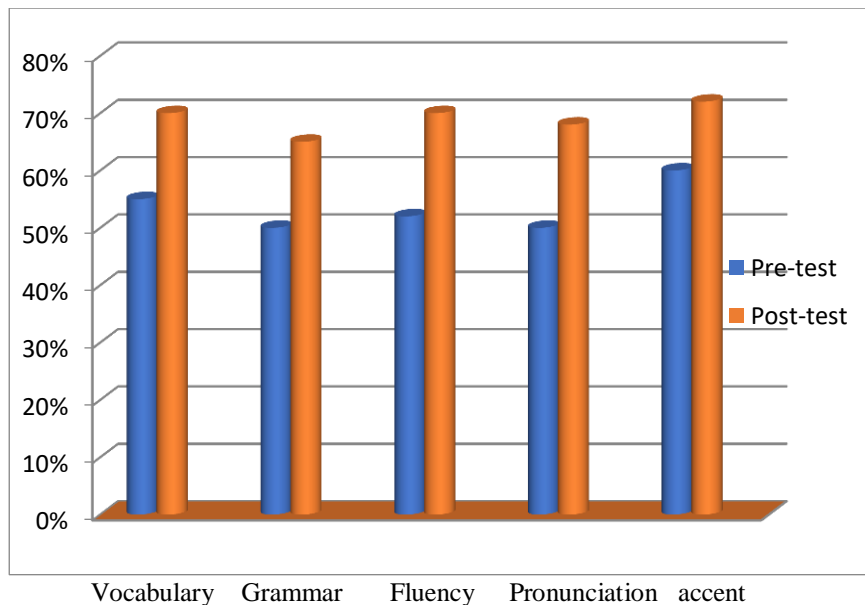


Figure 1. The Students' Score of Speaking Aspects of Pretest and Post-Test in Experimental Group

The figure showed the score of speaking aspects achieved by students in experimental class in both pretest and pos-test. The score described a significant improvement in each aspect of speaking. In the aspekt of vocabulary, the students percentage was 55% in pretest and reached the percentage 70% in pos-test which mean that they generated the idea better after applying communicative language teaching. The students made significant improvement about 25% in the vocabulary aspect. Therefore, they could make such a good progress in pos-test.

Then, in grammar aspect, it seemed that most of the students were lack in grammar mastery. The grammatical of their speaking dominated by errors. The pretest score of the students was 50%, then up to 68% after applying the

technique. However, they could make significant improvement. It mean that they reached 18% progress in the post-test. the students achieved 50% in pretest and then score up to 15% to the score 65%.

Regarding to the fluency aspect, the students were able to make improvement as much as 18% by reaching the score 70% in the post-test. Before the implementation of communicative language teaching, the students score of pretest was 52%. In other words, the students could speech smoothly and fluid, few no to hesitation no attempts to search for words and volume is excellent.

The last aspect was pronunciation & accent. The students got 60% in pretest. Then, the score increased to the level of 72%. Most of the students was not effort toward a native accent, pronunciation was lack and hard to understand. But after the researcher described those were important. So that the result of their pronunciation was excellent and good effort in accent.

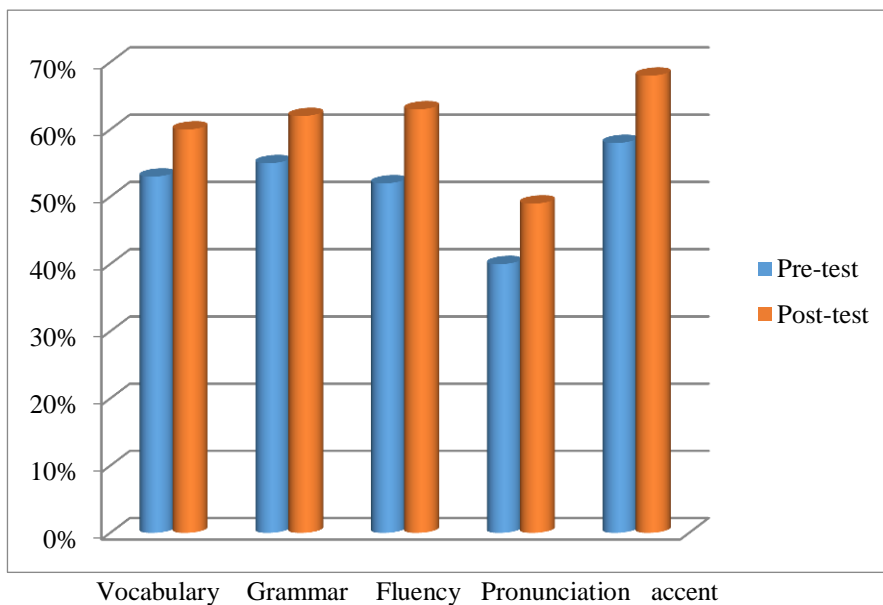


Figure 2. The Students' Score of Speaking Aspects of Pretest and Post-Test in Control Group

The figure showed the score of speaking aspects achieved by the students of control class in both pretest and post-test. The score described a significant improvement in each aspect of speaking. In the vocabulary aspect, the percentage of the students' score in pretest was 53%, and then increased to 60% in post-test. The students could only make the improvement as much as 7%.

As for the grammar aspect, the students reached 55% in pretest and their achievement increased to 62% in the post-test. There was no significant improvement in the aspect of grammar. Concerning the fluency aspect, the students got 52% in pretest. Then, the score increased up to 11% to the score 63%, it was the highest aspect that improved in the control group. As the las aspect was pronunciation and accent, the improvement reached by the students in control group was 9%. It increased from 40% in the pretest to 49% in the post-test.

Based on the result of the speaking, the percentage of experimental class was higher than the control class. It means that the implementation of communicative language teaching could improve the students' aspect of speaking.

### The Results of Questionnaire

The questionnaire was given to know students' responses toward the implementation of communicative language teaching approach. It was given only for the experimental class after communicative language teaching applied. The questionnaire consisted of 15 statement about CLT. The researcher served 5 possibilities of answers as proposed by Likert scale namely Agree, strongly agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. There are 20 students in experimental group and percentage of constant value is 100 %. Most of students got greater percentage after experimental conducted.

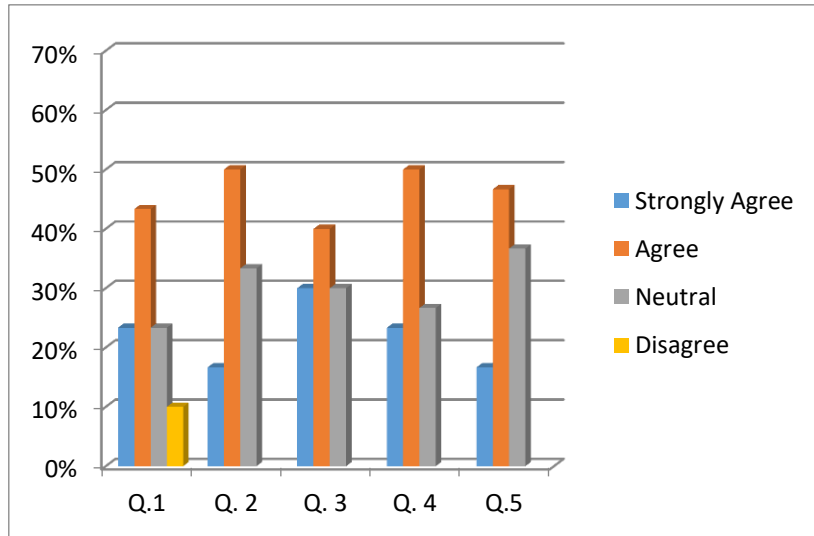


Figure 3. Percentage of Questionnaire Number 1 until 5 Dealing with Motivation Dimension

Figure 3 shows that almost all of students agree that Communicative Language Teaching helps them in speaking. While the rest of 10 % of the students chose disagree on statement. The statement number 1 shows that 23.3 % of the students answered strongly agree, 43.3 % agree, 23.3 % felt neutral. It revealed that practicing speaking by Communicative Language Teaching helps students to talk about their experience. The statement 2 showed that 16.6 % of students selected strongly agree, 50 % felt agree, 33.3 % answered neutral. None of them chose disagree and strongly disagree on the statement. So, the result is effective which means Communicative Language Teaching helped students a lot to express the ideas in speaking.

The statement number 3 attracted 30 % of the students to answered strongly agree, 40 % agree, and 30 % felt neutral. None of students chose disagree and strongly disagree. It means that learning speaking by using Communicative Language Teaching helped them to respond their feelings and thoughts.

The statement number 4 got the following responses: 23.3 % chose strongly agree, 50 % agree, and 26.6 % neutral. Nobody chose disagree and strongly disagree. This statement indicated that by using Communicative Language Teaching, it is improved students' speaking fluency. The statement number 5, there are 16.6 % of students selected strongly agree, 46.6 % agree, 36.6 % neutral, and also none of them chose disagree and strongly disagree. It implied that every students felt Communicative Language Teaching is a way of thinking in exploring their learning.

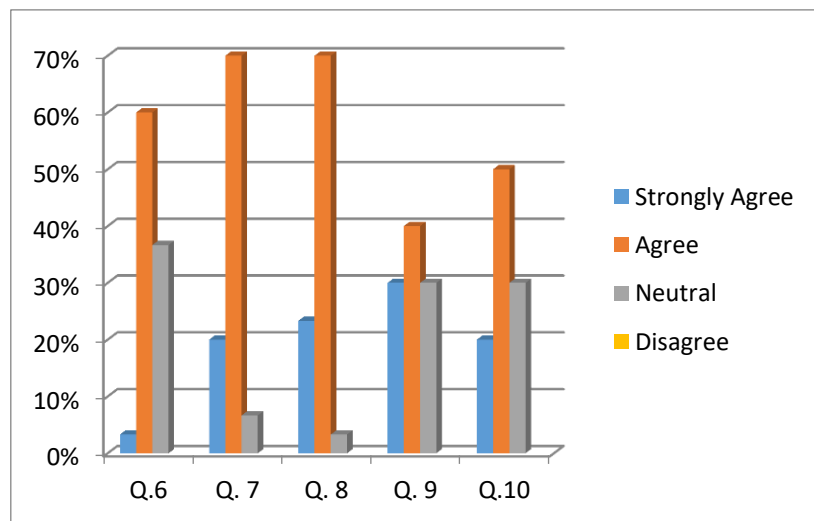


Figure 4. Percentage of Questionnaire Number 6 until 10 Dealing with Writing Improvement Dimension

Figure 4 indicates that most of students agree that Communicative Language Teaching improves students' skill in speaking. The statement number 6 showed that there was only 3.3 % of student who chose strongly agree, but 60 % of them selected agree, and 36.6 % of them chose neutral. No one of them choose disagree and strongly disagree. So, the response of students still quite good.

The seventh statement, there are 20 % of students chose strongly agree, 73.3 % agree, and 6.6 % felt neutral, and nobody chose disagree and strongly disagree. So, the percentage of agree is higher than another answer.

The statement number 8, there are 23.3 % of students selected strongly agree, 73.3 % agree, and 3.3 % neutral. Nobody chose disagree and strongly disagree. It revealed that the students felt easy to describe what they understood by using Communicative Language Teaching.

The statement number 9 got the following responses: 30 % of students answered strongly agree, 40 % agree, 30 % neutral, and none of them chose disagree and strongly disagree. The statement number 10, there are 20 % students chose strongly agree, 50 % agree, 30 % neutral, nobody chose disagree and strongly disagree. The total of students who chose agree is about 15 person.

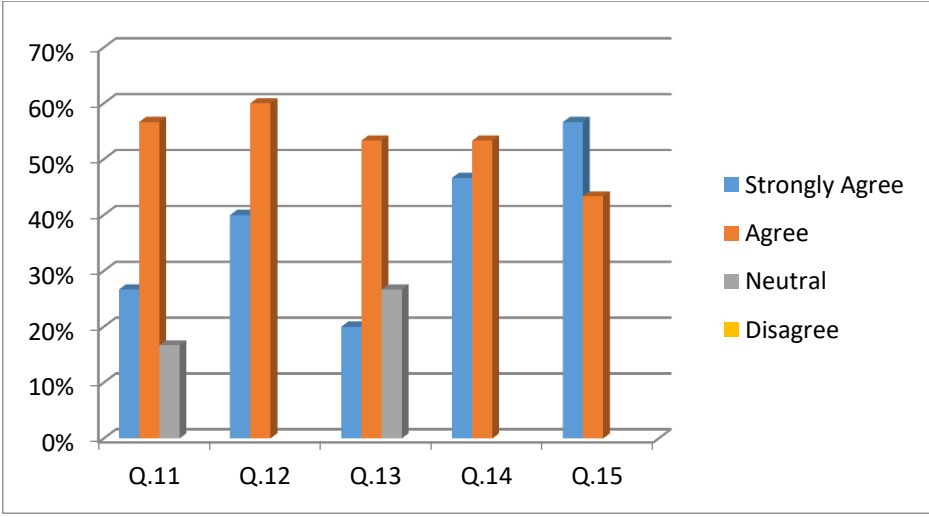


Figure 5. Percentage of Questionnaire Number 11 until 15 Dealing with Convenience/ Self Confidence Dimension

Figure 5 shows that the benefit of Communicative Language Teaching in increasing students' self-confidence and convenience in speaking. The statement number 11 attracted 26.6 % of the students to selected strongly agree, 56.6 % agree, 16.6 % neutral, and nobody selected disagree and strongly disagree. So, most of the students agree that Communicative Language Teaching boosted their creativity.

The statement number 12, there are 40 % of students chose strongly agree, 60 % agree, and nobody chose neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. The thirteenth statement, 20 % of students selected strongly agree, 53 % agree, 26.6 % chose neutral, and also no one's of them chose strongly disagree and disagree.

The statement number 14 showed that 46.6 % of students answered strongly agree, 53.3 % agree, and nobody felt neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. The last statement, there are 56.6 % of students answered strongly agree, 43.3 % agree, and no ones of them chose neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. It indicated that Communicative Language Teaching gave them a worthwhile experience.

Regarding the statements that addressed the value of the figure above, it can be summarized that most of students in experimental class had a good response toward the use of Communicative Language Teaching in practicing their speaking skill. Furthermore, the students presented better score in the post test. Most of students agree that Communicative Language Teaching is effectively helped them in improving speaking proficiency.

Another possitive influence of communicative language teaching is that the students become motivated to speak more, increase and enhance their creativity in speaking. More importantly, based on the questionnaire, it was found that about 50 % of students agree that communicative language teaching encouraged their confident in speaking. Therefore, it can be concluded that the implementation of communicative language teaching approach improved students speaking ability to the computer engineering students of vocational students in South Aceh Polytechnic.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the research questions are answered. First research problem the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching in vocational college of south Aceh polytechnic significantly improve students speaking proficiency especially for computer engineering department. There are good response and improvement of students' speaking skill between before and after being taught through Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Then the students' perception toward the implementation of CLT is increase their English skill. Besides that, the students become motivated to speak English and enhance their activity in speaking.

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