

การพัฒนารูปแบบการสอนภาษาเพื่อการสื่อสาร (CLT) สำหรับการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ ในประเทศไทย

DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT) INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL FOR TEACHING ENGLISH IN THAILAND

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บทคัดย่อ

แม้ว่าแนวทางการสอนภาษาเพื่อการสื่อสาร (CLT) ได้รับการบูรณาการเข้ากับหลักสูตรของไทยมาหลายปีแล้ว แต่นักการศึกษายังคงไม่แน่ใจเกี่ยวกับประสิทธิภาพในทางปฏิบัติของแนวทางดังกล่าว การศึกษานี้ยืนยันว่า บทบาทของภาษาอังกฤษในประเทศที่ไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษามีวิวัฒนาการอย่างรวดเร็ว โดยที่ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นเครื่องมือสำคัญในการสื่อสาร และการแข่งขันที่มากขึ้นในตลาดอาเซียน นักเรียนไทยจำเป็นต้องพัฒนาทักษะการสื่อสารในด้านต่างๆ ในบริบทร่วมสมัย วัตถุประสงค์หลักของการศึกษานี้คือเพื่อเสนอรูปแบบการเรียนการสอนใหม่สำหรับการสอนภาษาเพื่อการสื่อสาร (CLT) การศึกษานี้เน้นย้ำถึงการให้คำชี้แนะด้านการสื่อสาร ทักษะ และกิจกรรมการสอนที่มีส่วนร่วม โดยเน้นย้ำถึงบทบาทการทำงานร่วมกันของครูและนักเรียนในการส่งเสริมการสอนภาษาเพื่อการสื่อสารที่มีประสิทธิภาพภายในห้องเรียนไทย การศึกษานี้เริ่มต้นด้วยการชี้แจงความสำคัญของ CLT ในหลักสูตรแกนกลาง โดยกล่าวถึงสถานะของการศึกษาภาษาอังกฤษในบริบทระหว่างประเทศ ต่อมา

การศึกษาเจาะลึกการทบทวนและการวิเคราะห์ที่ครอบคลุมของกรอบทางทฤษฎีที่สำคัญซึ่งกำหนดโดยนักวิชาการที่ผ่านมา โดยมีเป้าหมายเพื่อเน้นย้ำถึงข้อกำหนด ความท้าทาย และผลประโยชน์ที่อาจเกิดขึ้นจากการบูรณาการ CLT สุดท้าย การศึกษานี้จะเสนอโมเดล CLT ซึ่งแสดงให้เห็นถึงประโยชน์ของการนำไปใช้โดยนักเรียนและครู โดยสามารถปรับให้เข้ากับความต้องการที่หลากหลายของครูและนักเรียนในสภาพแวดล้อมการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษที่หลากหลาย และช่วยพัฒนาทักษะด้านภาษาของนักเรียนและเตรียมความพร้อมสำหรับการสื่อสารในบริบทของอาเซียนและระดับโลก

คำสำคัญ: การสอนภาษาเพื่อการสื่อสาร การสอนภาษาอังกฤษ ทักษะการสื่อสาร

Abstract

While the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach has been integrated into the Thai curriculum for several years, educators remain uncertain about its practical efficacy. This study contends that, given the swift evolution of English's roles in non-native-speaking countries, where English serves as a crucial tool for communication, and the intense competition within the ASEAN marketplace, it becomes imperative for Thai students to enhance their communication skills in the contemporary landscape. The primary objective of this study is to advocate for a novel instructional model for Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Emphasizing communicative feedback, competence, and engaging teaching activities, the study underscores the collaborative roles of teachers and students in fostering effective communicative language teaching within Thai classroom settings. The exploration begins by elucidating the significance of CLT in the core curriculum and addressing the state of English language education in international contexts. Subsequently, the study delves into a comprehensive review and analysis of key theoretical frameworks established by earlier scholars, aiming to spotlight the requirements, challenges, and potential benefits of integrating CLT. Finally, the study proposes a new CLT model that exhibits promising advantages for adoption by Thai students and teachers. It asserts that this model can be adapted to meet the diverse needs of educators and learners in various English teaching-learning environments and foster improved language proficiency and better preparation for real-world communication in ASEAN and global contexts.

Keywords: communicative language teaching, teaching english, communication skills

INTRODUCTION

In teaching English as a foreign language context, the primary objective of English language instruction is to enhance learners' speaking abilities for diverse communicative purposes (Khamkhien, 2010). Proficiency in English speaking is one of the essential macro skills vital for effective communication (Ho, 2020). Researchers have sought alternative techniques over the years to address the limitations of traditional teaching methods, such as grammar-translation and audio-lingual approaches (Kaweian, 2018). Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has emerged as an alternative. First employed in the 1970s to nurture students' communication skills (Cook, 2016), CLT significantly emphasizes developing students' ability to interact confidently and effectively in real-life settings.

Despite initial uncertainties and challenges educators face, CLT has gained widespread adoption in English language teaching globally. Historically, Thailand predominantly relied on grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods (Kaweian, 2018). However, these approaches proved ineffective in enhancing Thai students' communication skills inside and outside the classroom. Recognizing the urgency of English language education, the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Thailand incorporated English language teaching into the Basic Education Core Curriculum (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2008, p.266). The curriculum underscores the significance of English as a vital tool for communication, education, information seeking, livelihood, and cultural awareness on a global scale.

Introducing a national CLT syllabus marked a paradigm shift from traditional grammar-focused and audio-lingual instruction, prioritizing learner-centered methods (Kaweian, 2018, p. 37). Given these changes, Thai English teachers must adopt creative and effective teaching strategies. These approaches aim to instill a positive attitude toward the English language and empower students with the practical knowledge

necessary for diverse interpersonal interactions and the pursuit of higher education (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2008).

In contrast, teachers struggle to foster communicative competence among their students despite the Thai government's endorsement of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in English schools since the 1990s (Kwon, 2017). Kwon's analysis identifies various factors contributing to the failure of CLT implementation in the Thai context. Notably, the absence of CLT-aligned textbooks hinders the promotion of communicative competence using English course materials. Moreover, teachers often face pressure to prioritize teaching language components in preparation for the National Entrance Exam, hindering the incorporation of communication-focused activities (Kwon, 2017, p.119).

Consequently, English communication is undervalued, with a preference for emphasizing skills such as reading and writing to better align with the National Examination objectives. Thus, this study seeks to advocate for a new communicative language teaching (CLT) instructional model tailored for English learners and instructors in the Thai context. It underscores the joint responsibility of teachers and students in enhancing communicative language instruction through communicative feedback, competence development, and feasible communicative teaching activities.

Two prevailing trends warrant consideration in establishing English communication- oriented classrooms for Thai students and teachers. Firstly, the substantial increase in the number of non-native English speakers (NNSs) has transformed the role of English speakers (Ke & Cahyani, 2014). Crystal's (2012) study reveals that there are 750 million non- native speakers, surpassing the number of native speakers. English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has consequently gained acceptance among NNSs, serving as a communication tool for cross-cultural exchange and a contact language in international business and tourism (Wang, 2013). Thus, fostering Thai English learners' communication skills through an appropriate instructional model becomes imperative to prepare them

for the evolution of English worldwide and enhance their ability to interact across diverse cultural backgrounds (Anchunda & Kaewurai, 2021).

Secondly, the 2015 integration of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has heightened awareness of the English language among instructors and learners (Nomnian, 2014). English is now considered the working language in ASEAN nations, and the prevalence of English as a Lingua Franca is evident in interactions with non-native English speakers, predominantly from Asian nations (Kongkerd, 2013). With ASEAN countries becoming more competitive in professional fields, practical communication skills are essential for improved job prospects (Deerajviset, 2014). In response, Thai English learners must receive early and adequate preparation in primary education to thrive and maintain competitiveness in the global marketplace.

Traditional Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) models, while successful in many contexts, often fall short when applied to the unique environment of Thai language learning. For example, traditional CLT approaches emphasize authentic communication and interactive language use, which can clash with Thailand's examination-focused educational environment and large class sizes (Promtara, 2021). Additionally, limited opportunities for English exposure and cultural factors, such as a preference for teacher-centered instruction, can make it difficult to implement CLT principles effectively (Ho, 2020). These challenges have hindered the development of communicative competence among Thai students, indicating a need for a modified CLT model that aligns better with the local context and addresses these specific obstacles. Therefore, addressing this gap necessitates a new CLT model specifically tailored to the Thai context that tackles specific challenges and cultivates communicative competence in a culturally relevant manner. The proposed model addresses these limitations by incorporating components specifically tailored to the Thai context. It tackles the exam-centered approach by incorporating communicative tasks and formative assessments that prioritize real-life language skills over rote memorization. At the same time, it

addresses the gap in culturally relevant materials by training teachers to design localized, meaningful instructional content. Together, these elements aim to transform the language learning experience in Thai classrooms, making English both practical and accessible for students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT) is widely acknowledged as an influential model for English instruction, emphasizing the use of language as a tool for authentic communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). According to Richards (2006), the central goal of CLT is to enable learners to communicate competently by focusing on meaning and interaction rather than rote grammar drills. Promtara (2021) adds that effective communication requires an understanding of what to say and how to say it appropriately based on situational context, the roles of speakers, and their communication goals. Nunan (2015) notes CLT's theoretical foundations emphasize five essential aspects: 1) interaction-based communication, 2) the use of authentic materials, 3) focus on the learning process as well as language content, 4) incorporating learners' personal experiences, and 5) engaging learners in practical, real-world activities. Additionally, Kaweian (2018) outlined several core communication components, including the following:

- Communication competence is emphasized as the "objective of language teaching" in CLT, emphasizing the connection between language and communication.
- CLT sees language as an instrument for communication that should be learned and used in social interaction

- The language taught includes its meanings and functions in addition to its structure
- CLT entails high unpredictability and deliberate language used to encourage sincere conversation. Errors are accepted and considered a normal part of learning how to communicate. In handling error correction, "fluency" is given control over "accuracy."
- CLT represents an engaged social relationship between instructor and student. It embraces the learner-centered approach, giving students a greater sense of "ownership" over their learning and increasing their drive to learn English (Brown, 1994, as cited in Kaweian, 2018). Teachers have to encourage learner autonomy and consider their students' requirements.

CLT has been globally influential. However, despite its broad acceptance, implementing CLT in Asian educational settings has encountered various challenges and sparked significant debate (Kwon, 2017). In the Thai context, several researchers argue that the core principles of CLT clash with the traditional, exam-oriented learning culture, which prioritizes memorization and structured, teacher-led lessons over communicative competence (Baker, 2012; Richards & Rodgers, 2017). This conflict has led to questions about the practical suitability of CLT in countries where language education traditionally reinforces hierarchical relationships between teachers and students. Critics argue that these dynamics can hinder the development of learner autonomy and diminish opportunities for meaningful interaction, both of which are central to CLT (Wiriyaichitra, 2002; Teng & Sinwongsuwat, 2015). This tension highlights a broader issue in CLT adoption: the importance of context-sensitive adaptations that consider cultural and systemic factors, as emphasized by Richards (2006).

Moreover, resource limitations present another significant challenge. Thai classrooms often lack the instructional materials, technology, and small class sizes that would ideally support communicative activities (Warschauer, 2010). This has led to a version of CLT that is adapted or simplified to fit within existing constraints but often fails to achieve the intended communicative outcomes. The proposed CLT model responds directly to these challenges by incorporating elements that address exam-centric and teacher-centered barriers. For instance, the model emphasizes incremental development of communicative feedback and evaluation methods that accommodate large class sizes and limited resources. Additionally, it introduces modified communicative tasks designed to fit within Thai classroom constraints, thereby facilitating the gradual integration of CLT principles in a culturally responsive manner. By doing so, the model aims to bridge the gap between CLT's theoretical ideals and the practical demands of Thai classrooms. It also supports a more sustainable and effective implementation of communicative teaching.

The roles of instructors and learners in CLT

The prevailing belief that native English speakers (NESTs) are inherently better suited for instructing non-native students than non-native English speakers (NNESTs) is deeply ingrained, perpetuating the idea that NESTs are the sole model for English instruction and the primary source of learning materials (Lee & Phillips, 2022). However, in Thailand, like many Asian nations, most English teachers catering to 9.6 million students are non-native English speakers (63,450 teachers in total) (Hayes, 2009). This study advocates for recognizing NNESTs as a suitable English teaching model, considering their valuable attributes, especially in enhancing students' communicative skills.

Firstly, Phillipson (1996) contends that NNESTs, having experienced learning English at a young age, may excel as English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors. Their sensitivity to learners' linguistic and cultural needs stems from firsthand experience

learning and using a second language. Secondly, as the majority of English language learners engage with other non-native English speakers, learning with NNESTs facilitates familiarity with diverse accents. Thirdly, non-native English speakers can serve as role models, having mastered proper pronunciation models for learners (Songsirisak, 2015).

In addition to the challenge of native and non-native distinctions, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) presents a transformative shift for Thai English teachers, necessitating a departure from traditional teacher-centered approaches. However, the reliance on course books persists, driven by the unfamiliarity of Thai teachers with this innovative teaching methodology (Markmee & Taylor, 2001). Moreover, limited exposure to English in real-world situations and a lack of theoretical understanding hinder the qualifications of Thai teachers for effective communication-focused English teaching (Hallinger & Kantamara, 2000). Rojo-Sevilla (2016) underscores the importance of certified language teachers trained in the fundamentals of CLT, communicative teaching techniques, and instructional resources (p.55).

Implementing CLT places students in communicative contexts, encouraging active participation and interaction to foster language learning and communicative competence. Teachers in CLT become organizers, facilitators, and researchers, shifting from mere knowledge providers (Kaweian, 2018). This approach demands that students take responsibility for their education by actively participating in the learning process, contributing as much as they receive, and independently acquiring knowledge. The term communicative competence encompasses both grammatical understanding and social awareness of language use, and learners are encouraged to develop these language abilities (Rojo-Sevilla, 2016). As a result, CLT offers students multiple opportunities to use and produce language, enhancing motivation and fluency in the process.

KEY THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

This study adopted two critical theoretical frameworks to propose a new communicative language teaching (CLT) instructional model for Thai L2 learners and instructors. Firstly, a study by Ho (2020) was used. As shown in Figure 1, Ho argued that communicative language teaching (CLT) aims to improve “students' communicative proficiency in all areas of communication, including all English skills, i. e., speaking, reading, writing, nonverbal interactions, and listening.” Accuracy is less critical than fluency as long as communication goals are met. Moreover, the “principles of grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, cultural awareness, social status, interpersonal techniques, coherence, cohesiveness, background knowledge, and meanings that go beyond the meanings of the individual sentences are all expected of learners to master” (Ho, 2020, p.3).

Communicative Language Teaching	
Objectives	• Enhance learners' communicative competence in verbal and nonverbal interactions.
English skills	• Listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are interrelated. Fluency is more valued than accuracy.
First language and Target Language	• Learners' mother tongue is not discouraged during lessons and they use English as much as they can to meet daily-life communication purposes.
Teacher's role	• Teachers facilitate learners' English learning and create abundant communication opportunities in class.
Learner's role	• Learners take active roles in English learning. They participate in ample communicative activities.
Communicative activities	• Brainstorming, information gap, role plays, think-pair-share, interviews, problem-solving tasks, group discussion, jigsaws, games, competitions, etc.

Figure 1. The framework of communicative language teaching from “Communicative language teaching and English as a foreign language undergraduates' communicative competence in Tourism English” by Y. Y. C. Ho, 2020, *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, pp. 27, 1–16.

Next, Ho perceived using the learner's mother tongue as essential for learners. They were encouraged to speak as much as possible in English. This approach aids learners in

realizing that English is more than just a subject for the classroom—it is a daily necessity. In other words, students are taught to view English as a valuable tool for achieving daily communication goals. Regarding teachers’ role, English teachers support students’ English acquisition and impart linguistic information. Also, “teachers provide many possibilities for communication to promote three-way language exchanges between students, students and teachers, and teachers and students.” Meanwhile, students actively participate in their English language education. They engage in various communicative activities, including interviews, group projects, pair discussions, and board games. They constructively address issues and pose inquiries. In the classroom, they converse effectively and efficiently in English. Lastly, Ho suggested several communicative activities in CLT, such as “brainstorming, information gap, role plays, think-pair-share, interviews, problem-solving tasks, group discussion, jigsaws, games, and competitions.”

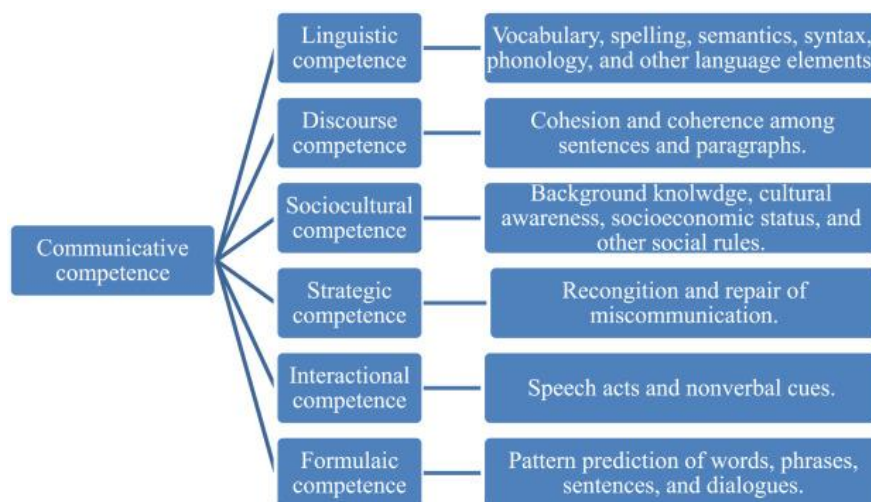
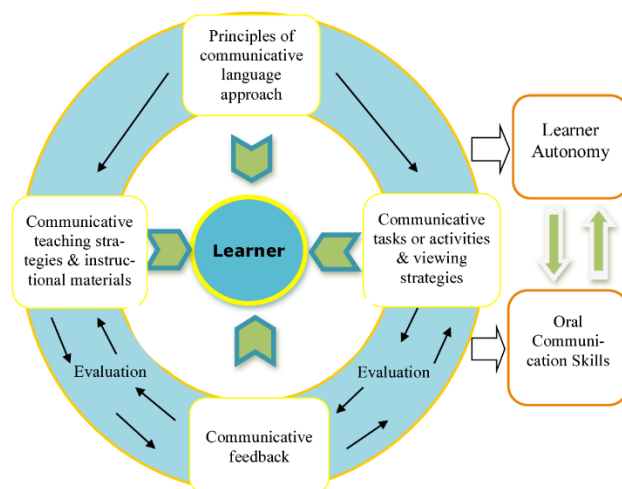


Figure 2. The components of communicative competence from “Communicative language teaching and English as a foreign language undergraduates’ communicative competence in Tourism English” by Y. Y. C. Ho, 2020, *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, pp. 27, 1–16.

In addition to the framework discussed above, Ho (2020) denoted the necessity of communicative competence for English learners in her study. She pointed out that the ability to communicate effectively with others through listening, speaking, reading, writing, and physical interaction is known as communicative competence (p. 5). In Figure 2, Ho described linguistic competence as “understanding vocabulary, spelling, semantics, syntax, phonology, and other language characteristics.” This is known as grammatical competence. Discourse competence is “the ability to infer the inter-sentential meanings” or cohesion and coherence (Ho, 2020, p.5). Sociocultural competence is social sensitivity to language use, such as topic relevance, social roles, and speaker-listener relationships. Next, strategic competence is described as “a skill allowing the improvement of communication effectiveness by identifying communication breakdowns and correcting miscommunication.” Interactional competence is the “capacity to speak with foreigners, such as asking, apologizing, demanding, appeasing, and exchanging information.” Lastly, formulaic competence emphasizes “predictable, established patterns in dialogues or systematic pairings of words, phrases, and sentences.” Since the concept of communicative competence emphasizes the significance of such fundamental aspects of language use as knowledge of language forms (grammar), appropriate language use in light of social contexts, use of cohesion and coherence devices, and knowledge of verbal and nonverbal communication strategies to make up for any language deficiencies (Sekiziyivu & Mugimu, 2017), this study perceives the need for this competence for Thai English learners.



CLTP for ADNU EN003 Class

Figure 3. The conceptual framework designed from “Development and validation of a communicative language teaching program for Filipino college students” by J. A. Rojo-Sevilla, 2016, *ICLLCE*, 52-65.

Secondly, this study also highlights the need for active teacher training. In line with Kaweian (2018), CLT training is absent for instructors in traditional teacher education. This lack of training brings negative attitudes towards using this new theoretical concept in their classes. This result is consistent with research from other EFL settings where teachers have expressed reluctance to embrace CLT because doing so would force them to switch from techniques they are accustomed to ones they are not.

Rojo-Sevilla (2016, p. 55) emphasizes that a qualified language instructor should be equipped with foundational knowledge in the communicative language approach, as well as skills in communicative teaching strategies and CLT- specific instructional materials. This framework, illustrated in Figure 3, highlights essential components that support the development of effective CLT instruction in the classroom. The central focus of this framework is the learner, with surrounding elements structured to promote both learner autonomy and oral communication skills. The model incorporates principles of

the communicative language approach, which guide the overarching goals and values of the instructional approach. Communicative teaching strategies and instructional materials provide teachers with practical methods and tools to engage learners in meaningful communication, while communicative tasks or activities and viewing strategies encourage students to use language in authentic, interaction-based settings.

In addition, a crucial aspect of this framework is communicative feedback. By providing constructive feedback, teachers enable learners to refine their communicative abilities in a supportive environment. Additionally, evaluation plays a central role in this model, ensuring that both teaching strategies and student progress are assessed continuously. Evaluation allows instructors to adjust their methods and tailor materials to support learners' communicative competence and autonomy better. This component is integral to the iterative cycle of teaching and learning, aligning with the proposed model's emphasis on reflective practice and continuous improvement.

THE PROPOSED MODEL

The proposed model draws on the frameworks of Ho (2020) and Rojo-Sevilla (2016), with additional insights from Phillipson (1996) on the roles of non-native English-speaking instructors. Specifically, Rojo-Sevilla's (2016) framework guided the incorporation of essential components such as communicative language principles, communicative tasks, instructional materials, feedback, and continuous evaluation—each adapted to address the unique needs of Thai English learners. As shown in Figure 4, the model begins with the contexts of English language teaching-learning in Thailand, where English is taught as a foreign language. It also emphasizes the mutual roles of teachers and learners. English instructors in this model are non-native English-speaking teachers who have experienced learning English as a second language. As Phillipson (1996) suggests, these instructors bring valuable sensitivity to their learners' linguistic and cultural demands due to their own first-hand experience with second language

acquisition. This alignment of the instructors' backgrounds with the communicative needs of their students enhances the model's applicability to the Thai context.

Next, the English instructors in this model must be given training focusing on communicative teaching strategies and designing instructional materials for CLT. As pointed out earlier, most Thai instructors had no opportunities to participate in such training to build their confidence and familiarity in applying new teaching methods in English classrooms. To make it more specific, Senthamarai (2018) suggested some helpful, communicative teaching strategies, such as encouraging students to fully participate in the activities, employing inquiries that encourage dialogue, discussion, and practical application, and utilizing instructional tools that demand responses and draw in and hold the student's attention. Furthermore, it is suggested that CLT design materials should be authentic. The authentic instructional materials may not have been created with the classroom in mind but for use in real-world settings (Sekiziyivu & Mugimu, 2017). These resources are taken directly from the real world and introduced into the classroom without necessarily undergoing any adjustments. "Newspapers, restaurant menus, recipes, maps, reports, and instruction manuals" are just a few examples.

A more structured, step-by-step approach is recommended to support instructors in implementing this model, which includes practical examples in each phase.

Phase 1: Training and Preparation

- Instructors should receive training on communicative teaching strategies, focusing on role plays, group discussions, and other interactive methods. Workshops or online modules could provide practice scenarios and feedback loops.
- Training should also cover designing authentic materials. For example, instructors can use local newspapers, menus, and other culturally

relevant materials that students can relate to and apply in real-life contexts.

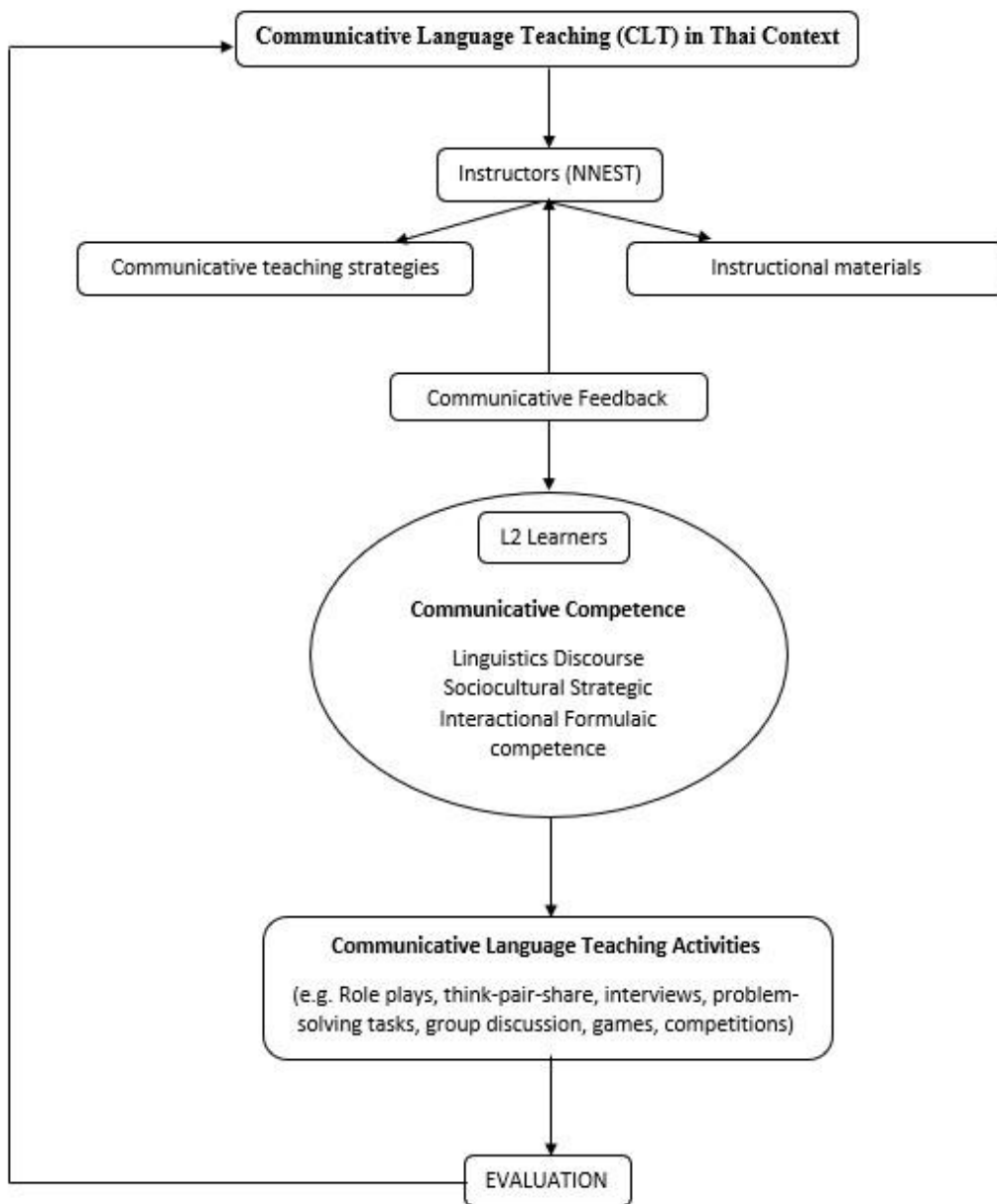


Figure 4. The proposed CLT instructional model for Thai learners and instructors

Phase 2: Introducing CLT Activities

- **Small-Scale Activities:** For large classes, divide students into smaller groups for activities like *think-pair-share*, where pairs can exchange ideas before sharing with a larger group. This reduces the time needed for individualized attention while ensuring participation.
- **Role Plays and Simulations:** Organize role plays on topics relevant to students' daily lives, such as ordering food, giving directions, or discussing a local event. This helps learners gain practical language skills.
- **Peer-Led Discussions:** Assign group leaders within student groups to guide discussions, reducing the instructor's need to manage each group individually. This approach is suitable for large classes where personalized attention is challenging.

Assessment of Communicative Competence

Since CLT emphasizes real-time communication skills, traditional testing alone may not capture students' progress. The model suggests alternative assessment methods.

1. **Performance-Based Assessments:** Instructors could use rubrics to assess role plays, group discussions, and problem-solving tasks, focusing on fluency, coherence, and sociocultural appropriateness.
2. **Peer and Self-Assessment:** Integrating peer and self-assessment allows students to reflect on their communicative skills and identify areas for improvement. Instructors might provide checklists or reflection prompts for these assessments.
3. **Ongoing Feedback through IRF:** The Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) model enables instructors to give immediate, constructive feedback during interactive sessions, reinforcing learning and encouraging self-reflection among students.

Continuous Evaluation and Reflection

Evaluation is a critical component. It allows teachers and students to reflect on the model's effectiveness and make adjustments. Teachers should reflect on what worked well and what challenges arose after each lesson, adjusting activities for future sessions. Furthermore, end-of-class reflections or brief feedback sessions allow students to express what they learned, any difficulties, and their preferences, creating a feedback loop for the instructor.

For learners, they are expected to play an active and engaged role in developing a variety of communicative competencies essential for effective language use. Central to this approach is the idea that learners are not merely passive recipients of knowledge but rather active participants in their language learning journey. Engaging in various communicative activities encourages them to acquire six core competencies: linguistic, discourse, sociocultural, strategic, interactional, and formulaic.

Linguistic competence is the foundation, encompassing knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, which allows learners to form accurate and contextually appropriate sentences. Discourse competence then builds on this by enabling learners to structure their language into coherent and cohesive statements, ensuring that their messages are clearly understood in longer conversations or written passages. Equally important is sociocultural competence, which focuses on the learners' ability to recognize and adapt to different social and cultural contexts, an essential skill for successful cross-cultural communication.

In addition, the model emphasizes the importance of strategic competence, equipping learners with the tools to manage and overcome communication challenges, such as finding alternative ways to express themselves if they lack specific vocabulary. Interactional competence further develops learners' conversational skills, teaching them how to engage in back- and- forth exchanges, manage turn- taking, and respond appropriately in conversations. Lastly, formulaic competence involves familiarity with

commonly used phrases and expressions, enabling learners to sound more natural and fluent in everyday communication.

By fostering these competencies, the CLT model encourages learners to communicate effectively across all language skills—listening, speaking, reading, writing—and even engage in physical interaction as part of the language learning process. Through active participation and practical application, learners are not only expected to improve their linguistic abilities but also to build the confidence necessary to use English spontaneously and meaningfully. This dynamic and participatory approach is designed to prepare learners for real-life communicative situations, making language learning both practical and impactful.

Limitations and Challenges

Despite all the promising benefits of the proposed model, the author found some challenges and concerns regarding its implementation. Using this model, Thai English teachers will first be given more work. Undeniably, the teachers have a vast teaching workload, including administrative work, at the school. Given that joining English teaching training or workshops is a valuable activity, the teachers might have no allocated time for it due to its effects on the teaching schedules. Accordingly, school administrators should consider providing teachers with support or additional resources. Moreover, some experienced teachers might be unwilling to change their teaching methods because the methods have been their comfort zone for many years. It might be challenging to ask them to put more effort into designing, preparing, and integrating new teaching methods and teaching with creativity. Besides, the teachers must ensure that their students have acquired all necessary communicative competence for successful CLT. As a result, teachers might be overwhelmed with teaching using the method. Continuous professional development and the sharing of success stories from early adopters can help ease this transition.

Second, CLT aims to develop learners' communicative skills by extensively applying the skills they learn in real-life situations. However, Thai learners must study seven other compulsory subjects in a week. As CLT demands considerable time to use the language inside and outside the class, the school must create supportive environments for students to use English continuously in various situations. Although the MOE issued in the core curriculum states that English should be used in other subjects to acquire knowledge, students might find it challenging to do so.

In summary, the proposed model offers a structured pathway for Thai English teachers to implement CLT. By emphasizing interactive methods, authentic materials, and formative assessment, it aims to make language learning a more dynamic, relevant, and effective experience. However, successful implementation will require adjustments to meet the unique demands of each classroom, especially in terms of class size and resources. Future research could focus on piloting this model, gathering data on its effectiveness, and refining it based on teacher and student feedback.

CONCLUSION

One of the primary goals of teaching and learning English in Thailand is to enhance students' communicative skills through the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. This approach has been integrated into the Thai curriculum for years, yet teachers remain uncertain about its practical implementation in natural classroom settings. This study argues that fostering Thai students' communication skills is increasingly necessary, given the evolving role of English as a communication tool in non-native-speaking countries and the heightened competition within the ASEAN marketplace. The primary aim of this study was to advocate for a novel CLT instructional model tailored for Thai L2 learners and instructors, emphasizing shared responsibility through communicative feedback, communicative competence, and dynamic teaching activities to enhance classroom engagement.

This study examined the status of English language teaching globally, narrowing the focus to Thailand's unique context, and underscored the significance of CLT in the national core curriculum. It then identified the needs, challenges, and opportunities for CLT integration, drawing on critical theoretical frameworks from previous scholarship. Ultimately, a new CLT model was proposed, promising meaningful applications for Thai learners and educators. However, it is essential to recognize limitations, such as cultural resistance to student-centered approaches, limited resources in rural or underfunded schools, and the challenge of implementing the model effectively in large classes. Future research could pilot-test this model to assess its impact and gather feedback from educators and students, which could inform further refinements.

For schools and the Ministry of Education, initial steps to support implementation might include professional development programs focused on CLT strategies, particularly for non-native English-speaking teachers, and investing in resources that align with communicative goals. Encouraging collaborative efforts among stakeholders— teachers, administrators, policymakers, and communities— will be essential to create an environment where English communication skills can be cultivated successfully. With a sustained commitment from all involved parties, the overarching goal of improving Thai learners' communication skills becomes achievable.

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