



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**The Effectiveness of CLT in Promoting Intercultural Communicative Competence among L2 Learners**

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**ABSTRACT**

Globalization requires cross-cultural communication and second language learners need to possess inter-culturally communicative competence. This research aims to determine whether CLT is efficient in enhancing ICC among L2 learners. Thus, the present research's main aim is to evaluate CLT's effects on the acquisition of ICC in L2 learners. The study hypothesizes that active CLT with its emphasis on meaningful communication and inter-cultural interaction improves learners' ICC as a result of engagements in learning interactions that reflect various cultural modes of expression. The research design adopts a quantitative research design. It incorporates quantitative data collection tools. A research questionnaire with MCQs will be used to test the hypothesis on how CLT affects L2 learners' ICC. The strategy includes choosing participants from various cultural backgrounds and different levels of L2 education from GIFT University, Gujranwala. The quantitative data will be analyzed by using SPSS software through one sample T-test. The present paper's purpose is to fill a theoretical and empirical gap in the analysis of using CLT to promote ICC improvement among L2 learners and help language educators and curriculum developers find better ways to support ICC development in language learning environments. The results elaborated that the CLT teaching methodologies helped promote intercultural communicative competence among L2 learners. It is recommended to use the techniques and methods of Communicative Language Teaching in classrooms to increase intercultural communicative competence among L2 learners.

**Keywords:** CLT Methodology, Communicative Language Teaching, Intercultural Awareness, Intercultural Communicative Competence, Language and Culture, Second Language Learning

**Introduction**

Communicative language teaching is one of the most important parts of language teaching for second language learners. It is a modern approach to teaching a second language to students by increasing their communicative competence (Mohd Radzi, Azmin et al. 2007). It comprises of various techniques for teaching language through the sole means of communication. This research paper will analyze how CLT is effective in promoting intercultural communicative competence among learners of English as a second language. According to (Tran and Duong 2018), it is necessary nowadays to be inter-culturally competent in second-language communication. CLT has a great impact in enhancing the communicative competence of learners in inter-cultural contexts.

The background of this research revolves around the impact of Communicative Language Teaching in improving intercultural language competence among L2 learners. (Hymes 1972) coined the term communicative competence. It is referred to as the knowledge of both rules of grammar and rules of language use appropriate to a given context. CLT enables the L2 students to gain powerful grammatical, sociocultural, and discourse competence. All these components combine to produce an enhanced

communicative competence in L2 (Mohd Radzi, Azmin et al. 2007). Communicative Language Teaching enables people to communicate effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds.

The research methodology involves the utilization of quantitative and questionnaire-based research to gather data. The purpose of this study was to review the literature on the communicative approach in language education (CLTE) and related methodologies for enhancing second language (L2) learners' ICC. Thus, the main research question is to reveal to what extent different methods and approaches to CLT enhance the development of intercultural communicative competence. Another aim was to find out which aspects of CLT e. g. interaction, feedback, and authentic materials facilitate ICU and communication skills the most.

This research focuses on two research questions for exploring and comparing CLT's ability to foster ICC in L2 learners. They helped to concentrate on examining the roles and efficacy of the CLT approaches and tasks implemented in the contexts of intercultural communication. Here are some research questions that will guide this research study:

How does CLT contribute to the development of intercultural communicative competence among L2 learners?

How do different CLT instructional techniques impact learners' cultural sensitivity and awareness?

The following research questions are intended to reveal the roles and prospects of CLT in enhancing the ICC among L2 learners.

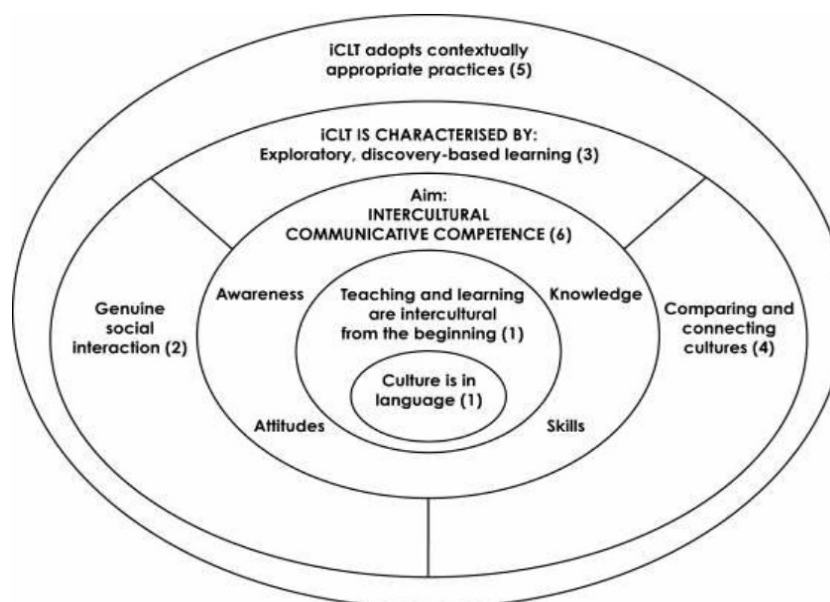
Evaluating communicative language teaching (CLT) to foster ICC among L2 learners entails several factors in language learning and cultural awareness. CLT thus focuses on realistic communication objectives whereby the learners participate in relevant and contextualized interactions (Lee, Ho et al. 2023). The incorporation of cultural themes into language classes assists the learner in the creation of cultural sensitivity and consciousness. CLT promotes language skills in L2 learners. For example, by performing the speech-related exercises, the students will be capable of interacting with teachers and other learners of various cultures. CLT concentrates on the act of communicating instead of paying exclusive attention to grammar rules and patterns. The learners are assisted in attaining the directed levels of fluency and proficiency in the target language. Lee, Ho et al. (2023) produce evidence that CLT has a positive impact on ICC by enhancing the learners' cultural mutual understanding and appreciation. CLT may also not produce the intended results due to cultural and linguistic differences of the learners and the type of educational system in which the CLT is applied. Therefore, the effectiveness of CLT depends on the teachers' skills in organizing meaningful intercultural encounters. It also depends on how the instructor promotes favorable learning conditions.

CLT encourages the acquisition of language skills as well as understanding and acceptance of cultural differences. The communication-based focus of CLT helps develop learners' proficiency in the networks of communication tasks in the target language. The skills acquired through CLT are progressively in demand in the globalized organization. The employees interact with people from different cultures. If they have good communication skills then they will easily do their job. The studies on CLT and ICC can help create language education policies as well as culturally sensitive curriculum frameworks (Adem and Berkessa 2022). The use of CLT promotes personal and career development.

This research has several pedagogical implications that can influence language teaching practices and educational policies. It enables the teachers to integrate aspects of culture into the teaching of language. It also helps them to use materials and activities for

learners to manage cultural differences effectively. The CLT-based teaching methodologies can have a direct impact on learners' target languages and cultures (Biseko, Manyilizu et al. 2020). This research focuses on adding the CLT approach to enhance the communication skills of learners originating from other cultures.

**Figure 1: Impact of CLT in Promoting Intercultural Communicative Competence among L2 Learners**



The figure above presents “Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)” by using circles showing that culture is in language. It highlights that intercultural communicative competence impacts the awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitude of the learners. The diagram also shows guidelines for teaching and learning. For example, it involves authentic interaction and the construction of cultural resemblances. Also, it highlights the contextually relevant approaches to language learning.

## Literature Review

CLT has received a lot of attention as an impactful way of teaching languages. Communication and interaction are overly valued instead of a grammar-centered teaching approach. This teaching method fulfills the demands of the modern principle of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) needed in today's interconnected world (Rouffet, van Beuningen et al. 2023). In Pakistan, the practice of CLT has multiple objectives. It has the overarching goal of improving the students' ICC to handle the different cultural encounters effectively.

The present research focuses on the effectiveness of CLT in promoting intercultural communicative competence among L2 learners. There are several issues, which hinder the application of CLT in Pakistan. These are resistance from teachers who have only practiced the culture of conventional teaching methods. Teachers must be properly trained with exceptional teaching skills and modern teaching materials (Chege 2023). Furthermore, the literature review includes some empirical studies on the impact of CLT in enhancing ICC in the Pakistani educational context. This study seeks to fill the research gaps through an effective literature review on the subject.

Richards (2006) has written in his book named, "Communicative Language Teaching Today" explore the principles and evolution of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). They have highlighted the CLT's emphasis on interaction, real-world communication,

and learner-centered activities. The study provides a comprehensive overview of CLT's theoretical underpinnings and practical applications, setting the stage for understanding its role in language education.

Dörnyei (2013) examines a development in Communicative Language Teaching in the form of "Principled Communicative Approach". It is one of the most influential pedagogical methodologies in language education during the last few decades. PCA was brought against traditional CLT. The study aims to give communicative language teaching in the twenty-first century a more structured and theoretically grounded framework. The results showed that PCA is very promising to build the teaching approach of language teachers in such a way that learners are communicatively competent, but also competent in the linguistic aspects while learning the language

Canale (1980) in her research article, defines communicative competence and differentiates its components, including grammatical, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence. In her quantitative research, the author argues for a balanced approach to language teaching. The research focuses on how to incorporate these elements for better results of language teaching. The results show that CLT as a means to develop comprehensive language skills.

Byram (2020) elaborated the concept of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in his research. He emphasized the importance of cultural understanding in language education. The book outlines a framework for teaching and assessing ICC, linking it closely with communicative approaches like CLT.

Kirkpatrick (2007) discusses the challenges of teaching English in diverse cultural contexts. In her research, she highlights the need for approaches like CLT to address the varying communicative needs of learners. The book highlights the issue of insufficient attention to cultural diversity in traditional language teaching methods, which CLT aims to address.

Littlewood (2011) explores the evolving nature of CLT in her research. In her quantitative study, she acknowledges the challenges faced by educators in its implementation. The results of the study identify the problems such as a lack of teacher training and resistance to change from traditional methods, which can hinder the development of both communicative and intercultural competence.

Sercu and Bandura (2005) examines the role of foreign language teachers in their international study. It is quantitative and qualitative study. They found that CLT methodology helps to develop students' ICC through CLT. The research indicates that teachers recognize the importance of ICC. There are significant differences in how it is integrated into curriculum across different countries.

Holliday has deeply addressed the methods of CLT in his book about the challenges of teaching English in a global context. He emphasizing the need for approaches like CLT that promote ICC. Holliday critiques the dominance of native-speaker norms and advocates for a more inclusive approach that acknowledges the diverse cultural backgrounds of learners. (Holliday 2013)

The study of (Joe and Lee 2013) explores the effectiveness of CLT in Korean EFL classrooms, focusing on its role in developing ICC. It was a quantitative research on numerous Korean students. The research found that CLT helps students engage more deeply with cultural content, fostering a better understanding of intercultural nuances in communication.

These reviews provide a comprehensive overview of the theoretical background, challenges, and effectiveness of CLT in promoting Intercultural Communicative Competence. They highlight the need for culturally responsive teaching methods and underscore the benefits of CLT in developing comprehensive language and cultural skills in diverse educational contexts.

## **Material and Methods**

Research methodology focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in promoting Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) among second language (L2) learners. This involves understanding the historical evolution of research methodologies in language education. These styles have transitioned from traditional, grammar-focused approaches to more dynamic, interaction-based methods like CLT.

Research methodology in this study is grounded in the theories of communicative competence and intercultural communication. (Canale and Swain 1980) model of communicative competence, which includes grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competences, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding language proficiency. Additionally, Byram's model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) emphasizes the importance of attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary for effective intercultural communication. (Byram 1997) These theoretical models inform the research design, data collection, and analysis methods employed in this study.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emphasizes the practical use of language in real-life contexts. It encourages interaction and communication among learners. According to Canale and Swain's (1980) model, communicative competence encompasses grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competences. CLT aims to develop these competences holistically. Additionally, Byram's (1997) model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) introduces the importance of attitudes, knowledge, and skills for effective intercultural communication. CLT has special focus on authentic communication and cultural contexts. It improves the ICC by enabling learners to practice language use in diverse, intercultural scenarios.

The research design utilizes quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of CLT in promoting ICC. This research measure changes in ICC quantitatively. It explores the learners' experiences and perceptions in depth. This method helps in enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings by including evidence from different sources.

Data collection involves Quantitative techniques to gather comprehensive information through a research questionnaire. This questionnaire was administered online to measure changes in ICC among L2 learners. The survey includes standardized MCQs that were designed to evaluate various components of ICC. The research helped to gather in-depth insights into learners' experiences with CLT.

A purposive sampling technique will be employed to select participants. The sample will consist of 61 L2 learners from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The participants belong to various departments of GIFT University, Gujranwala. They were enrolled in language programs that implement CLT. This approach ensures a representative sample that can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of CLT across different contexts.

A comprehensive research questionnaire will be utilized to collect data. Proper MCQs questions are designed to measure different aspects of ICC, including cultural knowledge, attitudes, and communicative skills. It will also help to explore participants'

experiences and perceptions of CLT and its impact on their intercultural communicative competence.

Data analysis will involve both quantitative method for research. The Quantitative data analysis includes statistical techniques, such as one sample t-test. The SPSS software was used to analyze the scores of questionnaire. The results helped us in determining the effectiveness of CLT in enhancing ICC. By integrating quantitative approach, this methodology aims to capture the multifaceted nature of communicative competence and its development through CLT. The structured and systematic approach ensures the credibility and reliability of the findings, contributing valuable insights to the field of language education.

## Results and Discussion

The objective of this study was to evaluate the success of Communicative Language Teaching in developing Intercultural Communicative Competence among L2 learners. The results indicated that the more CLT strategies are used, the better ICC in L2 learners is realized when assessed through questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations.

**Table 1**  
**Results of one-sample T Tests**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean
Q1	61	1.70	1.229	.157
Q2	61	1.26	.575	.074
Q3	61	3.13	1.040	.133
Q4	61	2.54	.565	.072
Q5	61	3.38	1.344	.172
Q6	61	3.23	1.657	.212
Q7	61	3.34	1.078	.138
Q8	61	3.36	1.017	.130
Q9	61	3.21	1.051	.135
Q10	61	3.11	1.097	.140
Q11	61	3.25	1.150	.147
Q12	61	3.11	1.066	.137
Q13	61	3.69	1.444	.185

The table includes data for 13 different items (Q1 to Q13). N is the Sample Size which is 61 for all items. 61 participants from GIFT University were selected for this research. The mean ranges from 1.70 to 3.69. The standard deviation ranges from 0.525 to 1.444. The standard error of the mean that ranges from 0.067 to 0.185. The results overall elaborated that Communicative Language Teaching is effective in promoting intercultural communicative competence among L2 learners.

The mean represents the average score for each item. For example, Q1 has a mean of 1.70, indicating that the average response for this item is 1.70. This rate shows that 50 percent of the participants agreed with the statement. On the other hand, the higher means shows that majority of the participants agreed with the statement of the question. For example 3.69 for Q13 suggests that respondents generally gave higher scores for this item. This is the case from question number 5 to 13.

Standard Deviation measures the spread of the responses around the mean. It shows that majority of the participants have chosen the option of strongly agree, slightly agree and agree. A higher standard deviation indicates more variability in the responses. For instance, Q13 has a standard deviation of 1.444, meaning the responses for this item are more spread out compared to Q2, which has a standard deviation of 0.575. Same is the case from Question 5 to 13.

SE has provided an estimate of how much the sample mean is showing variations from the true population mean. Smaller SE values indicate more limited variations of the mean of the selected population. For example, Q1 has an SE of 0.157, suggesting that the mean of 1.70 is estimated to be within 0.157 units of the true population mean.

Central Tendency shows that the means indicate the central tendency of responses for each item. Items with higher means (e.g., Q13) suggest that respondents generally rated some responses (strongly agree, slightly agree and agree) at a higher level compared to the others. The central tendency is higher from question 5 to question 13.

Variability in the results show that the standard deviations have shown the variability in responses of participants. Items with higher standard deviations (e.g., Q13) have more varied responses, indicating less consensus among respondents. The participants have selected the options of strongly agree, slightly agree and agree.

Cultural content embedded in language lessons, therefore, does not only teach learners language forms but how to use these in contexts associated with respective cultural entities. This conforms to Byram's (1997) theory on ICC, which ties cultural awareness to effective communication. Enhancement of the communicative skills confirms the pragmatic view of the effectiveness of CLT in actualizing its learners to a real-life communicative situation. According to Savignon (2002), the ultimate goal of CLT is to enable the learners to be effective communicators across contexts, a preposition that this study confirms. The ability to hold conversations between cultural divides is a very essential facet of ICC, which to a large degree well fleshes LC.

Greater cultural awareness and sensitivity was observed among the participants after they had been exposed to the CLT methodologies. Participants showed increased understanding of culture. The abilities of participants was observed in their ability to conduct conversations that involved more than one cultural context.

The participants explained that their communicating abilities were improved. As a result, they were able to communicate effectively across cultures. The participants feel confident to start and keep conversations going with different people from other cultural backgrounds.

The survey had shown that CLT not only improved linguistic competence, but it also enhanced the development of intercultural competencies. Learners were able to interpret the cultural information easily. It helped them to increase their comprehension and interaction within cultural settings.

It is a well-known fact that CLT is communication-oriented. It enabled the classroom to be socially interactive. The students were very motivated and engaged with the learning process. A majority of the subjects claimed that the CLT had made the learning content relevant to their everyday experience. This teaching methodology has made language learning more meaningful and enjoyable.

The findings of this research confirm the effectiveness of CLT in enhancing ICC among L2 learners. The results of this present research are similar to the number of other researches on the same topic. This section contrasts the findings of the present research with the credible research work of other researchers.

For (Byram 1997) in 1997, ICC incorporates attitudes, knowledge, skills, and critical cultural awareness as the elements that can help deliver effective intercultural communication. The current study adds more to the existing findings by demonstrating close similarity in results with the Byram model for L2 learners exposed to CLT. Apart from the attainment of language skills, these students have shown progress in understanding the

culture. It was much similar to the findings given by Byram as a result of good intercultural education. Like Byram (1997), the present research confirms that the development of ICC leads to successful intercultural communication.

For this reason, Dörnyei (2002) considered that CLT is especially good at developing communicative competence. As it deals with the functional use of language in real situations. In the current study, learners showed improvement in the ability to communicate in a culturally different setting. These findings are similar to the findings given by Savignon. The core of CLT consists of authentic materials and interactive tasks. These help to enhance both linguistic and intercultural skills among learners. Research by Savignon and results of this study prove that CLT prepares learners to communicate in the real world. CLT is very suitable to develop ICC.

Dörnyei (2002) has suggested a model of intercultural competence, which involves developing an appropriate and effective way of communicating in intercultural contexts and situations. Evidence from the current study confirms the results given by the Deardorff's. The participants significantly improved their abilities to interpret, relate to, and respond against cultural information.

Dörnyei and Ushioda have investigated the role of motivation in the field of language learning. They believed that if a communicational task is interesting and meaningful, then it will provide an effective motivational boost to learners. In the present study, the participants' responses confirm that CLT methodology will increase the motivation and engagement of the learners. It will help to improve the intercultural communicative skills of the learners. The finding of this study is similar to what has been found by Dörnyei and Ushioda. (Dörnyei 2002).

Similarity of the findings in this research with those of other researchers further affirms the result. The findings elaborated that CLT is one of the effective ways of promoting ICC among L2 learners. The findings of four researches confirm that CLT promotes intercultural awareness and competence. It helps to provide a relevant platform that enables users to communicate across different contexts of cultures. This validates the study's outcome, further looking into establishing a more solid form of research agreement. Moreover, it stresses the importance of CLT in modern language education.

## **Conclusion**

This study aimed to assess the communicative language teaching approach in promoting intercultural communicative competence among second language learners. The findings in this research support the hypothesis very strongly: "CLT as a pedagogical approach is very effective for enhancing both linguistic as well as intercultural skills among language learners". Using authentic communicative tasks, real-life situations, and materials that carry cultural relevance, CLT managed not only to enhance learners' ability to use the target language but also considerably increased their level of cultural awareness, sensitivity, and competence. Learners, therefore, could become involved in more interactive and meaningful intercultural encounters, negotiate cultural differences, and apply their language use effectively in a wide range of contexts.

The results of the study fall in sequence with other works related to the development of ICC, like Byram, 1997; Savignon, 2002; Deardorff, 2006; and Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2013. In this manner, CLT occupies a vital place in the development of ICC. This research emphasizes the strength of CLT as a method of teaching that goes beyond language skills to the overall development of intercultural communication. The evidence supports the need to implement CLT strategies within language learning curricula in order to prepare L2 learners to communicate meaningfully in the globalized world. By fostering both the linguistic and intercultural competencies, CLT affords the learner the capability to engage in intercultural



dialogues with confidence and great competence, hence boosting his general success in communicative terms across cultures.

The findings of the current study strongly allude to the fact that Communicative Language Teaching may serve as an appropriate method for the promotion of ICC among L2 learners. The results further reasoned for emphasizing culture in language teaching via an integration process, thus reinforcing the notion that language teaching is much more than learning structural knowledge—it is about knowing the handling of successful intercultural communication. The implications of the study suggest that educators should try to focus on CLT methodologies more in order to prepare L2 learners for appropriate intercultural communication.

### **Recommendations**

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) significantly improves learners' intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and promotes cultural understanding that goes beyond the language skills. Culturally authentic materials must be introduced along with activities centered on ICC within CLT-based curricula to achieve more effective language learning results. Professional teacher training opportunities must be introduced for language teachers to better prepare them with strategies for teaching ICC through CLT approaches. This research will further encourage interdisciplinary approaches and support collaborations among linguists, educators, and cultural studies specialists to enhance the teaching framework of CLT for ICC. There is a need of future research directions into the long-term effects of CLT on ICC and its effectiveness across diverse cultural and linguistic environments. Education policymakers must recognize ICC as a fundamental objective in language teaching standards and curriculum development.

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