

ESL teachers' perception towards the use of communicative language teaching approach in senior high schools' in Ghana: The case of Wa municipality.

Abstract

This study examines CLT use among SHS teachers in Wa Municipality. To accomplish the set objectives, a mixed method approach was applied. Questionnaire, interview and observation were used to collect data from the participants. Constructive teaching model was used as a theoretical framework and the data analyzed using descriptive statistics (SPSS) and thematic analysis. The results showed that the majority of SHS teachers were aware of CLT as an approach to teaching English and also recognized the importance of CLT for students' communication skills. However, teachers did not adhere to the principles and teaching of CLT in their classrooms. This was due to a lack of understanding of the basic principles of CLT. For this reason, teachers still rely on traditional approaches to teaching the English language. The majority of teachers used teacher-centered practices instead of learner-centered practices in their classrooms. The study showed that teachers attributed their inability to use CLT in their classrooms to factors related to the teacher, the student, and the CLT approach. Teachers' differing ideas about CLT influenced their attitudes towards the approach. Based on the results, it is recommended that teachers of English try as much as possible to adopt appropriate strategies for teaching the English language and also to motivate their students in language learning to become proficient users of language. In-service teacher training should also be strengthened to keep teachers informed of evolving trends in ESL methodology.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, English as second language, Teachers, Strategies, Traditional

1.0 Introduction

Based on the English language standards, the methodology to be applied is the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Its main objective is to develop communication. Nevertheless, there are some cases in which this methodology does not follow its focus due to several factors like lack of knowledge about the method, low English levels from teachers and students, or lack of English teachers in schools (Elizabeth & Obando, 2023). The lack of appropriate methods, techniques, and strategies for teaching English are providing poor results. A study conducted by Calle, et al. (2012) as cited by Toro et al., (2019) indicates that the strategies teachers use in the English language classroom are based on traditional methods that do not focus on the Communicative Language Teaching approach as it is established by the Ministry of Education.

In Ghana, English is the official language and the language of instruction in our schools, from upper primary to all higher levels. Therefore, the need to study English is vital for students as it is the medium of teaching and learning, official work and international communication.

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High school is the second level of education in Ghana. At this stage, students would have been introduced to basic language arts such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. These arts need to be significantly improved to give students the confidence to communicate in the language (Ministry of Education, Curriculum for SHS, 2010). Various teaching and learning theories and strategies such as grammar translation and audiolingualism have emerged over the years to meet learners' needs (Brown, 2000).

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However, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach has been recognized as the appropriate teaching and learning approach in language education (Savignon, 1987; Savignon, 2002). Language teachers try to implement the CLT approach as much as possible in their classroom settings, though some of them still face the challenge of applying the approach effectively so that their students get the maximum benefit from it (Dos Santos, 2016).

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As English has increasingly become a global lingua franca, there is a need for ESL teachers to apply innovative approaches in their language teaching to meet students' language needs (Ahmed, 2012). Therefore, it is not enough for students to learn grammatical rules through repeated practice without being able to apply them in contextual situations (Larson-Freeman, 2000). Students will then need to be involved in classroom activities that help improve their language skills. As a result, the CLT has become an important approach to language teaching and learning.

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CLT puts students at the center of the teaching and learning process. Students are given the opportunity to develop autonomous learning based on their own learning styles and strategies, while the teacher becomes a facilitator and guide of student activities (Brown, 2001). This statement by Brown is supported by Savignon (2003) who expressed the opinion that CLT should focus on students and not just on processes. This is what the ESL teacher should do in the classroom. The goal of CLT is to enable students to become proficient in the use of the target language and teachers should act as partners in the process (Savignon, 1987; Savignon, 2002).

The English language Syllabus for SHS (2010) emphasizes the need for SHS students to be able to use the language effectively in everyday life. Despite the above statement, students are unable to express themselves fluently in written and oral contexts. This means that the students have not yet achieved the communicative ability in the target language (English language). This situation is due to the fact that English teachers do not adhere to the teachings and principles of CLT in their classrooms. In order to function effectively in the world of communication, the development of ESL communication skills in learners (especially senior high school students) is important (Department of Education, 2010). This explains why teachers should use systematic and holistic language teaching approaches to empower learners in their daily interactions (Kennedy, 2002). Linguists argue that traditional methods of teaching and learning languages fail to meet students' communication needs (Baugh, 1993; Emerson, 1971). For example, it has been argued that learning social terms and interpersonal and cross-cultural interactions is as important

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as learning grammar and vocabulary (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004). Moreover, language learning is not limited to language training and skills, but also includes the ability to communicate effectively (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, 2014). Unlike traditional approaches, the communicative approach to language teaching offers a number of innovations and opportunities that teachers and learners can use for effective language teaching and learning (Kennedy, 2002). This means that communicative language teaching can be used to fill the gaps in previous approaches to language teaching.

1.1 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are;

1. Examine teachers' perceptions of CLT in Wa Municipality.
2. Identify factors discouraging teachers from using CLT in SHS in the Wa Municipality.

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Communicative Language Approach (CLT)

People need to communicate effectively to get their ideas across. Communicating feelings and thoughts is a primary reason for incorporating communication activities into the classroom. Student speech is more productive when engaged in a dynamic learning environment that encourages on-task performance (Toro et al., 2019). According to Moss and Ross-Feldman (2003), all activities which require speaking and listening to others involve the use of communication. Activities aimed at communication are useful for breaking down barriers, finding information, expressing ideas about ourselves and learning about culture. Jeyasala (2014) states that teachers should always encourage students' communication skills and that in addition to limiting their ability to use language fluently and correctly, they should give students space to communicate with others or immerse themselves in speaking activities. They should provide them with spaces to interact with others or to immerse them in speaking activities that enhance their ability to use the target language.

The CLT principal goal is for learners to develop communicative competence. It emphasizes on meaning rather than grammatical structures (Hymes 1972). The communicative competence is defined as the ability to interpret social behaviors, and it requires the active involvement of the learner in the production of the Target Language (TL). Furthermore, when producing and interacting in the target language, some type of competences must be considered. Richards (2006) divides the language teaching into three phases:

Phase 1: Traditional approaches (until the end of the 1960s)

Phase 2: classical communicative language teaching (1970s to 1990s)

Phase 3: current communicative language teaching (end of the 1990s to today).

1.2.1.1 Phase 1: Traditional approaches (until the end of the 1960s)

Traditional approaches to language teaching gave priority to grammatical competence as the basis of language proficiency. They were based on the belief that grammar could be learned through direct instruction and through a methodology that made much use of repetitive practice and drilling (Richards 2006). The approach to the teaching of grammar was a deductive one: students are presented with grammar rules and then given opportunities to practice using them, as opposed to an inductive approach in which students are given examples of sentences containing a grammar rule and asked to work out the rule for themselves. It was assumed that language learning meant building up a large repertoire of sentences and grammatical patterns and learning to produce these accurately and quickly in the appropriate situation (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Once a basic command of the language was established through oral drilling and controlled practice, the four skills were introduced, usually in the sequence of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Techniques that were often employed included memorization of dialogs, question-and-answer practice, substitution drills, and various forms of guided speaking and writing practice (Brown, 2001). Great attention to accurate pronunciation and accurate mastery of grammar was stressed from the very beginning stages.

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The four language arts of speaking, listening, reading and writing were introduced after a basic understanding of the language had been built up through supervised practice, oral exercises and memorization. Accuracy took precedence over smoothness. In the early stages of language instruction, teachers emphasized accurate knowledge of grammar and accurate pronunciation. Memorizing dialogues, question-and-answer exercises, substitution exercises, and various forms of guided speaking and writing exercises were all common techniques (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Errors were viewed as deficient learning and students were discouraged from making errors, as it was believed that errors could become a permanent part of their speech (Brown, 2000). Richards and Rodgers (2014) emphasized the importance of perfect pronunciation and grammatical knowledge of the initial stages. The Grammar Translation Approach is a popular name for this method of language instruction (GTM).

The two approaches based on these principles were audio language literacy in North America and situational language teaching in the United Kingdom. Syllabi mainly consist of sorted words and grammar lists. The situational approach, according to Rutherford (1987), views language as a collection of products that can be sequentially acquired as collected entities. Second language acquisition (SLA) research has shown that L2 acquisition is a process that can be learned as a sequence of products.

Regarding language theory, Noam Chomsky has criticized the narrow view of language and language learning espoused by Skinner (Savignon, 1987). Chomsky argued that structural linguistic theory was not sufficient to explain the most important feature of language: the creativity and uniqueness of individual sentences. His view of language and language learning shifted the focus of American language studies from structural features to deep semantic

structures. Thus, this paradigm shift paved the way for the development of more communicative approaches to second language learning (Savignon, 1987).

Based on views on the traditional approach to language teaching, Hymes (1971), in response to this change in language technique, proposed the term communicative competence to refer to the use of language in a social framework. Communication is a negotiation of meaning between speaker and listener and between author and reader. Students learned to apply grammatical sentence patterns using the audiolingual approach (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). According to the approach, the best way to learn target language sentence patterns is through conditioning, which involves shaping and reinforcing learners' responses to stimuli. In audio language activities, students are exposed to a series of dialogues that they have to listen to, repeat and remember, as well as punch patterns (Brown, 2001). The dialogues give students structure and understanding to apply patterns in different situations. Typically, the dialogues reflect socio-cultural conditions in a target language, such as greetings, exchanges of views, likes and dislikes, and basic safe topics (weather, hobbies, etc.) that help students remember which expression is appropriate in each situation. Concentrate on accurate pronunciation, intonation, emphasis and use of rhythm by repeating and remembering all or specific parts of the dialogue.

Brown (2001), argued that, audio-linguistic technique is based on linguistic and psychological theories. To explain this further, Larsen-Freeman (2000, pp. 47-50) provides detailed illustrations of some common techniques associated with the audiolingual method: memorization of dialogue; back build-up (expansion exercise); repetition exercise; chain drill; single slot replacement drill; replacement drill bit with multiple slots; transformation exercise; questions and answers exercise; minimal pair analysis; Complete dialogue and grammar games.

The view of this current study is that, despite their shortcomings, teachers in the Wa Municipality still rely on these approaches to language teaching. Discussion of these traditional approaches has shown that they do not improve learners' language skills and instead focus on memorizing the rules and structures of the target language, with little or no emphasis on the use of language in contextual situations. It does not improve learners' language skills.

1.2.1.2 Phase 2: Classical communicative language education (1970s - 1990s)

In the 1970s, a reaction to traditional language teaching approaches began and soon spread around the world as older methods such as Audiolingualism and Situational Language Teaching fell out of fashion (Richards, 2006). The centrality of grammar in language teaching and learning was questioned, since it was argued that language ability involved much more than grammatical competence. While grammatical competence was needed to produce grammatically correct sentences, attention shifted to the knowledge and skills needed to use grammar and other aspects of language appropriately for different communicative purposes such as making requests, giving advice, making suggestions, describing wishes and needs, and so on (Richards 2006; Elizabeth & Obando, 2023). What was needed in order to use language communicatively was communicative

competence. Rather than simply specifying the grammar and vocabulary that students should master, it has been argued that a program should identify the following aspects of language use in order to develop students' communicative competence:

1. Consider the student's goals to learn the target language as fully as possible; for example, using English for business, hospitality or travelling.
2. An idea of where they want to use the target language, like in the office, on a plane, or in a shop.
3. The required grammatical information
4. The vocabulary or lexical content required (Van Ek & Alexander 1980).

1.2.1.3 Phase 3: Current teaching of communicative languages (late 1990s to present)

The communicative approach has become widespread since the 1990s. It describes a set of very general principles based on the notion of communicative competence as the goal of second and foreign language teaching and of a communicative curriculum and methodology as a means of achieving this goal (Richards, 2006). Bachman (1990) argues that current practices in communicative language teaching should be based on the following basic assumptions or variations thereof:

1. Effective communication comes from students dealing with relevant, useful, interesting, and engaging content.
2. Communication is a holistic process that often requires the use of multiple language skills or modalities.
3. Language learning is facilitated both by activities involving inductive learning or by discovering the rules underlying the use and organization of language, and by activities involving linguistic analysis and reflection.
4. Language learning is a gradual process that involves creative use of language and trial and error.

While mistakes are a normal product of learning, the ultimate goal of learning is to be able to use the new language accurately and fluently. The teacher's role in the language classroom is that of a facilitator, making a classroom environment conducive to language learning and providing opportunities for students to use and practice the language and to reflect on language use and language learning. Adopting CLT as an alternative to traditional approaches to language teaching and learning has yielded some good results. This is because studies have shown that students' communication skills have improved with the advent of CLT. Chang (2014) found for example, that student involvement in CLT instruction and activities has a positive effect on students' learning motivation. This is because when students participate in self-directed classroom

activities, they become more motivated to use the target language without fear of making mistakes, which are an inevitable part of the language acquisition process (Brown, 2000). CLT enables students to negotiate meaning through communicative activities, resulting in proficiency in the target language.

Based on this, the researchers suggested that teachers engage students multiple times in each communication activity to give students the opportunity to practice their English, encourage them to be independent learners, and provide a stimulating environment in the classroom. They also suggested that teachers provide students with regular constructive feedback and error correction about their performance during these activities to further motivate them. They also suggested that teachers provide students with equal opportunities to participate and interact in the classroom to achieve efficient results (Chang, 2014). For example, as a communication activity, 'Hot Seat' offer students the opportunity to communicate in authentic situations using the English language to practice grammar structures or targeted vocabulary and to get to know each other. Wajid et al. , (2017) examined students' perspectives on the influence of CLT on their attitudes towards English language learning in the classroom to confirm the effectiveness of CLT on language enrichment. The study results revealed that students at King Abdul-Aziz University (KAU) had conformist attitudes about improving their speaking skills on a more personal level. Similarly, the results of a case study conducted by Incecay and Incecay (2009) to determine Turkish students' perceptions of the effectiveness of communicative and non-communicative activities in their lessons revealed that students benefited from CLT when the activities communicative and non-communicative were combined in the English classrooms. In other words, the combination of CLT with traditional teaching practices appeared to benefit students. This is because most of the students were able to use the language effectively while participating in the CLT activities.

Therefore, language researchers and practitioners consider communicative competence education to be the most effective teaching method (Berns, 1990). Thompson (1992) agrees with the argument, stating that CLT is primarily designed to promote meaningful communication both inside and outside the classroom. Assignments in this technique are real activities that lead to a real life situation. The "communicative approach is a well thought out and essential approach to language teaching and learning because it places a strong emphasis on communication" (Brown, 1994, p.71). This enhances students' communication skills as they can use language in context through negotiation of meaning.

With the above discussion, CLT is the best way to fill the gap left by previous approaches to language teaching, as most focus on the accumulation of grammar knowledge at the expense of actual communication ability, which is a multifaceted approach. Consequently, CLT is student-centred in the teaching and learning process. Based on the above argument, the present study attempts to examine the processes teachers go through when using CLT in ESL classrooms in SHS in Wa Municipality.

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1.3 Communicative Activities to Teach English

Richards (2006) proposed two methods to achieve the objectives of communicative language teaching. These process-based methodologies include content-based instruction (CBI) and task-based instruction (TBI). CBI is a methodology that promotes language learning through the use of content. It can also connect and develop different language skills, as shown by Toro et al. (2019). TBI uses pedagogical and practice-oriented assignments to provide students with opportunities to engage in meaningful tasks. The first is a task that requires interaction between students, but the task itself does not take place in the real world, while the second is a task designed based on real-world materials, such as listening tasks, problem solving, sharing personal experiences, and comparisons, including real-life situations. As Richards and Rodgers (2014) recognized, there is more information about communication language teaching than learning theory. For this reason, they believe that it is necessary to discuss three factors of learning theory that can be distinguished from some communication education practices. The first element is the communication principle that relates to the activities focused on the use of real communication. The second is the task principle, which focuses on using language to accomplish meaningful tasks. Finally, the third principle is the semantic principle, according to which the language used must make sense to the learner. There are a variety of activities aimed at developing students' communication skills using communicative processes such as information exchange, i.e. negotiation and interaction. Also, games, role plays, simulations and task-based communicative activities should be used to support instruction using communicative approaches to language teaching (Richards&Rodgers, 2014). Colker (2007) also states that students learn best by using their senses to see, hear, touch, move, explore, smell and even taste things. He believes that students learn better when they are directly exposed to the material. In addition, Abe (2013) argues that group activities and individual development, discussions and presentations are useful in classrooms where CLT is used. Moreover, the author states that the constant use of English among students improves their speaking, although it may result stressful for them. For this reason, it is necessary to find effective ways to adapt English teaching using group work activities.

1.4 Teacher Perceptions of CLT

Teachers' perceptions, beliefs and metacognitive knowledge have been identified as critical factors in the learning process and overall classroom success (Coskun & Izzet, 2011). Teacher perception plays an important role in the success or failure of various theoretical and practical L2 teaching and learning topics, including CLT

1.4.1 Empirical studies

Nitish (2012) examined teachers' perceptions of CLT in Bangladesh and found that they theoretically supported the approach but were reluctant to use it in the classroom. They prefer the grammatical translation method because they know it well. Most teachers, especially in secondary schools in Bangladesh, have only a rudimentary understanding of Communicative

Language Teaching (CLT) and many misconceptions about how to use it in language teaching. CLT is generally considered by teachers to be a foreign approach to language teaching and is therefore not suitable for teaching in Bangladesh. This can lead to negative attitudes towards the use of CLT in teaching ESL. Although Australian Japanese teachers find CLT used in their classrooms, Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) found that their practices are not based on CLT in the way commonly presented in the literature. Rather, they develop CLT based on their personal perspectives and experiences. Seemingly lacking knowledge on the use of CLT, they prefer to implement grammatical translation elements instead of CLT. This is because the activities used in class focused more on grammatical translation than on CLT. Sato and Kleinsasser suggested that teachers should focus more on memorization and correct pronunciation to gain fluency.

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Similarly, Gamal and Debra, (2001) observe cultural tradition as another issue affecting teachers' attitudes towards CLT application in Egypt. According to Egyptian cultural tradition, students avoid speaking their minds for fear of losing face or offending others. Consequently, group work, pair work and discussion become less fruitful due to students' negative attitude towards these activities. Other than that, as stated by Gamal and Debra, teachers are seen as knowledge holders and they might consider that if they play games with students or ask students to role-play in class, they might not be seen as doing their job. This finding is consistent with Burnaby and Sun's (1989) findings that Chinese teachers felt like they were not teaching when using CLT activities and expected students to complain against them.

Defeng (1998) conducted a study at a Canadian university with 18 South Korean high school English teachers to identify their perceived difficulties in adopting CLT. All participants completed a written questionnaire and ten were also interviewed. According to the results of the study, teachers reported having difficulty implementing the CLT approach in their classrooms. Korean teachers reported four types of difficulties: "those caused by the teacher, the students, the education system and the CLT itself" (Li, 1998). This means that several factors can lead to a teacher's negative or positive attitude towards the use of CLT in the classroom.

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According to Sato and Kleinsasser (1999), teachers who do not fully understand CLT find it difficult to develop practices appropriate to the learning context and therefore often revert to traditional teaching. Chen (2015) conducted a study to research about the effects of practicing CLT in a mixed English conversation class. The purpose was to examine if L1 is necessary in CLT classrooms and if its use help learners to improve their learning attitudes through the following questions: What are the effects of implementing CLT in a mixed English conversion class? Should L1 be used in CLT classroom? Are students improving their learning attitudes and becoming active learners after the teaching methods were modified?

The results showed that learners were comfortable with the incorporations of CLT in the class; it was also evidenced that the use of the mother tongue could reduce learners' anxiety when they are not confident in the CLT classroom. In fact, after the modification of teaching methods that

involved the use of L1, visual aids like pictures, short videos, and role playing in the CLT classroom, students showed more positive learning attitudes and became active learners.

Bruner, et al. , (2015) carried out a study to detect how CLT contributed to foster communicative competence in two universities in Thailand. This study has the purpose of finding possible solutions to the classroom practices for improving the oral English proficiency of the majority of university low proficiency learners in Thailand. Teachers' experience, observations, and the findings from a questionnaire survey were the instruments used to detect the English proficiency level of students taking English communication courses at two universities in Thailand during a scholar year per university. Classes using CLT were based on the use of meaningful communicative contexts encouraging students to use English to express their ideas in authentic and real world communication, feedback was very important to let students improve their communicative skills, and errors were tolerated just in case they did not interfere the meaning of the real message.

In both universities, material to promote communication through CLT was used, collaborative activities were emphasized, and both groups did their best, sometimes, it turned to be difficult to group up students because of the different English level they had, being one possible solution to give students a placement test so later they could be grouped homogeneously. Big groups represented also another problem because it was challenging for the teacher to monitor their students' performance in communicative activities.

Ellis (1994), quoted in Karim (2004, p. 26), conducted a study in Vietnam to determine the adequacy of the communication strategy. Teachers' commitment to tradition was one of the biggest challenges in implementing a communication strategy in Vietnam. Two historical realities supported this: the Vietnamese cultural version of questioning written words and the examination system's emphasis on grammatical translation. According to the study, teachers in Vietnam are ignoring the use of CLT in the classroom as they continue to teach students using traditional methods such as grammar translation and audio speaking. As a result, teachers were ambivalent about CLT. This may be due to teachers' lack of knowledge of the CLT approach or other factors. This supports the argument that the environment in which students experience language is very important, as it can influence all aspects of the learning process, from motivation to the teaching methods used by teachers (Aleixo, 2003).

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Karim's (2004) study examined the views of university-level EFL teachers in Bangladesh on CLT. According to the survey, the majority of teachers felt positive about the basic concepts of CLT. She also noted that teachers were aware of the characteristics of CLT and that their perception of CLT was consistent with their CLT practice. The teachers engaged the students in various activities to help them use the language to meet their daily needs.

1.5 Factors preventing teachers from using CLT

Numerous factors influence the success of an educational programme; however, many experts believe that teachers are at the heart of good curriculum implementation (Borg, 2009; Fullan, 2007). Teachers are at the heart of curriculum implementation. Alwan (2006) supports the argument by stating that teachers' interpretations, perceptions and beliefs influence decision-making about instructional techniques. Because they use the curriculum in the classroom, teachers are seen as key players in implementing and transforming the curriculum.

Larsen-Freeman (2000) posits that CLT uses strategies to develop communication skills in context. However, CLT theories and practices have encountered a number of challenges in EFL/ESL contexts (Takanashi, 2004). These factors appear to hinder the implementation of CLT in the ESL classroom;

1.5.1 Pedagogical knowledge of teachers

According to Fullan (2007), an unclear curriculum does not lead to the desired results. Fullan (2007) also states that a vague resume will not achieve the desired results. According to Fullan (2007), teachers cannot implement curriculum components in their classrooms without a clear curriculum focus. This explains why teachers should be involved in curriculum planning and implementation. This makes it possible to demonstrate some knowledge in classroom practice, but it is difficult to clearly explain the details that distinguish CLT from grammar translation method.

Curriculum complexity is defined in the innovation literature as the extent to which teachers are faced with using new materials, acquiring new skills, and are expected to change their previous beliefs about teaching and learning (Fullan, 2007). GMT classroom features are still used by teachers, especially in rural areas. Most teachers failed to demonstrate CLT classroom activities (Brown, 2001). First, new programs or strategies compete with old ideas about language teaching and learning, which are often the result of previous teaching and learning experiences, biases and beliefs (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). On the other hand, teachers' pedagogical attitudes and perceptions influence classroom behavior, influence what students learn, and, although often held unconsciously, are powerful driving forces that determine teachers' teaching styles (Karavas 1996).

In these situations, language teachers feel that they are not part of the language teaching process. This may prevent teachers from introducing CLT into their classrooms. The ideas and practices of CLT seem incompatible with its application. Chowdhury and Ha (2008) wondered if CLT was very cultural and educational in Bangladesh, a very different eastern culture. This statement can be applied in Ghana, which most language teachers believe that certain approaches to linguistic education are not suitable for teaching in the classroom. Many researchers have conducted studies on CLT in classrooms, and teachers have reported that they face many challenges in implementing CLT. For example, Shiba's (2011) study of Libyan secondary schools found,

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through classroom observations and interviews with teachers, that issues such as lack of adequate training hindered the implementation of CLT. Additionally, Lee's (2001) study in Korea concluded that teachers had difficulties with speaking activities due to their lack of knowledge of English structures. The qualifications of English teachers have always been considered an important issue in English education. According to Hamid (2010), there are low quality English teachers without pedagogical knowledge. In this case, it will be difficult for teachers to adopt the necessary language teaching methods such as CLT. To support this statement, Islam (2015) conducted a study to identify the factors that hinder the use of CLT by Egyptian teachers. This indicates that English teachers do not receive regular and effective training and that only some teachers in selected schools have received CLT training. There is a significant lack of government support or planning for English teacher education and training. Inadequate professional development is one of the barriers that prevent teachers from implementing CLT Li (1998) and forces them to rely on traditional methods (Brutt-Griffler & Samimi, 1999). This is a sad reality because when teaching, teachers are often expected to provide effective solutions to problems that arise in the classroom. This becomes especially important when linked to new education policies that require major changes in teaching materials.

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1.5.2 Class size

There is no universal agreement on the number of students that make up a large class. According to Ur (2005), the concept of large classes is relative and depends on the situation. Ur also said that some private language schools consider a class of 20 students large, others consider a class of 40-45 students large, and others consider a class of 100 or more students. Practitioners from different educational groups define large classes in different ways. As a result, teachers' acceptance of large classes may vary across educational contexts and education levels, even within the same country (Shamim et al., 2007). A class is considered large when it is difficult for the teacher to meet the needs of each individual student because of the large number of students in the class (Charleston, 1976).

Benbow et al. (2007), a class is considered large if the number of students/teachers exceeds 40. Such classrooms are particularly common in developing countries where classrooms have 100 or more students. Teachers around the world face a variety of challenges when teaching in overcrowded classrooms. According to Sharndama (2013), large classes are classrooms with more students than the recommended class size, learning materials, and physical facilities, which prevents teachers from achieving their goals and hinders student learning. Both teacher productivity and student learning suffer greatly in overcrowded classrooms (Sharndam 2013).

In large classes, teachers have to spend valuable class time managing student noise and disruptions rather than focusing on teaching and learning activities. Individual students are stuck in these overcrowded classrooms as teachers try to communicate with students with different socio-cultural and learning abilities using the same teaching methods because it is difficult to

provide individuality the needs of every student (Abioye, 2010). Students are highly motivated to learn a language, but lack of learning materials and crowded classrooms can create a poor learning environment. English teachers around the world, especially in developing countries, have to deal with large classes (Watson, 2006). This applies to secondary schools in Ghana, where most language classes have more than 50 students.

1.6 Theoretical framework

Constructivist theory of second language acquisition, based on Piaget's cognitive development theory and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, shapes the theoretical perspective of the current study. Based on the premise that knowledge is socially constructed, this study was designed from the socioconstructivist perspective of Guba and Lincoln (1994). The social constructivism of Guba and Lincoln is a good guide for this study for the following reasons:

First, Guba and Lincoln's research perspective is consistent with the social constructivist nature of language learning and teaching. For example, Vygotsky (1978) asserts that language is learned through social interaction. Similarly, the object of study, communicative language teaching (CLT), emphasizes that foreign languages should be taught through interactive social activities (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). Consequently, the social constructivist position of Guba and Lincoln is consistent with the nature of language learning and the CLT perspective on foreign language teaching.

Secondly, the methodological principles of social constructivism are consistent with the aim of the study. For example, according to social constructivism, people construct language based on their experiences, activities, and perceptions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). According to studies, teachers' implementation of CLT varies according to their teaching experiences and attitudes towards foreign language learning and teaching (Hiep, 2007; Liao & Zhao, 2012; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999). To understand the implementation of CLT, therefore, it is necessary to take into account the influence of teachers' experiences, activities and attitudes. Furthermore, from an epistemological point of view, real knowledge in the social sciences is the result of the interaction between researcher and participants (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011). According to Hatch (2002, p. 15), "researcher and respondent construct the subjective reality under study through mutual engagement".

Finally, the researcher examines social phenomena as they occur naturally from the socioconstructivist perspective (Creswell, 2007; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Hatch, 2002). In other words, the researcher does not modify the conditions or behaviors under study. This feature is appropriate for this study as it allows the researcher to learn about the processes teachers in Wa municipality are using to implement CLT in their language lessons. Language pedagogy has incorporated a wide range of teaching methods that emphasize the centrality and diversity of learners and their active participation in authentic and meaningful activities as individuals and

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groups (Kaufman, 2004). According to constructivist philosophies, people create their own meaning through experience. This means constructivism refers to how people construct or interpret reality based on their own experiences (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Jonassen, 1992). This is an indication that some prior knowledge of a language may be the basis for language acquisition. Constructivism also values experience. Education and training must therefore be realistic. In addition, classrooms should be designed and organized so that students can ask critical questions, discuss ideas and experiences, and connect with one another (Brooks & Brooks, 1999).

The father of social constructivism, Lev Vygotsky, believed that knowledge is built through dialogue and interaction with others (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). He proposed that knowledge is co-constructed in a social setting and that people use language as a tool to construct meaning during social interaction. The use of language as an interpsychological tool between individuals in an environment is central to the social constructivist view of the learning process. Successful learning must lead to an internal dialogue, which can in the future be used in various situations as an intrapsychological tool (Marsh & Ketterer, 2005; Vygotsky, 1978).

The current study is based on the constructivist theory of language teaching. The data from this study were analyzed under the assumption that the learner and the teacher jointly construct meaning and play an important role in the process of language acquisition. Although learner and teacher perform complementary functions, learner autonomy in language teaching and learning is highly desirable.

The teacher's perception of a learning approach is relevant to the process of acquisition and the resulting processes used to achieve desired outcomes (Mirel, 1998). Teaching conditions such as the teacher-learner relationship, the number of learners, the requirements of the curriculum and the quality of educational activities that allow the learner to interact with the language improve the processes of language acquisition (Jonassen et al., 1999). To summarize, in an active constructivist learning classroom, both teacher and learner play an important role in achieving the desired learning outcomes associated with effective teaching conditions.

1.7 Methodology

The researcher used the mixed method approach to allow him to collect data numerically, to ensure a high sense of reliability of the collected data, and also to provide in-depth and broader insights into the practices used by teachers to implement CLT in their language classrooms to use. The approach also allows the researcher to gain insights into teachers' perceptions of CLT use and the factors that discourage teachers from using CLT in their language lessons. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) argue that the blended method approach allows for a greater degree of insight than using a single approach for a study. To study also used Convergent parallel design. Data collection instruments employed in this study include questionnaires, observations and interviews to get a true picture of how CLT is being used in ESL classrooms in Wa Municipality.

The questionnaire was analyzed descriptively using the SPSS on a five-point Likert scale. This allowed the researcher to understand teachers' knowledge of CLT, teachers' perceptions of CLT, and factors discouraging teachers from implementing CLT in their language lessons. Since each statement in the questionnaire required a response on the Likert scale, the percentage of respondents who gave each response was calculated and discussed. Likewise, the data collected from the interviews and observations of the teachers were analyzed thematically.

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The population for this study were made of ESL teachers at SHS in Wa Municipality. There are about ten (13) SHS in Wa Municipality. Each SHS has approximately ten (10) ESL teachers. The total study population includes approximately one hundred and thirty (130) ESL teachers. The researcher used a simple random sampling technique to select a subset of teachers based on their gender. Five (5) ESL teachers have been selected from each school. Thus, the sample population for the study consisted of fifty (50) ESL teachers. The researcher used this technique because it ensures that the sample is not biased, giving all teachers an equal chance of being selected. Teachers were selected based on their willingness to participate in the study. Schools were assigned codes from S1 to S10 for confidentiality reasons.

1. 8Results And Discussions

The outcomes of results obtained from ESL teachers through questionnaires, interviews and observations were discussed. The result from each data collection tool was explained separately to address the research objectives. In total, answers to two research objectives were discussed, which include teachers' perceptions of CLT, and the factors that prevent teachers from using CLT. Fifty (50) questionnaire was administered to fifty teachers of ten secondary schools in the Wa Municipality. In the same way, five (5) teachers in English language were also interviewed using an interview guide about the practices that teachers in ESL classroom use to implement CLT and its application in the ESL classroom. The fifty questionnaires were all retrieved which achieved a return rate of one hundred percent. According to Saunders (2009), a return rate of fifty percent is adequate; sixty percent is good and seventy percent and above is described as very good. That is why it can be said that the return rate for this study is very good and has therefore produced the desired result for analysis. The results of the questionnaire were analyzed with the help of SPSS while the interview was thematically analyzed after being transcribed. The results of the observation session were recorded using a checklist. The first part discussed the findings of research objective 1. This research question was designed to evaluate ESL teachers' perceptions of CLT, particularly in the municipality of Wa. Finally, the second research objective evaluated the factors that prevented ESL teachers from implementing or using CLT in their language lessons.

1. 8.1. Perceptions of ESL teachers on the use of CLT

A Likert scale analysis was conducted to discover teachers' perceptions of CLT use in the ESL classroom. The research question has divergent perceptions from the literature to examine how these perceptions affect CLT use. This is illustrated in table 1.

Table 1. ESL teachers' perceptions towards CLT

Questionnaire item	Strongly Agreed Frequency (%)	Agreed Frequency (%)	Strongly Disagreed Frequency (%)	Disagreed Frequency (%)	Undecided Frequency (%)	Mean
1.Language curriculum does not support CLT	26 (52.0)	24 (48.0)	00 (00.0)	00 (00.0)	00 (00.0)	4.52
2.Address errors regularly	26 (52.0)	22 (44.0)	02 (4.0)	0 (00.0)	00 (0.0)	4.48
3.By mastering the rules of grammar, Students become fully capable of communicating in the target language	25 (50.0)	25 (50.0)	00 (00.0)	00 (0.0)	00 (0.0)	4.5
4.CLT would not help learners to pass their examinations	27 (54.0)	23 (46.0)	00 (00.0)	00 (00.0)	00 (00.0)	4.54
5. Language performance should be judged on grammatical correctness	27 (54.0)	23 (46.0)	00 (0.0)	00 (00.0)	0 (0.0)	4.54

1. 8.1.1 Language curriculum does not support the use of CLT

Table 1 shows that one perception that influences ESL teachers' use of CLT is the idea that our language curriculum does not support the use of CLT. Table 1 point 1 shows that 52% of respondents strongly agree with the statement, while 48% of respondents agree with the statement. This has the average value of 4.52. This perception of teachers influenced their decision not to involve their students in CLT-related practices.

The data on point 1 in Table 1 is in line with the argument of Zheng (2014) who claims that the choice of teaching methodologies and strategies is usually influenced either by teachers' ideas based on their own experience or by contextual factors such as curriculum, classroom setting, student interest. The data show that teachers' understanding of language curriculum requirements influences the choice of a pedagogical approach in language teaching. Sometimes societal expectations do not match curriculum goals. When this happens, teachers are torn between teaching to meet the needs of society or the school curriculum. This lack of concentration influences the choice of a teaching strategy. However, the perception that "our language curriculum does not support the use of CLT" conflicts with the proposition in the English language curriculum for SHS 1-3 (2010). The program introduced the use of CLT in our language classrooms and also describes the various hands-on activities and assessment procedures for CLT lessons. This perception of the respondents therefore implies that they are not familiar with the language programme. This lack of understanding of curriculum direction will lead teachers to use inappropriate strategies that they feel are appropriate for teaching (Larsen-Freeman 2001). Similarly, during the interview session, respondents indicated that the English-language program obliges them not to involve students in practical activities. For example, Respondent 5 indicates that;

"The curriculum is not explicit or clear enough

on how students should be assessed using CLT activities.

Sometimes if you want to dwell on the CLT oriented

activities in your class, you will not meet what others are teaching.

This will make your students not to pass their examination".

The response to the above interview confirms the findings in Table 1 point 1. It is clear that respondents were influenced by the perceived discrepancy between what the curriculum represents and the exam requirements. This is supported by Green (2013) statement that the mismatch between what the curriculum aims to develop and what the examination system assesses creates real confusion among teachers and limits their choices of teaching methods. This therefore requires proper training of language teachers on the logic of the language teaching curriculum.

1. 8.1.2 Addressed errors on a regular basis

Another perception of respondents is the location of errors in the CLT approach. Table 1, point 2, shows that 52% of respondents strongly agree that teaching and learning errors should be dealt with frequently, while 44% of respondents agree that errors should be dealt with frequently. These two together give an average of 4.48. It can be concluded that all respondents agreed that errors should be dealt with in the ongoing teaching and learning process. Contrary to what respondents said, CLT is easy to avoid. According to (Littlewood, 2011), CLT should not focus on error correction because errors are inevitable in the language acquisition process. Therefore, learning failures should be considered as progress in learning the target language. Therefore, the emphasis in a CLT class should not be on learning errors.

The responses in Table1, point 2, imply that learners have not had the freedom to manipulate and interact with language elements in others in order to internalize structure. Constantly interrupting learners to correct mistakes demoralizes them because they often remember their mistakes as they speak. This discourages them from speaking in the target language. This is at odds with the core principles of the CLT regarding the handling of errors in language teaching. Learners are expected to engage in interactive activities regardless of their proficiency level in the target language. Because language proficiency is a process, learners will eventually overcome their deficits. This is supported by Can (2009, p. 68) that “mistakes are seen as an integral part of the language learning process and learners should engage in a range of 'try and error' activities to avoid them to internalize the L2 structures”. Eventually, as the acquisition process progresses, they will overcome their mistakes. The ESL teacher should not rush to correct mistakes because in the learning process the learner will overcome these mistakes. It is important that the teacher involves the learner in self-correction activities. The frequent correction of errors by teachers at each point of error contradicts the basic tenets of the relationship between errors and CLT in a constructivist classroom. The answer to table1 Item 2 of the questionnaire was confirmed by the respondents during the interview session. For example, Respondent 5 said the following during the interview:

“I correct students’ error immediately because if I

don’t do that, they will continue to commit those errors

and these errors could become part of them in future”.

This does not encourage active student learning and thus places the teacher at the center of the learning process rather than the learner (Can, 2009). Teachers therefore use teacher-centered pedagogy in this approach instead of CLT, which is a learner-centered approach.

1.8.1.3 By mastering the rules of grammar, students become fully capable of communicating in the target language

From the data in Table1, it can be seen that 25 of the respondents, or 50%, strongly agreed with item 3 of the questionnaire. Another 50% of respondents agreed with the statement. Cumulatively, the response is 100% with an average of 4.5. This indicates that all respondents agreed with the statement. This perception of CLT explains why teachers focused their teaching on grammar. This view led respondents to isolate grammar lessons from contextual lessons. The emphasis on grammar meant that students had to memorize grammatical rules in order to communicate. This deprives students of other important communicative skills such as sociolinguistics and strategic skills (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). As a result, students will not become proficient speakers because the emphasis in teaching grammar is on accuracy, not fluency. To become proficient in a language, you need to acquire both accuracy and fluency. Larsen-Freeman (2000) notes that CLT does not mean zero grammar. You mentioned that practicing dialogues and engaging in conversations will ensure students learn proper grammatical structures and develop accuracy and fluency in using the language. Dialogue practice serves as a stepping stone to learning new vocabulary and sentence structure (Paul, 2009). Language teachers therefore need to contextualize grammar teaching so that students can acquire communicative competence. The isolated teaching of grammar indicates that teachers are still using the traditional approach to grammatical translation.

1. 8.1.4 CLT Does not help learners pass exams

According to the data in Table1, Item 4 shows that 54% of respondents strongly agreed that CLT will not help learners pass their exams. Another 46% of respondents agreed that engaging learners in CLT activities does not help them pass their exams. This has an average score of 4.54, which means that all respondents agreed with the statement. It is clear from this that the interviewees strive to attend language courses for exam purposes. Passing the exams thus becomes the basis for education. Language teachers are aware of the importance of CLT for the development of students' level of language proficiency, but factors such as exam pass requirements do not allow them to use interactive teaching strategies such as CLT (Morgan, 2016). This interference from teaching standardized tests undermines teachers' creativity, takes up most of the class time, and causes anxiety in teachers because their focus is on how their students pass an upcoming exam. This denies teachers the ability to use CLT because their goal is for students to pass exams, not for them to communicate effectively.

Similarly, the response to the interview revealed that teachers were concerned about the performance of their students in external examinations and the consequences of performance. They see their students' poor performance in such exams as a source of shame and guilt. This pushes teachers to use inappropriate approaches to teaching the English language at SHS. For example, respondent 3 suggested that;

"CLT involves a lot of activities which take away instructional time. Most of the activities in CLT do not come in the final examination. Even some of activities in the syllabus book are not examinable"

This response implies that teachers do not use CLT because they feel that CLT would not help their students to pass examinations and consequently would not implement it in their classrooms.

1.8.1.5 Grammar proficiency is the primary criterion by which linguistic performance should be judged

The data in Table 1 point 5 shows that 27 of the respondents, thus 54%, strongly agreed that grammar proficiency should be used to evaluate a student's linguistic performance. The data also shows that 23 of the respondents, or 46% of the respondents, agreed with the statement in point 5 of table 1. This has an overall average value of 4.54, indicating that all respondents agreed with the statement. It is therefore clear that this perception has led teachers to place great emphasis on teaching grammar and therefore to resort to grammar translation. In contrast, CLT goes beyond just teaching repetitive grammar to encompass overall language performance. The rationale of CLT is to develop students' ability to use the language fluently. This is consistent with Lightbrown and Spada (2013) that CLT is an instructional approach that prioritizes the transmission of meaning through contextual activities over the abstract transmission of grammatical rules. CLT should therefore take precedence in a language class. In this way, students develop grammatical, strategic and sociolinguistic skills in the target language. Similarly, during the interview session, the respondents confirmed the data in Table 1, point 5. They agreed that grammar should be considered and given great importance in language teaching, since the learner will use grammar to communicate. For example, Respondent 1 indicated the following;

"I always teach my students grammar because

without grammar their spoken English will be bad. Grammar

will help them to speak good English"

This response goes to buttress their perception that grammatical competence should be the basis for judging language performance. It is true to maintain that teachers prioritize the teaching for grammatical competence over any other language skill. Grammar, though is a significant component of language, teaching it in isolation will not help students to develop the appropriate language ability. Teachers should therefore teach grammar in context.

1.9 Factors that deter teachers from the use CLT

This research question is made up of four themes. These include educational system related factors, teacher related factors, students related factors, and CLT related factors. Respondents

were expected to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on each of the factors provided using a Likert scale of 1-5.

Table 2 Factors Related to Educational System

Questionnaire item	Strongly Agreed Frequency (%)	Agreed Frequency (%)	Strongly Disagreed Frequency (%)	Disagreed Frequency (%)	Undecided Frequency (%)	Mean
1. Teachers lack training on CLT	28 (56.0)	18 (36.0)	04 (08.0)	00 (00.0)	00 (00.0)	4.48
2. Large classes for the effective use of CLT	29 (58.0)	17 (34.0)	00 (00.0)	05 (10.0)	00 (00.0)	4.46
3. The existing examination system in Ghana	24 (48.0)	25 (50.0)	01 (02.0)	00 (00.0)	00 (00.0)	4.46
4. Exam- oriented educational system in Ghana	32 (64.0)	18 (36.0)	00 (00.0)	00 (00.0)	00 (00.0)	4.64

1. 9.1 Teachers lack training on CLT

Table 2 point 1 shows that 28 of the respondents, representing 56% of the respondents, strongly agreed that a lack of CLT training has prevented them from using the approach in their classrooms, while 18 of the respondents representing the 36% of respondents agreed with the statement. This has a cumulative response rate of 92%. On the other hand, 4 of the respondents, representing 8%, strongly disagree with the statement. The average value for this statement is 4.48. This indicates that the vast majority agreed that lack of knowledge or training in the use of CLT has prevented teachers from engaging their students in CLT practices. Recognizing the relevance of CLT in language teaching, teachers have been hampered in its implementation due to limited training. The teacher reaction was an indication that most teachers still do not understand the basic principles and teachings of CLT, since they receive almost no ongoing training in teaching methods. This is consistent with (Shiba, 2011) that factors such as a lack of proper training hinder the implementation of the CLT approach in most ESL classrooms.

This means that the teacher's knowledge of a particular approach to language teaching influences its implementation in the classroom. It is clear from the responses that teachers are unaware of the principles of CLT. Therefore, they resort to traditional approaches to language teaching. Similarly, during the interview, the teachers replied that they had never been trained in the use of CLTs. All five respondents confirmed that they did not understand the use of CLT. It was therefore difficult for them to apply the approach in their classes. For example, Respondent 5 said:

"I haven't had any training in CLT and its use in teaching ESL since I graduated from college about eight years ago."

This is consistent with (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999) who argued that insufficient continuing education is one of the barriers to implementing CLT, forcing them to rely on traditional methods such as grammatical translation. This explains why language teachers need to be continually trained in teaching methods to keep them up to date with the current needs of language teaching in the ESL classroom.

1.9.2. Large class size

From point 2 in Table 2, it can be seen that 29 of the respondents, or 58%, strongly agreed that a large class size discouraged them from using CLT. 17 of the respondents with a share of 34% agreed with the statement. This corresponds to an overall percentage of 92. Only 10% of respondents disagreed with the statement. This has an average score of 4.46, meaning that a majority of respondents agreed with the statement.

Large classes do not provide favorable conditions for teaching and learning. Indeed, activities that require the practical participation of the learner cannot be carried out. A classroom should provide an appropriate learning environment that takes into account the interests of learners. This can be complicated by the overcrowded classes that teachers have to teach. In some classrooms we still have a teacher-student ratio of 1:65, compared to the official teacher-student ratio of 1:30. This situation makes it difficult for teachers to use a student-centered approach like CLT. This is consistent with (Sharndama, 2013) who argues that a large class prevents the teacher from working as intended and hinders student learning.

In large classes, the teacher must spend valuable lesson time managing student noise and disturbance rather than focusing on teaching and learning activities. Individual students are buried in such overcrowded classrooms. This condition does not guarantee effective use of CLT as teachers struggle to apply learner-centered practices to engage learners in the classroom.

1.9.3 Examination system in Ghana

The data in Table 2 point 3 indicates that 24 of the respondents, representing 48% of the total number of respondents, strongly agreed that the existing exam system prevents them from using the CLT, while 25 of the respondents, representing 50%, agreed with the statement. Overall, this represents 98% of respondents. However, only 2% of respondents strongly disagreed with this statement. This statement has an average value of 4.46. This indicates that an overwhelming majority of respondents agreed that the existing assessment system is a barrier to using CLT in the classroom. The focus on test scores by policy makers and parents discourages teachers from using innovative methods such as CLT that build learners' language skills. This is because at the end of each academic year, the teacher's performance is judged by the students' pass rate on internal and external exams. Therefore, the fundamental goal of most teachers is to convey curriculum content that they feel is testable, rather than what learners will use the language for. This causes teachers to put themselves to the test. This is consistent with (Crooks, 1998) who asserts that the effects of a high-stakes test are so influential that the test score is considered determinative of the test-taker's life chances.

The results of high-stakes tests such as public examinations, large-scale standardized tests, or the external examinations reach far beyond the classroom and are used for policy purposes: assessing educational equity; providing evidence on school and effectiveness; allocating compensatory funds to school and districts; evaluating effectiveness; accrediting school; classifying students for remediation and certifying successful completion of high school (Airasian et al.,1983). These situations compel most language teachers to abandon interactive teaching methods such as CLT for approaches they think would make students to pass examinations because final examination results are used to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the teacher.

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Similarly, during the interview session, the respondents indicated that CLT prescribes practices that students will not be tested on. Engaging learners in CLT activities means that the learners will not pass their examinations. For instance, respondent 3 indicated that:

*"If you engage students in these CLT activities, your students
will fail and the school management will blame you for that.*

So, I am forced to teach the topics WAEC normally sets questions on".

This statement is a confirmation of the responses on table 2 item 3 which indicates that the existing examination system deterred teachers from using CLT.

1.9.4 Academic performance is based on passing the exam in Ghana

Table 2 statement 4 shows that 36 teachers (64%) strongly agreed with the statement, while 18 respondents (36%) agreed with the statement. This has overwhelming approval. The average

value is 4.64. This is an indication that all respondents agreed that academic performance is based on passing exams in Ghana. Therefore, this discourages teachers from using CLT in their language lessons. The tendency to measure one's academic performance by success in exams and not by how well the language can be used in different contexts is very high in Ghana. This idea of society causes teachers to use strategies they deem appropriate to pass exams. For this reason, most teachers will prefer to use strategies they believe will help students pass exams, rather than taking into account the student's overall development in language skills. This is consistent with (Morgan, 2016) the assertion that teachers who have underperforming students and need to raise their students' standards use methods that do not support the use of CLT, such as memorization and practice.

This interference from standardized test teaching undermines teachers' creativity, eats up most of the class time, and causes anxiety in teachers. This prevents teachers from implementing CLT because their goal is for students to pass exams, not for them to communicate effectively. For these teachers, the ultimate goal of language teaching is for students to pass exams, because that is the only way to assess their work. This is confirmed (Khaniya, 2005, p. 56), who points out that “washback is an inherent attribute of the exam that can influence teaching and learning methods”.

Similarly, in interviews, respondents indicated that they could not use the CLT because it was time-consuming and the activities involved did not reflect the type of questions that students had to answer on their final exams. For example, Respondent 2 said:

*“CLT seems time-consuming and activities
there are no exams there. If I want to use CLT it means
that my students will not cover many topics in advance for
their final exams. I think CLT is best for elementary school”.*

The above statement indicates that teachers are forced to use strategies other than CLT in their classrooms to meet exam requirements, which they believe are the only way to measure learning outcomes.

1.10 Conclusion

In conclusion, the study was done to unravel the use of CLT by SHS teachers in Wa Municipality based on the teachers' perception and the factors that hindered the effective use of CLT in the teaching of English Language. Research has shown that there is a gap between what is proposed in the curriculum and what is actually practiced in language teaching. This was due

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to several factors. The results showed that teachers' perceptions influenced their choice of teaching methods.

The results also showed that the examination-based education system, large class sizes, low student achievement and over-reliance on traditional approaches hindered the effective implementation of CLT in SHS. From the results, it can be concluded that the effective and efficient use of CLT in language teaching and learning has not yet been fully implemented.

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