



## **TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND LEARNERS' RESPONSES IN COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING CLASSROOMS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY FOCUSED ON ODISHA AND EASTERN INDIA**

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### **Abstract**

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been widely advocated as an effective pedagogical approach for developing communicative competence in English language learners. In India, while CLT has been formally incorporated into curricula and policy documents, its classroom implementation varies considerably across regions. This empirical study investigates teachers' perceptions and learners' responses toward CLT practices in English classrooms in Odisha and other Eastern parts of India, namely West Bengal, Bihar, and Jharkhand. Using a descriptive-analytical survey design, data were collected from 30 English language teachers and 120 secondary and higher-secondary students through structured questionnaires based on a five-point Likert scale. Key parameters examined include classroom interaction, learner participation, speaking skill development, confidence building, and assessment practices. Quantitative analysis using mean scores, tables, and graphical comparison reveals that both teachers and learners hold positive attitudes toward CLT, particularly in relation to communicative activities and oral proficiency. However, challenges related to assessment alignment, large class size, and infrastructural constraints persist. The study underscores the need for region-sensitive teacher training and assessment reforms to ensure effective CLT implementation in Eastern India.

### **Keyword:**

*Communicative Language Teaching, Teacher Perception, Learner Response, Odisha, Eastern India, English Language Teaching.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

English occupies a crucial position in the Indian education system as a language of academic advancement, employment, and global communication. In multilingual contexts such as Odisha and other Eastern Indian states, English is predominantly learned as a second or third language, often with limited exposure beyond the classroom. Consequently, the pedagogical approach adopted by teachers plays a decisive role in shaping learners' language competence.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emerged as a response to traditional form-focused methods that emphasized grammar memorization and translation at the expense of meaningful communication. CLT prioritizes communicative competence, learner interaction, fluency, and contextualized language use. In India, national curriculum frameworks and



state education boards have increasingly recommended CLT-oriented pedagogy. However, the translation of policy into practice remains uneven, especially in non-metropolitan regions.

Eastern India presents a distinctive educational context characterized by socio-economic diversity, multilingual classrooms, examination-oriented teaching traditions, and infrastructural limitations. Teachers in this region often navigate large classes, limited teaching aids, and curriculum pressures, which can influence their perceptions and classroom practices related to CLT. Similarly, learners' responses to communicative activities are shaped by linguistic background, confidence levels, and prior exposure to English.

Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to empirically examine teachers' perceptions and learners' responses to CLT classrooms in Odisha and other Eastern states, offering data-driven insights into the effectiveness and challenges of CLT in this regional context.

## **2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING**

Communicative Language Teaching is grounded in the concept of communicative competence, which extends beyond grammatical accuracy to include sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. CLT classrooms emphasize learner-centered instruction, interaction, pair and group work, task-based learning, and authentic language use.

In CLT, the teacher assumes the role of facilitator rather than sole knowledge provider, while learners actively participate in meaning-making processes. Error correction is viewed as a developmental aspect of language learning rather than a failure. Assessment, ideally, is aligned with communicative outcomes, evaluating learners' ability to use language effectively in real-life situations.

While CLT has demonstrated success in many contexts, its effectiveness depends largely on teacher preparedness, institutional support, and contextual adaptability—factors that are particularly significant in Eastern India.

## **3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

A substantial body of research has examined the theoretical foundations and classroom practices of CLT worldwide. Richards (2006) highlights that CLT enhances learner motivation and communicative confidence when appropriately implemented. Savignon (2018) argues that teachers' beliefs and attitudes are central to successful CLT practice.

Indian studies reveal mixed outcomes. Kumar and Subramaniam (2020) report positive learner attitudes toward CLT in urban schools but note difficulties in rural and semi-urban settings. Research conducted in Odisha by Das and Mohanty (2021) indicates that teachers recognize the value of CLT for speaking skill development but often revert to traditional methods due to examination pressures. Roy (2020), focusing on West Bengal, observes that learners respond enthusiastically to group activities but experience anxiety during oral assessments.

Despite these contributions, there remains a lack of comparative empirical studies examining both teachers' and learners' perspectives simultaneously, particularly in Eastern India. This study addresses this gap by providing quantitative evidence from multiple states in the region.

## **4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study aims to:

Examine teachers' perceptions of CLT implementation in English classrooms in Odisha and Eastern India.

Analyze learners' responses to communicative teaching practices.





Compare teachers' and learners' perspectives across selected CLT parameters.

Identify challenges affecting effective CLT implementation in the region.

## 5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 1. Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive-analytical survey design, suitable for examining attitudes and perceptions across a defined population.

### 2. Sample

The sample comprised participants from selected schools and colleges in Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar, and Jharkhand:

- 30 English language teachers
- 120 learners from Classes IX to XII

### 3. Research Instrument

Two structured questionnaires—one for teachers and one for learners—were developed based on CLT literature. Each questionnaire contained statements measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The parameters included:

- Familiarity with CLT principles
- Use of group and pair activities
- Student participation
- Improvement in speaking skills
- Learner confidence
- Assessment aligned with CLT

### 4. Data Analysis

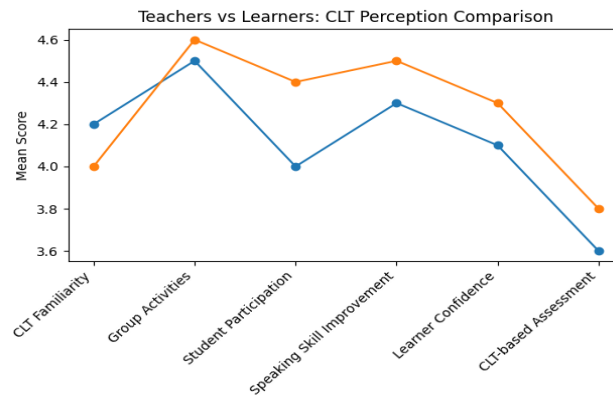
Collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Mean scores were calculated for each parameter and presented through tables and graphical comparison to facilitate interpretation.

## 6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Table 1: Mean Scores of Teachers' and Learners' Responses to CLT**

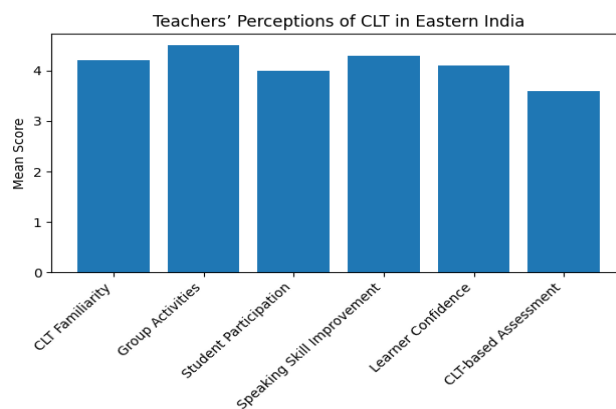
Parameter	Teachers (Mean Score)	Learners (Mean Score)
CLT Familiarity	4.2	4.0
Group Activities	4.5	4.6
Student Participation	4.0	4.4
Speaking Skill Improvement	4.3	4.5
Learner Confidence	4.1	4.3
CLT-based Assessment	3.6	3.8

**Explanation:** Table 1 presents the comparative mean scores of teachers and learners across major Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) parameters in selected institutions of Odisha and Eastern India. Higher mean values indicate stronger agreement with the effectiveness of CLT practices.



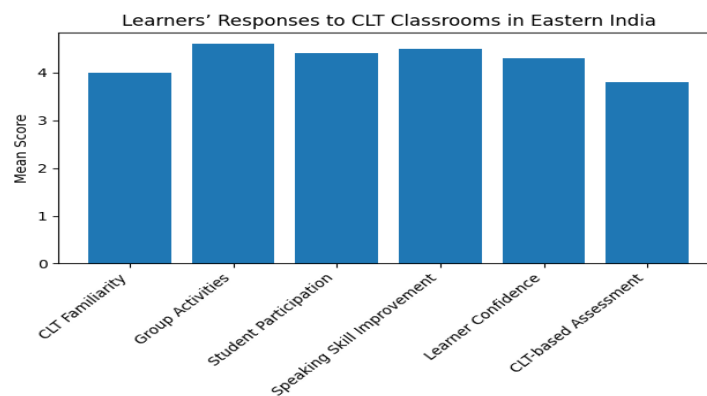
**Figure 1:** Teachers vs Learners – CLT Perception Comparison.

**Explanation:** Figure 1: Teachers vs Learners – CLT Perception Comparison illustrates trends in perceptions and responses related to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The figure highlights levels of familiarity, classroom interaction, participation, and communicative skill development among teachers and learners in Eastern India.



**Figure 2:** Teachers' Perceptions of CLT in Eastern India.

**Explanation:** Figure 2: Teachers' Perceptions of CLT in Eastern India illustrates trends in perceptions and responses related to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The figure highlights levels of familiarity, classroom interaction, participation, and communicative skill development among teachers and learners in Eastern India.



**Figure 3:** Learners' Responses to CLT Classrooms in Eastern India.



**Explanation:** Figure 3: Learners' Responses to CLT Classrooms in Eastern India illustrates trends in perceptions and responses related to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The figure highlights levels of familiarity, classroom interaction, participation, and communicative skill development among teachers and learners in Eastern India.

## 7. INTERPRETATION

The data indicate a high degree of alignment between teachers' perceptions and learners' responses across most CLT parameters. Both groups rated the use of group activities and improvement in speaking skills highly, reflecting the effectiveness of interactive pedagogy in Eastern Indian classrooms. Learners reported higher levels of participation and confidence, suggesting that CLT reduces hesitation and promotes peer-supported learning.

However, the comparatively lower mean scores for assessment alignment highlight a persistent gap between communicative teaching practices and traditional examination systems prevalent in the region.

## 8. DISCUSSION

The findings corroborate earlier studies indicating that CLT enhances learner engagement and communicative competence. In Eastern India, where learners often experience limited exposure to English, CLT provides valuable opportunities for meaningful interaction. Teachers' positive perceptions suggest growing professional acceptance of communicative pedagogy.

Nevertheless, challenges such as large class sizes, limited instructional time, and exam-oriented syllabi constrain full CLT implementation. The discrepancy in assessment practices underscores the need for systemic reforms that align evaluation with communicative objectives.

## 9. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. Teachers in Odisha and Eastern India demonstrate strong awareness and acceptance of CLT principles.
2. Learners respond positively to communicative activities, particularly group work and oral tasks.
3. CLT significantly improves speaking skills and learner confidence.
4. Assessment practices remain insufficiently aligned with communicative outcomes.

## 10. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

- Teacher training programs should emphasize practical CLT strategies and assessment tools.
- State education boards should incorporate communicative components in examinations.
- Schools should adopt context-sensitive CLT practices suitable for large classrooms and limited resources.

## 11. CONCLUSION

This empirical study demonstrates that Communicative Language Teaching is positively perceived by both teachers and learners in Odisha and other Eastern parts of India. While CLT enhances classroom interaction, speaking proficiency, and learner confidence, its full potential can only be realized through assessment reform and sustained teacher support. By addressing contextual challenges, CLT can significantly contribute to improving English language education in Eastern India.

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