



## TEACHERS' PRACTICES IN IMPLEMENTING THE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING APPROACH TO TEACHING ENGLISH IN SAUDI ARABIAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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### **Abstract:**

This study aims to analyze the practices of secondary school English teachers in implementing the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in public schools in Saudi Arabia. The study used a descriptive-analytical approach and relied on two main instruments: a questionnaire and an observation checklist. These were constructed according to items and criteria directly derived from the CEFR competencies and their conceptions of communicative language use. The results showed an excellent level of teachers' application of CLT approach concepts, indicating that there are no statistically significant differences between teachers' practices in applying the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools attributable to the experience variable. The results also revealed several difficulties related to its implementation, such as insufficient time allocated to interactive activities, inadequate specialized training, and limited teachers' comprehensive knowledge of the practical application of communicative tasks.

**Keywords:** Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Saudi public schools, EFL teachers

### **1. Introduction**

Language is an important means of expressing feelings, thoughts, and attitudes. Through language, skills, and experiences, one can acquire the means to achieve a better life. Despite linguistic diversity, some languages enjoy global prominence, such as English, which is the most widely spoken and used language globally. It is considered the primary language used worldwide in all fields, whether as a first or second language (Al-Saidat et al., 2023; Alqurashi, 2022; Al-Sharif, 2011).

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Teaching requires specific skills, competencies, and training on the part of those who practice it. Teachers must select teaching methods and techniques that align with the specific characteristics of the subject they are teaching. The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT, henceforth) approach to teaching English is one of the methods and practices used by teachers. It focuses on participation and speaking, encouraging learners to speak English and urging them to ask questions. It also fosters a spirit of cooperation, encouraging them to work in groups or pairs, and creating a classroom environment that promotes communication, mutual respect, and collaborative work (Hamdan & Murtaja, 2011).

The CLT approach to language teaching is not a modern phenomenon; rather, it dates back to the early 1970s. This led to changes in language teaching methods, including English, which had positive results on the educational process. It made students proficient in writing and using the language, and it is of great importance in using and communicating in foreign languages in various situations (Hafeez, 2017). The use of the CLT approach is a new approach to teaching foreign languages that focuses on the learner's ability to use the language and communicate in different situations. Therefore, the teaching practices of English language teachers play an important role in learners' acquisition of communicative language skills. It also addresses the diversity of learners' levels, the differences in their needs, and the varying speeds of their learning. If the teacher does not possess good, flexible teaching practices, it may affect learners' acquisition of communicative language skills.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) aims to enhance the quality of education and facilitate methods that assist both teachers and learners in carrying out communicative tasks and building competencies. The framework indicates that the degrees of difficulty of communicative tasks should be considered in terms of learners' competencies and characteristics, including their language learning goals and the conditions and constraints of the tasks they are required to perform.

Given the importance of teachers' teaching practices and the importance of communicative language in language teaching, the current research focused on highlighting the practices of secondary school teachers in applying the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools in Saudi Arabia.

### **1.1 Problem of the Study**

Acquiring English language skills has become essential and a necessity for communication and interaction in light of this openness to different foreign cultures. Therefore, traditional methods and practices of teaching English in schools are no longer sufficient to keep pace with this development. The Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has given great attention to developing the English language curriculum according to the latest theories and methods.

Ahmed's (2015) study confirmed that the main goal of language teaching is to enable the learner to communicate with language users. The communicative need is influenced by the nature of the society in which the learner lives, such as in multilingual

societies. This makes teaching communicative English important for learners not only on an educational level, but also on the level of interactions in public life. Al-Sharif's (2011) study indicated that educational policymakers in Saudi Arabia recognized the importance of teaching English as an official language of instruction due to the need to support communication with the outside world and achieve various goals such as strengthening economic and diplomatic relations with foreign countries. Furthermore, proficiency in English is a basic requirement for admission to many university majors in Saudi Arabia, and it is a condition imposed by the labor market on many applicants for various jobs. Similarly, Alqurashi and Althubaiti (2021) state that although English language instruction in Saudi Arabia has improved, the majority of EFL learners find it challenging to be fluent and competent in the four language skills. Accordingly, the current study attempted to clarify the features of secondary school teachers' practices in implementing the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools in Saudi Arabia.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

This study is significant in that it helps determine the degree of secondary school teachers' practices in applying the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools. It also enriches the literature related to modern practices in teaching English as an important communicative language, which benefits students and researchers. Furthermore, the study contributes to revealing the obstacles and challenges faced by secondary school English teachers in applying the CLT approach in public schools.

### **1.4 Study Objectives and Questions**

This study aims to examine the level of secondary school teachers' practices in applying the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools. It also aims to identify statistically significant differences in secondary school English teachers' practices in applying the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools, attributable to the experience variable. Finally, it aims to explore the difficulties faced by secondary school teachers in applying the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools.

To achieve the above goals, the study posits the following research questions:

- **RQ1:** What is the level of secondary school teachers' practices in implementing the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools?
- **RQ2:** Are there statistically significant differences between teachers' practices in implementing the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools that can be attributed to the experience variable?
- **RQ3:** What difficulties do secondary school English teachers face in implementing the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Communicative Language Teaching Approach

The CLT approach to language teaching first emerged at a time when the field of language education in Europe was undergoing major social changes and upheavals as a result of the economic and political interdependence between the various European countries. The Council of Europe, part of the European Union, also began to gradually recognize the importance of meeting the linguistic needs of immigrants and workers coming from abroad. As a result of the ineffectiveness of traditional curricula and study programs, which failed to facilitate the development of learners' abilities to use language in communication, language teaching specialists endeavored to design new educational programs and courses capable of achieving the desired communicative goals of language teaching. The Council of Europe provided significant support for research and publications related to the theoretical foundations of the CLT approach to language teaching and its application.

The rapid adoption of these ideas by linguists, textbook authors, language teaching specialists, curriculum development centers, and even official educational bodies resulted in the first practical applications of the CLT approach to language teaching through the design of an educational program based on its functional principles during the early 1970s. Based on a solid theoretical foundation of rigorous scientific research, the CLT approach has gained widespread acceptance among English language teaching professionals, curriculum planners, textbook authors, and even the British government (Chang, 2019).

The CLT approach to language teaching is characterized by the integration of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and their application to serve the communicative purpose. Listening is developed by providing natural or near-real-life situations in the classroom. Speaking is presented in a functional context with a communicative purpose stemming from the learner's needs and the situation. Reading is linked to a specific need or goal, and writing is functional, related to conveying a message and achieving a purpose. Thus, the CLT approach ensures the development of effective communicative competence in learners by using language in life situations relevant to their needs and motivations, rather than focusing exclusively on abstract linguistic aspects (Rambe, 2016; Galloway, 2017; Nishino, 2008). It is defined as "a teaching approach that focuses on refining students' communicative language competencies and designing and implementing teaching procedures for the four language skills in a way that highlights the interdependence between language and communication" (Richards & Rodgers, 2008, p. 66).

The researcher believes that implementing the comprehensive level requires intensive training for teachers in its use, as well as a minimum level of proficiency in basic language skills among students. It is also more suitable for application in the context of English language teaching in Saudi Arabia, given the students' weak grasp of many basic language knowledge and skills, the teachers' limited experience with the CLT approach

to language teaching, and their need for considerable time to master its teaching practices.

## **2.2 Previous Studies**

There is a growing body of literature on CLT, but there are various gaps related to employing CLT in the Saudi EFL context. Little attention has been paid to the teachers' implementation of CLT in Saudi EFL classrooms, relationships between teacher training, professional development and CLT implementation (Alharbi, 2024).

For example, Chen's (2020) study aimed to find out how a teacher education program through an action research program can support English as a foreign language in the application of communication curricula. Its sample consisted of three volunteer teachers and 90 students; it used three tools: observation, interview, and questionnaire to collect data according to the action research methodology. One of its most prominent results was that teachers' limited understanding of curricula appears to be a dominant factor in the implementation of communication curricula.

Eid's (2018) study aimed to determine the impact of using Facebook, as a popular social network based on the CLT approach, on developing specific oral and written argumentation skills in French as a foreign language among fourth-year students in the French Department at the Faculty of Education. A test was used to collect data using a quasi-experimental design. The instrument was designed as follows: a test to measure students' written argumentation ability, a test for oral argumentation, and a unit based on the use of the CLT approach, according to Facebook, comprising six lessons. The most prominent finding of the study was that using Facebook had a positive impact on developing these skills. Written and oral argumentation in French.

Al-Asiri (2022) explored the perceptions of Arabic as a second language teachers regarding the application of the CLT approach in distance Arabic language teaching and the difficulties they face in this regard, adopting a mixed methodology with a sequential explanatory design. The author administered a questionnaire consisting of 23 statements to a sample of 31 Arabic language teachers at the Arabic Language Institute at Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh. The author conducted semi-regular interviews with five of them to support the questionnaire results and obtain more in-depth findings about their perceptions and the difficulties they encountered while applying the CLT approach in distance Arabic as a second language teaching. The study results showed that the study sample held positive perceptions of applying the CLT approach remotely; their perceptions were high, and these perceptions were related to the most important principles of the CLT approach. However, they also encountered some difficulties during its application.

In the Saudi EFL context, Hakami (2025) investigated the perceptions of the Saudi EFL learners of the CLT approach and its role in enhancing English skills. The author collected data from 30 EFL learners from Taif University using semi-structured interviews and focus group sessions. The study revealed that CLT was effective in improving participants' engagement and fluency, especially in listening and speaking

skills. The study also identified some challenges in employing CLT, such as teachers' lack of preparedness, resource disparities and linguistic anxiety. Similarly, Abdulkader (2019) investigated the attitudes of 35 Saudi EFL teachers concerning the effectiveness of using CLT in the Saudi classrooms. All the participants had received extensive and professional in-service training in CLT. The results of the study revealed that most of the participants were unable to use CLT in the English classrooms, although they had a clear understanding of its benefits and principles. Furthermore, Alharbi (2024) explored the obstacles to the successful implementation of CLT in Saudi EFL classrooms. She investigated the entrenched resistance to CLT caused by traditional teaching methods among teachers and students. The study reported that the resistance to CLT may be attributed to the clash between traditional pedagogical approaches, such as the Audio-Lingual and Grammar-Translation Methods, and sociocultural traits of Saudi learners, in addition to the evaluation system of the exams, which emphasizes a rote memorization and grammar.

The current study differed from previous studies in that it explores the practices of teachers in applying the CLT approach (CLT) to teaching English in public schools in Saudi Arabia. It also differs from previous studies in that it is the first study to combine the two study variables: teachers' practices and the CLT approach, to the best of the researcher's knowledge.

### 3. Methods

The study adopted the descriptive-analytical approach for scientific reasons, most importantly, its suitability for analyzing educational and behavioral phenomena within the classroom, the possibility of collecting data through questionnaires and observation, the comparability between teachers' levels, and then analyzing the correlation between them and international standards.

The current research population consists of English language teachers in public schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. A convenience sampling method was employed, as it is a non-probability technique in which participants are selected according to their availability and accessibility to the researcher.

For data collection, the study employed two instruments: a questionnaire and an observation checklist. The questionnaire was used because it allows for obtaining information about the participants' opinions about the phenomenon under research, displayed in the questionnaire items. Therefore, there is no right or wrong answer, but rather it is an expression of the opinions of the participating individuals, with scores shown in Table 1. It will also be used to determine the averages of the observation checklist and its evaluations. There is no right or wrong answer, but rather it is an expression of the opinions of individuals based on their observations of the teachers.

**Table 1: Answer Weights on a Five-Point Likert Scale**

Answer	Wight	Wight Average
Strongly Agree	5	4.20-5.0
Agree	4	3.40-<4.20
Neutral	3	2.60-<3.40
Disagree	4	1.80-<2.60
Strong Disagree	5	1.00<1.80

### 3.1 Instrument Validity

The researcher used construct validity, where the instrument's statements are measured in terms of clarity, wording, and vocabulary used. The accuracy of the data used in both the questionnaire and the observation checklist was also assessed, along with its relevance to the research topic and whether it was suitable for the purpose it was designed to measure. The face validity of the research instrument was measured by presenting it to expert reviewers to obtain their opinions on the soundness of the questionnaire and the observation checklist in terms of wording and the extent to which the statements measured their respective axes. The questionnaire and observation checklist were modified according to the reviewers' opinions. Internal consistency validity was also used by measuring the correlation coefficient, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Internal Consistency Validity of Questionnaire Axis Items**

Axis	T	Axis Correlation Coefficient	T	Axis
Axis 1	1	.727**	4	.738**
	2	.628**	5	.700**
	3	.348**		
Axis 2	1	.697**	4	.417**
	2	.308**	5	.627**
	3	.908**		
Axis 3	1	.577**	4	.937**
	2	.574**	5	.737**
	3	.947**		

\*\*significant at the (0.01) level

The results shown in Table 2 indicate the internal consistency validity of the axis statements, as all correlation coefficients between each statement and its respective dimension, as well as between each statement and the total of the independent variable axis, range between 700 and 839, which is a high positive value. Furthermore, all of these coefficients are statistically significant at the significance level of 0.01, indicating the availability of internal consistency validity for the questionnaire axes. This means that the statements measure what they were designed to measure.

### 3.2 Instrument Reliability

To measure the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha test was performed on the instrument, and the test results are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Cronbach Alpha Coefficients for Questionnaire Reliability

Cronbach Alpha Coefficients	Numbers of Items
0.855	15

Based on Table 3, the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients for the instrument as a whole is (0.855), and all values are high, indicating the reliability of the study instrument.

**Table 4:** Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients for Observational Instrument Reliability

Cronbach Alpha Coefficients	Numbers of Items
0.841	19

Based on Table 4, the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients for the instrument as a whole is (0.841), and all values are high, indicating the reliability of the study instrument.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Demographic Data Results for the Study Sample

**Table 5:** Distribution of the Research Sample by Age

Age Group	Number	Percentage (%)
Under 30 years	28	28.0
30-40 years	32	32.0
40-50 years	21	21.0
Over 50 years	19	19.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 5 shows the age distribution of the study participants, revealing that 32% of participants are between 30 and 40 years old, while 28% are under 30. This is followed by those aged 40-50 (21%), and finally, those over 50 (19%). This indicates that the majority of the study sample falls within the 30-40 age group.

**Table 6:** Distribution of the Research Sample by Years of Experience

Years of Experience	Number	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 years	32	32.0
5-10 years	42	42.0
Over 10 years	26	26.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The distribution of the study sample members with respect to years of experience came as follows: those with less than 5 years of experience (32), from 5-10 years (42), and greater than 10 years (26), and thus the largest proportion of the study sample falls into the age group of 5-10 years.

## 4.2 Results Related to the Research Questions

To answer the first question, both the questionnaire and the observation checklist were used. The results are as follows:

**Table 7:** Means and Standard Deviations for  
the Questionnaire Axes Related to the First Question

M	Statements	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Level	Rank
1	Use active teaching methods that encourage student participation in the lesson	4.40	0.828	Strongly agree	2
2	I provide opportunities for students to interact with each other in English during the lesson.	4.44	0.844	Strongly agree	1
3	Encourage students to use English inside and outside the classroom	4.15	0.963	Agree	3
4	I use techniques that encourage students to interact in learning English.	3.67	1.18	Agree	5
5	I integrate language skills fully into the lessons.	3.75	0.936	Agree	4
<b>Total for the First Axis</b>		<b>4.08</b>	<b>0.746</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Based on the means and standard deviations of the opinions of the study sample members shown in Table 7, the level of practices of secondary school teachers in applying the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools in Saudi Arabia is high, with a degree of agreement (Agree), a mean of (4.08), and a standard deviation of (746). The first item was: "I provide opportunities for students to interact with each other in English during the lesson," with a mean of (4.44), a standard deviation of (844), and a degree of strong agreement. The second item was: "I use active teaching methods that encourage student participation in the lesson," with a degree of agreement (Strong Agree), a mean of (4.40), and a standard deviation of (828). The last item was: "I use techniques that encourage students to interact in learning English," with a degree of agreement (Agree), a mean of (3.67), and a standard deviation of (1.18).

**Table 8:** Means and Standard Deviations of Observation Card Statements Related to Question 1

M	Statements	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Level	Rank
Dimension 1: Teaching Practice Using the CLT Approach					
1	Promote language communication and active listening among students in the classroom.	4.40	.499	Very Excellent	1
2	Use interactive teaching materials that support the principles of the CLT	4.40	.288	Very Excellent	2
3	Encourage interactive activities such as group conversations to develop language skills	3.90	1.02	Excellent	6
4	Guided students to use English actively inside and outside the classroom.	3.60	1.04	Excellent	7
5	Integrate and assess core language skills (reading, Writing, listening and speaking) in an integrates manner that supports the CLT approach	3.60	1.04	Excellent	8
6	Use group activities that focus on enhancing collaboration and interaction skills among students	4.10	.258	Excellent	5
7	Provide a classroom environment that encourage the natural and continuous use of English	4.30	.656	Excellent	3
8	Encourage students to ask question in English to promote critical thinking and interaction.	4.15	.547	Very Excellent	4
Total Dimension 1		4.05	.695	Excellent	
Dimension 2: Evaluating the Implementation of the CLT Approach					
1	Use teaching strategies with the principles of the CLT Approach	4.20	.516	Very Excellent	3
2	Use English as a means of communication and learning through the CLT Approach	4.35	.587	Very Excellent	1
3	Encourage students to interact and participate in English	4.05	1.14	Excellent	4
4	Provide opportunities for hands-on learning and practical application of language skills	3.55	.899	Excellent	7
5	Measure students' progress in developing their language skills through the application of CLT Approach strategies.	3.80	.528	Excellent	5
6	Teacher flexibility in modifying teaching strategies to suit the different needs of students.	3.80	1.05	Excellent	6
7	Use continuous formative assessments to determine the extent to which students have grasped the principles of the CLT Approach.	4.20	.767	Very Excellent	2
Total for Dimension Two		4.01	.654	Excellent	
Dimension 3: Supporting the Learning Environment for the CLT Approach					
1	Providing appropriate learning resources, such as technological devices or teaching aids, helps promote language communication.	4.25	0.786	Very Excellent	2
2	Using multiple methods to motivate students to participate, such as language games or interactive tools.	4.35	.889	Very Excellent	1
3	Creating a supportive classroom environment for students to interact freely without fear or anxiety.	4.10	1.07	Excellent	3
4	Addressing individual students' challenges, such as language anxiety or reluctance to speak English.	3.70	1.34	Excellent	4
Third Dimension Total		4.10	.229	Excellent	
Axis Total		4.05	.674	Excellent	

Based on the means and standard deviations according to the observations about the teachers shown in Table 8, the level of secondary school teachers' practices in applying the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools in Saudi Arabia is high (excellent), with a mean of (4.05) and a standard deviation of (476). This indicates the variation in performance among teachers in applying the CLT approach. Based on the means and standard deviations according to the observations about the teachers shown in Table 8, the dimension of teaching practices using the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools in Saudi Arabia is high (excellent), with a mean of (4.05) and a standard deviation of (596). This indicates the variation in performance among teachers in teaching practices using the CLT approach. The item "Enhancing linguistic communication and active listening among students in the classroom" came in first place with a mean of (4.40) and a standard deviation of (994), and a performance rating of "very excellent." The item "Using interactive educational materials that support the principles of the CLT approach" came in second place, where it received a performance rating of "very excellent." With an arithmetic mean of (4.40) and a standard deviation of (882), the last two items were: "Guiding students to actively use English inside and outside the classroom" with an evaluation of (Excellent), an arithmetic mean of (3.60), and a standard deviation of (1.04), and the item: "Integrating and assessing basic language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) in an integrated way that supports the CLT approach." with an evaluation of (Excellent), an arithmetic mean of (3.60), and a standard deviation of (1.04). After evaluating the application of the CLT approach to English language teaching, the results showed a mean of (4.01), a standard deviation of (456), and a practice level of (Excellent). The first item, "Using English as a means of communication and learning through the CLT approach," received a very excellent practice level, a mean of (4.35), and a standard deviation of (0.587). The second item, "Using continuous formative assessments to determine the extent to which students have grasped the principles of the CLT approach," received a very excellent practice level, a mean of (4.20), and a standard deviation of (767). Finally, the item "Providing opportunities for practical learning and application of language skills" received an excellent practice level, a mean of (3.55), and a standard deviation of (998).

Regarding the dimension of supporting the educational environment for implementing the CLT Approach, it came with a mean of (4.10), a standard deviation of (922), and a practice level of (Excellent). The first item included the statement: "Using multiple methods to motivate students to participate, such as language games or interactive tools," with a practice level of (Very Excellent), a mean of (4.35), and a standard deviation of (988). The second item included the statement: "Providing appropriate educational resources, such as technological devices or educational tools that help enhance language communication," with a practice level of (Very Excellent), a mean of (4.25), and a standard deviation of (786). In last place was the item: "Addressing individual challenges of students, such as language anxiety or reluctance to speak English," with a practice level of (Excellent), a mean of (3.70), and a standard deviation of (1.34).

To answer the second question, an ANOVA analysis was conducted on the dimension of teachers' practices in implementing the CLT Approach for teaching English in public schools, according to the experience variable. The results were as follows:

**Table 9:** ANOVA Analysis on the Axis of Teacher's practices in Applying the CLT Approach to Teaching in Public Schools According to the Experience Variable

	Sum of squares	Df	Mean of Squares	F	Significance Level
Between Groups	3.061	2	1.531	2.847	0.063
With Groups	52.146	97	0.538		

Based on the results shown in the previous Table 9, the significance level is -0.063, which is greater than (0.05), indicating that there are no statistically significant differences between teachers' practices in applying the CLT Approach to teaching English in public schools attributable to the experience variable. To answer the third question, the means and standard deviations were calculated for the axis of difficulties faced by secondary school English teachers in applying the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools in the questionnaire. The results are shown in Table 10:

**Table 10:** Means and Standard Deviations for Question 4 Question Axes

M	Statements	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Level	Rank
1	I have difficulty managing my time to effectively implement the CLT approach to English language learning.	4.1	1.00	Agree	2
2	I have difficulty adapting appropriate English language materials and curricula to implement the CLT approach in the teaching process.	3.63	1.14	Agree	5
3	I find it difficult to overcome technical challenges or a lack of technological resources necessary to implement the CLT approach in English language learning.	3.74	1.03	Agree	4
4	I find it difficult to balance meeting students' needs with applying the core principles of the CLT approach to English language learning.	3.98	1.10	Agree	3
5	I find it difficult to motivate students to communicate in English outside of class	4.22	839.	Strongly Agree	1
<b>Total for Axis 3</b>		<b>3.93</b>	<b>780.</b>	<b>Agree</b>	

The study results showed that secondary school English teachers face difficulties in implementing the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools, with a high degree of agreement (Agree), a mean of (3.93), and a standard deviation of (780). The most significant difficulty they face is: "Motivating students to communicate in English outside of class," with a high degree of agreement (Strongly Agree), a mean of (4.22), and a standard deviation of (938). The next most significant difficulty is: "Managing time to effectively implement the CLT approach to learning English," with a high degree of

agreement (Agree). The mean score was (4.10), and the standard deviation was (1.00). The least difficult challenge they faced was adapting the materials and curricula of the English language to implement the CLT approach in the educational process, with a degree of agreement (agree), a mean score of (3.63), and a standard deviation of (1.14).

## 5. Discussion

The study showed a high degree of agreement between its results and those of previous studies, such as Al-Asiri (2022), which indicated a rise in positive perceptions towards the CLT approach; Chen (2020), who proved that teachers' weak theoretical knowledge hinders application; and Eid (2018), who demonstrated the effectiveness of interactive activities in enhancing communicative competence. According to the study's results, it supports the idea that implementing CLT is not merely using group activities, but requires precise practices that include: fluency, task management, verbal interaction, and language production guided by meaning rather than form. The analysis of the results also revealed a gap between teachers' theoretical knowledge and their skill in practically implementing communicative tasks, which is entirely consistent with the findings of Abdulkader (2019) and Hakami (2025).

## 6. Conclusion

The current study aimed to explore the practices of secondary school teachers in implementing the communicative language teaching approach in Saudi public schools. The results of the study revealed an excellent level of teachers' use of communicative approach concepts. The results also showed that there are no statistically significant differences between teachers' practices in applying the CLT approach to teaching English in public schools attributable to the experience variable. The analysis of the data indicated that teachers found some challenging aspects of implementing the CLT approach in public schools, including a time barrier in that the time allocated to interactive activities was insufficient, inadequate specialized training, and limited teachers' understanding of the practical application of communicative tasks. To overcome these difficulties, the study recommends the development of specialized training programs; incorporation of training sessions that simulate real-life classroom situations such as problem-solving and interactive projects; improving teachers' ability to prioritise fluency over accuracy, in line with the CLT philosophy; provision of specialized CLT pedagogical supervision to offer ongoing professional feedback; increasing classroom activities that require language negotiation among students; and adoption of alternative assessment methods (projects, presentations, applied tasks) instead of relying on grammar tests.

Future research is encouraged on the impact of applying the CLT approach on EFL learners' language achievement, and on exploring the impact of teachers' gender, the number of training courses they completed, and class density on applying the CLT approach. Future research may also include the impact of using the CLT approach on

teaching languages other than English in schools and universities inside and outside Saudi Arabia.

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### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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