An Experimental Study of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in University Comprehensive English Class

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Abstract

The purpose of English language teaching should lie in cultivating the students' communicative ability. The traditional teaching method is mainly teacher-centered, paying attention to the impartation of knowledge, and this will neglect the students' creativity and communicative ability. However, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) which advocates student-centered classrooms and learning foreign languages through communication, takes communicative competence as the ultimate goal of foreign language teaching. This paper presents the research on the connotation, characteristics and advantages of the communicative language teaching method, while paying attention to the difficulties encountered in its promotion in the process of English teaching in universities. Prior to exposure to CLT approach, the respondents had been exposed the traditional English

language teaching and learning in a comprehensive English class. In order to understand the basic situation of the cultivation of university students' English communicative competence in Ningxia Medical University, 200 non-English major students responded to a questionnaire survey. The four aspects of university comprehensive English class are the learning objectives of English class, basic learning tasks in English class, students' interests, and difficulties in improving English communicative ability were analyzed using SPSS 23.0. The results reveal that communicative activities such as role-play, ask and answer activities, discussion and debate, and story-telling can be used by teachers to help students develop communicative competences. It is important to highlight that there are a variety of corresponding strategies besides the activities mentioned that can be incorporated in language teaching to improve the communication skills of students and English teaching in universities.

Keywords: CLT, University English course, Communicative competence

1. Introduction

With the increasing development of the world's social economy and science and technology, the demand for high-quality talents in the world has increased significantly. As an important way to cultivate high-quality talents, universities should shoulder the responsibility of cultivating high-quality talents for the world's development. As an important criterion for evaluating high-quality talents in the new era, English proficiency has received extensive attention from the education community. Since Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method focuses on improving the language learners' language communication and social communication skills, and is highly compatible with the teaching of English courses in universities, it is considered the best choice for cultivating university students' English ability (Xu, 2022).

In contrast, the traditional teaching theory is mainly teacher-centered and only pays attention to the impartation of knowledge, hence, neglecting the students' creativity. In many English classrooms, teachers are always in charge of every moment in class. They decide everything and talk most of the time in the class. Students simply absorb and digest what the teachers say and contribute themselves to what the teachers ask them to do (He, 2019). This teaching method has long been employed at Ningxia Medical University where this study took place.

The purpose of learning English for university students including those at Ningxia Medical University is to pass the final examination and College English Test 4 (CET 4). In this case, teachers spend a lot of time teaching grammar, sentence structure and language points. As a result, after learning English for many years, students know how to analyze sentence structures, how to translate, and how to appreciate English reading material. Unfortunately, students are still quite weak in communicating with English (Yan, 2020).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) takes the communicative competence as the ultimate goal of foreign language teaching (Nunan, 2000). It has been recognized as an effective approach to increase students' abilities to communicate in English (Savignon, 2001). However, due to the influence of the traditional teaching mode and concept and the general

English level of students in China, there are certain difficulties in the promotion and implementation of CLT (Li, 2019). Therefore, in order to promote the improvement of university students' comprehensive English ability, teachers should identify the challenges faced by communicative pedagogy in the teaching process, and actively seek effective improvement strategies for these challenges. These are the reasons why the current study was conducted.

2. Literature Review

According to Richards and Schmidt (2013), a communicative language approach is a method for teaching foreign or second languages. It highlights that the aim of language learning is communicative competence, which aims to center all classroom activities around meaningful communication and language usage. Therefore, the main goal of CLT is to improve learners' communication skills, which enable them to communicate successfully in a foreign language (Halliday, 1975). Luis (2020) pointed out the significance of the CLT method which focuses on highlighting students' main learning status as the teaching activity itself is a teaching process that leads students to explore knowledge actively. Compared to the traditional teaching method, CLT method pays more attention to social communication. Teachers, for instance, should pay attention to cultivate students' communicative competence and English listening and speaking ability. When students have good English skills as well as listening, speaking and communication skills, they can connect what they have learned with specific backgrounds and then significantly improve the accuracy of their use of English. Therefore, students have the opportunities to express themselves, which can significantly improve their self-awareness, learning interest, and confidence level when using English (Luis, 2020).

Numerous studies have been conducted to examine the effects of CLT method both on teachers and students. Banagbanag (2020) for instance, investigated 178 ESL teachers and 73 school heads' attitude towards CLT. The result revealed that a majority of the teachers had positive attitude toward CLT. Bagheri & Hashemi (2021) found that CLT method had a positive effect on the students' achievements in final examinations. It also illustrated the students' positive attitudes toward the communicative teaching method.

However, although most teachers advocate that CLT method is effective in English learning, and hold a positive attitude towards CLT method, they encountered many challenges and difficulties when implementing the CLT method. Al Asmari (2015) investigated the challenges faced in implementing CLT in the university EFL context in Saudi Arabia Taif University. The study showed that there are many factors affecting the process of applying CLT in Taif University such as the poor English proficiency of the students, the difficult accessibility of CLT resources, lack of CLT training and motivation. Nayeen et al. (2020) conducted a study on the school level in Bangladesh to find out that the teachers experienced difficulties in implementing CLT in their classes, due to the education system in Bangladesh. The results also show that, faulty examination systems, untrained teachers, large classrooms are the factors hinder the implementation of CLT. The CLT method concept will be successfully applied if the teachers have received adequate training and if both the teachers and the students fulfill the duties that are prescribed by the curriculum. Armnazi and

Alakrash (2021) examined the problems and obstacles that EFL teachers faced while introducing CLT in their teaching process. They reported that these problems might have arisen from the students' inability to use English outside of the classroom.

Regarding the problems and difficulties that EFL teachers faced in implementing CLT in their classes, He (2019) mainly analyzed how to apply CLT in college English teaching and proposed that English teachers carry out group discussions and cooperation based on the actual situation of students. If necessary, they can add group competitions, which can effectively stimulate university students' sense of competition and improve students' enthusiasm for English learning. Zhao (2024) emphasized that when using communicative teaching methods, teachers should create a certain language output environment for students to encourage students to correctly output the target language.

Based on the above literature, it can be seen that current research on CLT mainly focuses on studying the attitudes of teachers and students towards CLT and the difficulties faced in the implementation of CLT. At the same time, most of the research focuses on the study of English listening and speaking classes, and there is very little research on English comprehensive classes. In order to fill this gap, this study examined students' feedback on the use of CLT method in their English comprehensive classes. A set of questionnaire was deployed to understand the teaching objectives from students' perspectives, the teaching tasks, students' interests, and current difficulties faced by them in following CLT method in English comprehensive classes. The paper ends with proposals on effective CLT application methods to cultivate students' communicative abilities.

3. Research Design

Cultivating students' English communicative competence is one of the key points of English teaching reform. This study was conducted to understand the current situation of the cultivation of English communicative ability of university students from Ningxia Medical University. The students were asked to respond to a set of questionnaires of "Cultivation of University English Communicative Ability - Problems and Countermeasures". The questionnaire consisted of four aspects including the personal profile, English learning objectives, basic learning tasks in Comprehensive English Class, students' interests, and difficulties in improving English communicative ability. The problems existing in the cultivation of university English language communicative ability have two aspects, one is the current goal of English teaching which still focuses on textbook knowledge other than students' communication skills. The other aspect is students hope to improve their English communication skills, but lack opportunities for practice and effective learning methods. Finally, four examples of communicative activities are presented followed by suggestions for University English Class Teaching.

3.1 Research Participants

This study selected 200 non-English major students in Ningxia Medical University to respond to a set of questionnaires. The participants were from the School of Clinical Medicine (43%), the School of Basic Medicine (41%), the School of Nursing (30%) and the School of Dental

Medicine (6%). In this research, a total of 200 questionnaires were distributed online with 100% response rate, all of which were validated questionnaires.

3.2 The Procedure of Data Collection

The questionnaire is divided into two parts. The first part is the demo-graphic profile, which includes gender, majors, class time distribution of "Comprehensive English Class", and final exam (including CET-4 and CET-6) results.

The second part is the main questionnaire part. There are a total of 24 items in the questionnaire using a Likert five-level scoring system for the response. The five levels are: 1 = highly disagree; 2 = roughly disagree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = roughly agree; 5 = highly agree.

In order to fully and truly reflect the situation of the cultivation of English language communicative ability in Ningxia Medical University, the researcher sought help from English teachers to get their students to respond to the questionnaires. SPSS 23.0 was used to analyze the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire.

3.3 Findings

Descriptive analysis of the frequency, mean, and standard deviation were presented to show the cultivation of English language communication ability in Ningxia Medical University.

According to the analysis of Item 1-4 in the questionnaires, there are 105 boys (53%) and 95 girls (47%). In terms of students' CET4 results, 1% of the students were above 498, 5% scored 427-497, 42% scored 355-426 (The passing score is 425) and 52% scored below 355 (including those who did not take the CET-4). In terms of the distribution of Comprehensive English Class, 0.5% were distributed to speaking; 30% were distributed to writing; 69.5% were distributed to listening and reading.

To cultivate students' English communicative ability, the four abilities of listening, speaking, reading and writing should be integrated and infiltrated with each other, and are inseparable (Zhai, 2022). The survey shows that, during the English classes, most time was spent on listening and reading activities, while the emphasis on speaking and writing is far from enough.

The following are the analysis of the main part of the questionnaire (Items 5-24).

3.3.1 Objectives of English Learning

A clear English learning goal can help students clarify their knowledge, skills, cultural literacy, comprehensive ability, and stimulate students' self-consciousness in learning English (Xu, 2022). Questionnaire Item 5 - Item 10 tested the students' objectives of English learning.

Table 1. English Learning Objectives

Item	N	Frequency					Mean	SD
		1	2	3	4	5		
5. Pass the CET 4 and CET 6 according to school requirements.	200	15	38	23	82	42	3.49	1.228
6. Broaden horizons and understand the culture, customs and social life of English-speaking countries.	200	2	29	48	96	25	3.57	0.922
7. Able to read the literature and articles of English-speaking countries.	200	13	30	62	67	28	3.34	1.095
8. Able to learn the language skills (such as memorization, summarization, presentation, and precise and concise expression) that can be applied to other subjects.	200	11	18	28	87	56	3.80	1.113
9. Improving English proficiency in order to expand employment opportunities.	200	9	15	16	98	62	3.94	1.050
10. Improve English proficiency and study abroad.	200	16	40	76	53	15	3.06	1.043

According to the descriptive statistics in Table 1, the mean value of item 9 (M=3.94) is the largest, which shows that the students' English learning have clear goals, and the frequency also shows that the students who choose 4 and 5 in item 9 reached 160, which occupies 80% of all the students. These students believe that the goal of learning English is to improve their English level and lay a foundation for future work. Hence, it can be concluded that the goal of students' English learning is relatively clear and practical.

Items 10 (M=3.06) and item 7 (M=3.34) have the smallest mean values, indicating that only a small number of students think that learning English is for studying abroad and reading literature and articles from English-speaking countries. This is reasonable for non-English major students, especially medical students, who are more willing to make the goal of learning English more realistic and accurate. The mean value of item 6 is 3.57, and the standard deviation is the smallest (SD=0.922), indicating that students generally believe that English teaching is not only the teaching of language skills, but also the teaching of customs and social life in the cultural background of English-speaking countries, so as to broaden students' horizons. 124 students chose 4 and 5 for item 5 which occupies 62% of all the students, indicating that more students hope to pass the CET 4 and CET 6 examinations, which will help them find jobs in the future.

3.3.2 Basic Learning Tasks in Comprehensive English Class

Learning tasks are like a lighthouse, which can point out the correct learning principles, stimulate learning motivation, and give students the driving force to carry out learning behaviors. Therefore, a valid learning task can help students mobilize their enthusiasm for learning.

Table 2. The Most Important Learning Task in English Class

Item	N	Frequency					Mean	SD
		1	2	3	4	5		
11. Mastering the knowledge in textbooks.	200	9	15	27	114	35	3.76	0.980
12. Mastering the language knowledge Comprehensively and systematically.	200	5	23	30	105	37	3.73	0.976
13. Cultivate language communicative competence.	200	5	6	22	94	73	4.12	0.900

According to the analysis in Table 2, the mean of item 13 is the highest (M=4.12) and the standard deviation is the lowest (SD=0.900), indicating that students generally believe that the most important learning task in English class is to cultivate language communicative competence. In addition, 74% of students believe that the task of learning English should also be to master the knowledge in the textbook, which is also a basic requirement for language learning (item 11).

3.3.3 Students' Interests in Class

Interest is the driving force for students to actively learn a language, and it is a powerful assistant to help them acquire a language effectively (Long, 2021). Items 14-19 tested the students' interests in the process of language learning, in providing a reference for future classroom teaching.

Table 3. Students' Interests

Item	N	Frequency					Mean	SD
		1	2	3	4	5		
14. Students listen to the teacher's explanation of language points.	200	17	30	47	79	27	3.35	1.146
15. Students listen to the teacher's explanation of language and cultural background knowledge.	200	4	14	42	97	43	3.81	0.923
16. Teachers explain everything in English.	200	19	56	58	45	22	2.98	1.154
17. Teachers mostly explain in English, but need to explain in Chinese when necessary.	200	3	10	33	103	51	3.95	0.869
18. Students orally complete homework, translate sentences and express opinions.	200	14	30	45	83	28	3.41	1.117
19. Students are doing group activities, classroom discussions.	200	2	16	43	76	63	3.91	0.968

Table 3 shows that 53% of the students have interest in listening to teachers' explaining of the language points (item 14), and 47% of the students occasionally or rarely listen to

teachers' explaining the language points. This shows that a considerable number of students are not interested in the explanation of language points. The reason for this is because basic grammar and syntax analysis are relatively boring. However, 70% of the students are willing to listen to the teacher's explanation of language and cultural background knowledge, which is more likely to arouse students' interest than language points. Item 16 has the smallest mean (M=2.98) and the largest standard deviation (SD=1.154). Only 34% of the students agreed or strongly agreed with the teacher's explanation in English, and 38% of the students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the teacher's explanation in English. Item 17 is the opposite with item 16 with the largest mean (M=3.95) and the smallest standard deviation (SD=0.869), indicating that students generally agree that the teacher will explain in English and explain in Chinese when necessary.

There are 121 students who have interest in doing the assigned homework, answer questions, and express opinions orally. The standard deviation of item 18 is relatively large (SD=1.117), and the degree of dispersion is large, indicating that students have relatively different opinions on oral translation sentences. In addition, 139 students were more interested in group activities and class discussions, which is also in line with the student-centered teaching model.

It was found that students are more interested to work on activities than learning about the grammar rules so that they can apply the language skills.

3.3.4 Difficulties in Improving English Communicative Ability

At present, students still have many difficulties in improving their English language communicative ability. The following is the existing difficulties on communicative competence:

Table 4. Difficulties in Improving English Communicative Ability

Item	N	Frequency					Mean	SD
		1	2	3	4	5		
20. The understanding of the differences between Chinese and Western cultures are not comprehensive and profound enough.	200	8	15	45	90	42	3.72	1.009
21. Students seldom accept the infiltration of communicative ability teaching, lack of cultural knowledge and learning method guidance.	200	3	15	33	98	51	3.90	0.921
22. There is no time to take into account the absorption of cultural knowledge because of the heavy examination tasks.	200	9	23	51	75	42	3.59	1.081
23. Students did not get the comprehensive and systematic language	200	7	7	34	100	52	3.92	0.939

communication skills training.								
24. I think that improving language skills is more important than communication skills.	200	16	41	62	54	27	3.18	1.145

The data in Table 4 shows that the average value of item 24 is the smallest (M=3.18), the standard deviation is the largest (SD=1.145), and the degree of dispersion is large, indicating that students' perception on improving language ability or communicative ability has great differences. Item 21 has a high mean (M=3.90) and a small standard deviation (SD=0.921), indicating that students generally agree that the difficulty in improving English communicative competence is that they seldom accept the infiltration of communicative ability teaching, lack of cultural knowledge and learning method guidance. This shows that most teachers are lacking in communicative competence teaching and cultural knowledge guidance, which should arouse teachers' attention.

66% of the students think that it is difficult to improve their English communication skills because of the differences between Chinese and Western cultures, and their own learning and understanding are not comprehensive enough. 76% of the students think that they have not received comprehensive and systematic language communication skills and foreign culture knowledge and lectures. This shows that students are eager to understand and learn Chinese and Western cultural knowledge, and hope to receive comprehensive and systematic guidance on language communication skills. In Item 22, 59% of the students think that there is no time to take into account the absorption of cultural knowledge because of the heavy examination tasks.

3.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

From the research findings, the following preliminary conclusions were drawn:

First, regarding the purpose of English learning, students generally agree that English learning should be based on practical application and supplemented by book learning. Most students pay more attention to the cultivation of intercultural communication ability, and to the understanding and cognition of the relationship between native and foreign cultures.

Second, with regard to the most important learning task in comprehensive English class, students generally agree that efforts should be made to cultivate language application ability and apply this application ability to actual communication situations.

Third, with regard to the interest in class, most students agree with expressing their views orally, carrying out more group activities and class discussions in class. It is less effective when teachers explain entirely in English as they prefer teachers to explain in Chinese when necessary.

Finally, on language communication skills, most students agree to improve the skills, but there are deficiencies in the learning methods and teaching immersion. Students hope to communicate with teachers and classmates, including foreign teachers and foreign students in English, and learn more about the cultural knowledge of English-speaking countries, so as to improve their language communication ability.

4. Application of CLT in English Courses

Communicative activities are the most important part in CLT teaching. Communicative activities refer to the activities which are organized in classes with elements of communicative needs, communicative function and students' improvisation (Littlewood, 1981). The purpose is not only to gain knowledge, but also to motivate students' interest and improve communicative competence. In the following sections, four examples of communicative activities, role-play, ask and answer activities, discussion and debate, and story-telling, which can be applied in English class, will be discussed with examples.

4.1 Role-play

Role-play is very important in the communicative approach because it allows students an opportunity to practice communicating in different social contexts with different social roles. Students can become any imaginary persons such as Spider-Man, a king, a super star, and so on. On the other hand, they can put themselves in some imaginary situations, like seeing a doctor, on the airplane, or in the supermarket (Yan, 2020). Students could be divided into groups to carry on the performance sequentially to compete in role play activities. The following are the examples:

First, teachers are required to choose proper materials according to the different goals of teaching. For example, the teacher can choose a fairy tale with several characters before giving out the handouts of the story to the students and let them read. This story is different from the original one and it doesn't have an ending.

Next, the whole class can be divided into different groups, and give them different roles, like timekeeper, leader, observer, material collector, and so on. Students can decide their roles. Then, let them work in groups, choose their own character that they want to perform and prepare to act out the story. They can add what they want to say that is different from the handouts, and give an ending to their own story. When time is up, they will perform in class and compete to see who did a good job.

In the role-play activity, students are the center of the class as they work in groups cooperatively. This way, student's communicative competence, performance ability as well as the ability of critical thinking will be improved.

4.2 Ask and Answer Activities

This kind of activity is often used in traditional teaching where the teacher asks questions and the students answer. There are many kinds of ask and answer activities that can be carried out on CLT classroom. The following are some examples.

4.2.1 A Pair / Group Work

This method is used widely in class between desk mates or in groups of four. While doing such pair/group work, students must think about how to ask questions and provide answers to them. This method can provide more opportunities for the students to practice speaking in English.

4.2.2 Chain-question Method

This method can be used in groups of more than four students. Student A asks student B a question using the sentence structure that they learned in class. Student B will then answer the question first, before turning to the next student to ask him the question with the same sentence structure. This time, the student can add something he wants to say. For example, teachers can ask the students to practise like this:

S1 asks S2: Do you have a dictionary? I want to check these words.

S2 answers: No, I haven't, let me ask others.

S2 asks S3: Do you have a dictionary? S1 want to check the words, but I don't have.

S3 answers: Yes.../ No.... Do you have water, I am thirsty.

S4: ...

This method is often used in traditional English teaching classes. If this method is improved to allow students to incorporate more content into sentences and apply it in practical conversations, it will become a better communicative teaching method.

4.2.3 Interview

Interview is a face to face activity between two persons or more. An interviewer can ask the interviewee many questions. The interviewee answers the questions and expresses his own opinions. For example, there are four students; one student is an interviewer, one is a super star, the other two are her friends. The interviewer can use different types of questions like this:

General questions: Is this your most favorite film?

Would you say something about this film?

Alternative questions: Do you like this film or that one?

Tag questions: You are a rich woman in this film, aren't you?

Wh- questions: What's your attitude towards money?

What's your future plan?

... ...

The interviewee responds to the questions. Finally, the interviewer will draw a conclusion and end the interview.

If a student wants to ask a question, he must know the structure of the question, whether the question is simple or complicated, direct or in-direct, general questions or tag questions. Therefore, on the one hand, interview activity is helpful to improve students' language ability including the use of grammar and sentence structures; on the other hand, in the asking and answering activity, students can improve their communicative competence (Yuan, 2021).

4.3 Discussion and Debate

Discussion means students negotiate in groups to solve a problem. Students can think actively, get information and benefit from each other from the discussions. Discussion can improve the students' imagination and creative thinking. Meanwhile, the atmosphere of the class will be very lively. For example, the teacher asks a question according to the text, "What's the relation between nature and human?" Students discuss the question in groups of four, and then the teacher can arrange a competition to see which group gives the most answers.

Debate is usually between two groups. For example, the teacher gives a topic, "Nature and human, which is more powerful?" Students can think for several minutes and decide which group they want to go to. One group holds the supporting view, the other group holds the opposing view. First, they will discuss how to prove their opinion in their own group, and then they will have the debate. In the end, the teacher should lead them to know what to do and what not to do in their actual life.

4.4 Story-telling With Pictures

Stories can provide students a vivid picture of the target language, and increase their interest in English. Hence, story-telling is a very efficient and common way to involve students in English class. The method about how to carry out story-telling activity will be explained in the following paragraphs.

First, there are five pictures about the story. Each of them is different but connected with each other. Based on the story entitled "The Lost Son", the teacher gives every ten students the same picture, and numbers them from one to ten, and gives another picture to another ten students. After ten minutes, teachers can ask some students to describe all the things that happened in their picture.

Second, after several minutes, the teacher collects all the pictures, and asks the students who have the same numbers to form a group. Then, there are ten groups with five students.

Third, each member in a group can describe their own pictures and how these five pictures can be connected. Then each group can go on the stage to perform the stories they made just now. All the stories will be different.

In this activity, each student has their individual roles and has to cooperate with each other to achieve the common goal while the teacher just walks around and offers help when needed.

5. Suggestions for University English Class Teaching

Based on various activities that can be conducted using CLT method, it can be seen that in the teaching of English at university, teachers play a leading role in classroom teaching as they are responsible for content selection, classroom teaching organization and design. As teachers' own language communication skills, cultural literacy and teaching ability directly affect the teaching, they should receive some targeted English teaching training, broaden their horizons, and master relevant knowledge and skills, so as to improve their own cultural literacy and language communication skills. This will enable them to better guide the students

particularly those at the university to build relevant knowledge systems and cultivate students' communicative competence.

In university English class teaching, it is also necessary to create a good language learning environment. With the permission of the school, multi-functional English classrooms, language learning centers, simultaneous interpreter rooms, language laboratories, original movie halls, and so on. can be built to create an English environment. Audio-visual education technology reproduces the typical situation of foreign language teaching, making students feel like they are there. This English environment is crucial to improve students' English language communicative ability. In addition, the English learning platform in the school can be used to provide students with rich audio-visual and video resources, which can be accessed and downloaded at any time.

Additionally, it is important to strengthen the teaching of cultural background and create a relaxed language environment. Cultivating students' intercultural communication awareness and improving intercultural communication ability enables the students to deal with challenges in the actual communication environment, which requires the understanding and cognition of different cultures (Li, 2022). Therefore, in the process of English teaching, the primary goal is not only on the content of textbooks but also on the cultural background information and communicative knowledge. Then students can comprehensively and systematically master the linguistic aspects.

Finally, it is also suggested that schools organize various competitions to cultivate students' thinking ability and language communication abilities. For example, the schools can organize some English competitions and activities, such as English cultural knowledge competitions, speech competitions, debate competitions, drama performances, and so on, to improve students' language communication skills and learning motivation, as well as to meet the needs of individual development. These are conducive for the cultivation and improvement of students' language communication skills.

6. Conclusion

It is universally acknowledged that "language is a vehicle for expression or exchange of thoughts, concepts, knowledge, and information as well as the fixing and transmission of experience and knowledge" (Sunday, 2018). The application of the communicative language teaching method can improve the quality of university English teaching and promote the reform of English teaching approach in China, and give full play to its characteristics and advantages. Furthermore, it can help university students to better master the English language to a certain extent, both in the fluency and accuracy of the language while improving their motivation.

While the findings and teaching suggestions presented in this study could be used as guidelines in university English class teaching, it is worth mentioning that the current study has some shortcomings due to objective conditions such as environment and time as well as subjective factors. Firstly, quantitative study using questionnaires to study students' attitudes towards CLT is not enough. In future research, interviews can be added to investigate both teachers' and students' attitudes on CLT. Secondly, whether the CLT strategy proposed in

this paper can bring benefits to comprehensive English classes in university requires long-term observation in the classroom and continuous reform according to different classroom situations.

In a nutshell, English teachers should fully understand CLT, and try their best to create a communicative environment and design various communicative activities to make students involved in the learning process. English educators should combine China's national policies with CLT in teaching practice, and formulate an English teaching design that is more in line with Chinese university students, so as to cultivate excellent English talents with communicative skills. From the students' point of view, communicative pedagogy not only helps them to learn knowledge but also provides opportunities for them to be more competitive in the market (Li, 2021).

Acknowledgments

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