

# Learners' Attitudes towards using Communicative Approach in Teaching English at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School

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**Abstract**— This study was to explore the learners' attitude towards using the communicative approach in teaching English at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School in terms of their behavioral, cognitive and emotional aspects. To achieve the objectives of the study, a descriptive survey method was used and mixed method approach was employed to collect and analyze data. Under mixed method approach, sequential exploratory strategy was used and the data were gathered through questionnaires, interviews and classroom observation. The findings of the study revealed that the students in the study area have positive attitudes towards the communicative approach. However, they are not enthusiastic to participate in pairs or groups. The study further revealed that students perceive CLT as an effective learning approach and perceive most of the principles, goals, learner's role, features and advantages to improve their language performance. Finally, based on the implication of the findings, recommendations were made for language teachers, curriculum designers and bodies concerned.

**Keywords**— *communicative approach, learners' attitude, teaching English.*

## I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

English is being used as the medium of instruction in high schools and tertiary levels in Ethiopia. Hence, learners are expected to have adequate proficiency in using the language. This is because learners' skill in using the language highly determines their academic performance (Atkins *et.al*, 1995). Students should develop their English language proficiency through the appropriate methodology. Savignon (1971) states that, 'the central theoretical concept in communicative language teaching is 'communicative competence'. Communicative Language Teaching (hereafter CLT) has been introduced in EFL settings to improve students' abilities to use English in real contexts. To compensate for the limitations of the traditional language teaching methods, teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) have been encouraged to implement CLT to help students develop their English language abilities in a given context.

Freeman (1986) noted that in a communicative language class students are actively engaged in negotiating to mean and in trying to make them understand even when their knowledge of the target language is incomplete. In doing so, students are motivated to learn the English language since

they can see the immediate relevance of the language in a given social context. In Ethiopia, English language teaching textbooks were produced based on the communicative approach (MOE 1997). Regarding the CLT approach, local researches were conducted. For example, Surafel (2002) showed that large class size, inadequate background knowledge of the students, scarcity of textbooks, absence/scarcity of supplementary materials (for listening and reading) and exam practice as some common problems English language teachers face while they are trying to implement the approach. Amare (1998) also identified overcrowded classes, shortage of instructional materials, heavy teaching loads as major problems in the implementation of CLT in English classrooms. He further mentions that teachers' attitudes are another source of problems in the teaching learning process in Ethiopia. Likewise, Tigist (2012) concluded that there is a clear mismatch between what teachers, as well as learners, perceive about CLT and what they practice in EFL classes. The above studies focused on finding the constraints that hamper an active implementation of the communicative approach in teaching English. However, this study tried to

explore learners' attitudes towards using the communicative approach in teaching English concerning the behavioral, cognitive and emotional aspects.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In Ethiopia language teaching and learning context, the change in teaching materials by way of employing new syllabuses and the change in teaching approaches have not been paralleled by an attempt to achieve a change in the attitudes of learners involved in implementing the curriculum innovation. Some local research works have also been carried out about this area indicate that the problem observed in teaching was that many teachers complain that Ethiopian students are incapable of communicating in English in the English language classes (Berhanu 1999, Endalkachew 2006, Lakachew 2003 and Yemane 2007). These researches elaborated the teachers' traditional teaching methods have been hindered the implementation of CLT in Ethiopia. The current study was focused on learners' attitudes towards using CLT. It seems that no study separately explored students' attitudes towards CLT in the Ethiopian context. Therefore, it has explored learners' attitudes towards using CLT in teaching English at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School at Grade 11 level. Unlike the previous studies on similar areas, the learners' attitude towards using CLT was addressed in terms of learners' behavioral, cognitive and emotional aspects. This study attempted to evaluate the inadequacy of students' English language proficiency. This could be related to learners' attitudes towards using the Communicative Approach in learning English.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study was to explore learners' attitudes towards using the communicative approach in teaching English at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School Grade 11 in focus. To this end the specific objectives of the study were to:

- Look into the attitudes of students towards the communicative approach in teaching English in terms of their behavioral aspects
- Examine the attitudes of students' towards using the communicative approach in teaching English in terms of the cognitive aspects.
- Scrutinize into learners' attitudes towards using the communicative approach in teaching English in terms of emotional aspects.

## III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ON COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT)

Rodgers(1986) states that CLT encompasses a theory of language and a theory of learning. Briefly, they define an approach as a set of theories about the nature of language and of language learning. A method, on the other hand, is the level at which theory is put into practice and at which choices are made about the particular skills to be taught, the content to be taught, and the order in which the content will be presented. Hymes (1972) made history by challenging Chomsky's view on linguistic competence, and replacing it by the notion of communicative competence. In the words of Canale and Swain (1980) communicative competence refers to the "interaction between grammatical competence, knowledge of the rules of grammar, socio-linguistic competence and knowledge of the rules of language use".

Reid (2003) declared "Attitudes are important to us because they cannot be neatly separated from study." Attitude is considered as an essential factor influencing language performance (Visser 2008). This means that learning language should be approached primarily as a social and psychological phenomenon rather than as a purely academic one. Recently, De Bot et al. (2005) assert that language teachers, researchers and students should acknowledge that high motivation and positive attitude of students facilitate second language learning.

**Behavioral Aspect of Attitude:** The behavioral aspect of attitude deals with the way one behaves and reacts in particular situations. In fact, the successful language learning enhances the learners to identify themselves with the native speakers of that language and acquire or adopt various aspects of behaviors which characterize the members of the target language community. Likewise, Kara (2009) stated that, 'Positive attitudes lead to the exhibition of positive behaviors toward courses of study, with participants absorbing themselves in courses and striving to learn more. Such students are also observed to be more eager to solve problems, to acquire the information and skills useful for daily life and to engage themselves emotionally.'

**Cognitive Aspect of Attitude:** This aspect of attitude involves the beliefs of the language learners about the knowledge that they receive and their understanding in the process of language learning. The cognitive attitude can be classified into four steps of connecting the previous knowledge and the new one, creating new knowledge, checking new knowledge, and applying the new knowledge in many situations. Likewise, cognitive factors are created

when individuals gain information about the attitude object and thereby form beliefs Ajzen and Fishbein (1980).

**Emotional Aspect of Attitude:** Feng and Chen (2009) stated that, “learning process is an emotional process. It is affected by different emotional factors. The teacher and his students engage in various emotional activities in it and varied fruits of emotions are yield.” Attitude can help the learners to express whether they like or dislike the objects or surrounding situations. It is agreed that the inner feelings and emotions of FL learners influence their perspectives and their attitudes towards the target language (Choy and Troudi, 2006). Besides, Eagly and Chaiken (1993) suggest, an affective factor is based on emotional experiences or preferences. Both positive (e.g., delight) and negative affect (e.g., anger) can arise from experiences with the language learning attributes. In short, this paper attempted to integrate the concept of behavioral, cognitive and emotional components of attitudes with CLT practices in the research area.

#### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

##### 4.1 Research Design

To explore learners’ attitudes towards using the communicative approaching in teaching English at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School at Grade 11, a descriptive research method was chosen. It is qualitative and quantitative in nature that data collection and analysis techniques from both methodologies were employed. The sequential exploratory strategy was used since it involves the first phase of qualitative data collection and analysis, followed by the second phase of quantitative data collection and analysis that builds on the results of the first qualitative phase. Data were collected through written questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and observation with the participants. The use of these three data collection instruments helped validate both the answers in the questionnaires, interviews, and observations.

##### 4.2 Research Setting and Sampling Technique of the Study

This study was conducted at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School. The school is found in South Nation, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State, Gurage Zone, Wolkite town which is 158 km away from the capital Addis Ababa. Furthermore, this study was held starting from September 2018 up to April 2019.

The target populations of the study were grade 11 learners at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School. At this grade level, they are preparing for University and are demanded not only

learning but also make themselves ready for the Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Examination. To collect the relevant information, a simple random sampling technique was used. Thus, 120 students out of the total 870 were selected from both social and natural streams for this study.

#### 4.3 Instruments of Data Collection

##### 4.3.1 Questionnaire

To collect data to explore learners’ attitudes towards CLT, a total of 35 questions were designed for sample learners. The first part of the questionnaire (5 items) encompasses students’ background information. The second part of the questionnaire includes 30 items focusing on the attitudes scale to find out students’ attitudes towards using the communicative approach. The options were ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree" (five-point Likert scale).

##### 4.3.2 Classroom Observation

To make sure that the data obtained from the questionnaires are the reflection of what learners of the selected school are practicing the CLT, classroom observation based on checklists was utilized. The classroom observation was intended to strengthen the data gathered through questionnaire and interviews or it primarily focuses on crosschecking the existing attitude possessed by learners’. In addition, it was held two times for 40 minutes in each room. The observation was held during teaching and learning process was ongoing without disturbing the class. All observed data were summarized and changed into the Likert Scale which is a more quantitative way of describing items.

##### 4.3.3 Interview

In addition to questionnaire and classroom observation, a semi-structured interview which includes seven questions were prepared for students. The purpose of the interview with learners was to cross-check the information they filled in the questionnaire. Interviews with nine voluntarily selected students, who filled in the questionnaire, were held to obtain the range of attitudes that students possessed towards using the communicative approach in learning English.

#### 4.4 Data Analysis

Questionnaires that consisted of 35 items were distributed among 120 students’ of which all (100%) were filled in and returned. Among those students, who filled in and returned the questionnaires, 9 were interviewed. Besides, classroom observation was held two times in each (10) class. The classroom observation helped the researchers to get the necessary information on the problems students face in implementing CLT.

The information that was collected on the components of students’ attitudes through questionnaires was analyzed quantitatively and compared to the classroom observation quantitatively in mean, frequencies and percentages. Also, the data which was gained during the classroom observation was reported quantitatively. Finally, the interview was reported qualitatively to strengthen the data obtained through other tools.

**V. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

**5.1.1 Analysis of Students’ Questionnaire on Students’ Attitudes towards Communicative Approach regarding Behavioral, cognitive and emotional Aspect**

As can be seen from the above table under item 1, majority of respondents (i.e. 60%) and respondents (i.e. 26.67%) reported their agreement that students’ involvement is best promoted in communicative EFL classroom. Likewise, for item 2, 53.33% of respondents showed their strong agreement, whereas 33.33% of respondents agreed that in

CLT, group work activities are essential in providing opportunities for co-operative relationships to emerge and in promoting genuine interaction among students. Similarly, item 3 showed that the vast majority of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed on learners should interact primarily with each other rather than with the teacher in EFL classrooms and teachers should involve learners in problem-solving activities. From these items, it is possible to say that learners have positive attitude towards using communicative approach or the above statement regarding their behavioral aspect.

Regarding feedback, in item 5 and item 6 the respondents showed either their strong agreements or agreements that to enhance effective communication in the foreign language; the teacher’s feedback must be focused on the appropriateness and not on the linguistic form of the students’ responses. Likewise, they said that errors are normal (natural) part of learning, much correction is wasteful of time. For item 7, item 8 and item 9, almost all respondents showed strong agreements that Students should be involved in questioning and answering activities.

Table 1: Students’ Response for Behavioral Aspect

Item	5		4		3		2		1		Total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	F
1. Students’ involvement is best promoted in communicative EFL classroom.	72	60	32	26.7	4	3.3	6	5	6	5	120
2. In CLT, group work activities are providing opportunities for co-operative relationships to emerge and promote genuine interaction among students.	64	53.3	40	33.3	10	8.3	6	5	0	0	120
3. Learners should interact primarily with each other rather than with the teacher in EFL classroom.	79	65.8	29	24.2	4	3.3	3	2.5	5	4.2	120
4. In CLT, teachers’ should involve learners in problem- solving activities.	64	53.3	35	29.2	13	10.8	1	0.8	7	5.8	120
5. The teacher’s feedback must be focused on the appropriateness and not on the linguistic form of the students’ responses.	30	25	43	35.8	24	20	14	11.7	9	7.5	120
6. Since errors are normal part of learning, much correction is wasteful of time.	40	33.3	40	33.3	20	16.7	10	8.3	10	8.3	120
7. Students should be involved in questioning and answering activities.	76	63.3	28	23.3	6	5	7	5.83	3	2.5	120
8. Evaluation of students’ progress in language literacy should be carried out on the basis of their day to day classroom communicative performance.	40	33.3	50	41.7	16	13.3	7	5.83	7	5.8	120

9. In CLT, the teacher should correct all the grammatical errors students make.	52	43.3	48	40	7	5.8	11	9.17	2	1.7	120
10. Teacher should play a facilitator role in CLT class.	62	51.7	37	30.8	13	10.8	6	5	2	1.7	120
11. The teacher should act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group.	60	50	24	20	14	11.7	13	10.8	9	7.5	120
12. Teachers should use pair work in which two students work on a given task.	70	58.3	31	25.8	10	8.3	7	5.83	2	1.7	120
13. Teachers should explain new words and phrases and let the learners do the exercises in the textbook.	84	70	20	16.7	6	5	9	7.5	1	0.8	120
Average	61	50.8	34.8	26.5	11.3	9.4	7.7	6.4	4.8	4	120

Keys 5= Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= Undecided, 2= Disagree, and 1= Strongly Disagree

They showed agreements that evaluation of students' progress in language literacy should be carried out on the basis of their day to day classroom communicative performance (e.g. role play). For item 10 the vast majority of respondents, either strong agreed or agreed on teacher should play a facilitator role in CLT class. In so far, the above figure implies that learners have favorable feelings towards the communicative approach under item 8 that evaluation of students' progress in language proficiency should be carried out on the basis of their day to day classroom communicative performance. Under behavioral aspect of students' attitude towards communicative approach 50% of the target group possessed strong agreement on the teacher should act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group and 20% of students claimed their agreement for this item. Similarly, majority of the target respondents (i.e. 58.33%) claimed their strong agreements under item 12 that teachers

should use pair work in which two students work on a given task while 25.83% of them asserted their agreements. In addition, 70% respondents are strongly agreed that teachers should explain new words and phrases and let the learners do the exercises in the text whereas 16.67% of them agreed on teacher's explanation of new words and phrases. From this, we can say that learners have positive attitude that teachers should explain new words and phrases and let the learners do the exercises in the textbook.

In sum, the items in Table 1 imply that a great majority of the target respondent with a total mean value of (50.83%) have positive attitude towards the communicative approach based on their behavioral aspect. So, it is possible to say that majority of the target students' possessed positive as well as favorable attitude towards communicative approach with regard to behavioral aspect.

Table 2: Students' Response for Cognitive Aspect

Item	5		4		3		2		1		Total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1. CLT enhances good EFL.	74	61.7	36	30	7	5.8	3	2.5	0	0	120
2. CLT gives equal attention to all skills.	42	35	44	36.7	21	17.5	10	8.3	3	2.5	120
3. The communicative tasks engage students to put primary focus on meaning.	51	42.5	37	30.8	15	12.5	12	10	5	4.2	120
4. In CLT, grammar should be taught only as a means to an end and not as an end.	36	30	42	35	20	16.7	17	14.2	5	4.1	120
5. The communicative tasks in the course material are appropriate for the students to develop their language skills.	58	48.3	29	24.2	17	14.2	10	8.3	6	5	120
6. The communicative tasks are based on the student-centered approach.	44	36.6	39	32.5	21	17.5	12	10	4	3.3	120
		7							4	3	



<b>7. The communicative tasks promote the development of integrated language skills.</b>	44	36.7	44	36.7	16	13.3	12	10	4	3.3	120
<b>8. The tasks are appropriate to increase students' participation.</b>	72	60	30	25	7	5.83	10	8.33	1	0.8	120
<b>9. Students can suggest what the content of the lesson should be or what activities are useful for them in language classroom.</b>	62	51.7	39	32.5	8	6.7	10	8.33	1	0.8	120
<b>10. The teacher must supplement the textbook with other materials so as to develop the student's communicative skill.</b>	70	58.3	28	23.3	11	9.17	8	6.67	3	2.5	120
Average	55.3	46.1	36.8	30.7	14.3	11.9	10.4	8.67	3.2	2.6	120

**Keys: - 5= Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= Undecided, 2= Disagree, and 1= Strongly Disagree**

In Table 2, item 1 indicated that 61.7% of that participants confirmed they are strong agreed that communicative approach enhances good EFL learning; whereas 30% of them said they agreed. So, it is possible to say students possessed favorable feelings towards using the communicative approach in enhancing good EFL learning. In addition, 35% of respondents their asserted strong agreement for item 2 that the communicative approach gives equal attention to all language skills rather than focusing only to productive skills. Also 36.67% of the target groups showed their agreements. Likewise, for item 3 majority of respondents (i.e 42.5%) preferred strong agreements that the communicative tasks in the course material engage students to put a primary focus on meaning; whereas 37 (30%) students possessed agreement, 12 (10%) disagreed, 5 (4.17%) strongly disagreed, and 15 (12.5%) of the respondents favored no decision, respectively. Moreover, 30% of respondents preferred strong agreement for item 4 that in using CLT grammar should be taught only as a means to an end and not as an end in it. Whereas, 35% respondents agreed, 16.67% had no decision, 14.17% of students disagreed, and only 4.17% of the participants strongly disagreed. Besides, 48.3% respondents strongly agreed that the communicative tasks in the course material are appropriate for the students to develop their language skills while, 24.2% of them confirmed their agreement. For item 6 in Table 2, the majority of respondents (i.e. 36.7%) reported strong agreement; while 32.5%) of the respondents agreed with the issue that the communicative tasks are based on the student-centered instructional approach. From the rest 17.5% of respondents did not decided, 17.5% of respondents disagreed, and 3.33% of respondents strongly disagreed respectively that the communicative tasks are based on the student-centered instructional approach. Similarly, the

majority of students claimed either strong agreement or agreement for item 7 that the communicative tasks promote the development of integrated language skills in the classroom.

In the above table, it is indicated that majority of respondents asserted their strong agreement and agreement for item 8 that the communicative tasks are appropriate to increase students' participation. Similarly, vast majority of them reflected their strong agreement and agreement for item 9 that students can suggest what the content of the lesson should be or what activities are useful for him/her in language classroom. As can be seen from the above table, the majority of respondents (i.e. 58.33%) asserted their strong agreement under item 10 that the teacher must supplement the textbook with other materials and tasks so as to develop the student's communicative skill. Whereas, 23.33% of students claimed their agreement for the issue raised under item 10. The rest 9.17% of reported no decision that the teacher must supplement the textbook with other materials and tasks so as to develop the student's communicative skill, but only 6.67% of students disagreed and 2.5% of them strongly disagreed respectively.

All in all, the above figure and statement implies that the target respondents have favorable attitude towards using the cognitive aspect of communicative approach with a maximum average value of (55.3%). As a result it is possible to say the students have positive perception towards using the communicative approach in relation to their cognitive aspect.

When we see from Table 3 for item no. 1, the majority of respondents (i.e. 57.5%) asserted their strong agreements; whereas, 27.5% of the respondents possessed agreement that students' social development is best promoted in

communicative EFL classroom. Likewise, 50% of the respondents reported their strong agreement for item 2 that in CLT approach, students should correct their grammatical

errors in pair or group is essential. But, 30% of students showed agreement in using CLT approach, students should correct their grammatical errors in pair or group is essential.

Table 3: Students’ Response for Emotional Aspect

Item	5		4		3		2		1		Total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	
<b>1. Students’ social development is best promoted in communicative EFL classroom.</b>	69	57.5	33	27.5	5	4.17	8	6.67	5	4.17	120
<b>2. In CLT approach, Students should correct their grammatical errors in pair or group is essential.</b>	60	50	36	30	16	13.33	4	3.33	4	3.33	120
<b>3. CLT help learners to take responsibility of their learning process more than teacher centered approaches.</b>	49	40.8	45	37.5	9	7.5	13	10.8	4	3.33	120
<b>4. Students are more willing to take risk in communicative EFL classes than teacher fronted (lockstep) classes.</b>	46	38.3	38	31.6	17	14.17	16	13.3	3	2.5	120
<b>5. The communicative tasks help the students to use the target language outside the classroom.</b>	61	50.8	33	27.5	13	10.83	10	8.33	3	2.5	120
<b>6. In CLT approach, teachers should make the learners exchange letters, write reports, advertisements etc. cooperatively.</b>	53	44.1	33	27.5	16	13.33	4	3.33	14	11.6	120
<b>7. In CLT class, teachers should correct learners’ error in controlled practice activities like question and answer.</b>	62	51.6	31	25.8	7	5.83	10	8.33	10	8.33	120
Average	57	47.6	35	29.6	11	9.88	9	7.74	6	5.12	120
			6		.9		3		14		

Keys: - 5= Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= Undecided, 2= Disagree, and 1= Strongly Disagree

Similarly, for item 3, majority of the respondents (i.e. 40.83%) ‘strongly agreed’ that CLT help learners to take responsibility of their learning process more than teacher centered approaches; while 37.5% of the respondents reported their agreement in using CLT help learners to take responsibility of their learning process more than teacher centered approaches.

Likewise, for item 4, 38.33% of students reported their strong agreement for the issue that students are more willing to take risk in communicative EFL classes than teacher fronted (lockstep) classes. While, 31.67% of targets claimed their agreement that students are more willing to take risk in communicative EFL classes than teacher fronted (lockstep) classes.

Moreover, for item 5, more than half of the respondents (i.e. 50.83%) reported their strong agreement for the statement that the communicative tasks help the students to use the

target language outside the classroom; whereas, 27.5% of the respondents possessed agreement.

As can be seen 44.17% respondents which are beyond half students reported ‘strong agreement’ for item 6 that in CLT approach, teachers should make the learners exchange letters, write reports, advertisements etc. cooperatively. While, 27.5% of respondents claimed their agreement in CLT approach, teachers should make the learners exchange letters, write reports, advertisements etc.

In addition, half and more 62 (51.67%) respondents asserted their strong agreement for item 7 that in CLT class, teachers should correct learners’ error in controlled practice activities like question and answer. From the rest, 31 (25.83%) respondents claimed ‘agreement’ for CLT class, teachers should correct learners’ error in controlled practice activities like question and answer.

Generally, the above figure and statement implies that students of the target school have constructive attitude towards using communicative approach based on their emotional aspect with a total mean value of (47.62%). In addition, there is a high frequency of 'strong agreement' and 'agreement' choices in the above table. From this, it is possible to conclude that students of the target school possessed positive attitude towards communicative approach regarding their emotional aspect.

Overall, the cognitive component of attitudes (i.e., beliefs) was found to be more influential on students' attitudes towards using communicative approach of learning English language than were affective or behavioral components. This result contributes to theoretical evidence of the adequate role that the cognitive component had on positive attitude formation toward language learning (as defined by Ajzen and Fishbein 1980).

## 5.2 Analysis of Students' Interviews

In this part seven semi-structured questions to gather information were developed regarding learners attitude towards using the communicative approach in teach English at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory school which focused on grade 11. The data which is gained from the target interviewees' about the components of attitude (behavioral aspect, cognitive aspect and emotional aspects of attitude) is analyzed as follows.

*Do you think CLT has advantages in the language teaching and learning process?*

Most of the target interviewees' responded that using CLT approach has great advantage in learning English language. For example, seven out of nine interviewees reported that CLT has an advantage, because using communicative approach is based on the premise that successful language learning involves not only knowledge of structures and forms of the language, but also the functions and purposes that a language serves in different communicative settings. They added that communicative approach emphasizes the communication of meaning over practice and manipulation of grammatical forms. However, two of them responded that they did not see any benefit of communicative approach in teaching. Thus, it possible to infer that majority of the respondents believe that using CLT approach has great advantage.

*How do you feel the practicability of CLT in your classroom?*

All interviewees except two students felt that Communicative approach is helpful to develop the students' communicative competence as well as linguistic knowledge. The goal of communicative approach is to develop the

students' communicative competence which covers both the spoken and written language and all four language skills. The development of communicative competence requires realistic interaction among learners using meaningful, contextualized language, i.e., communicative approach. In addition, CLT reflects a more social relationship between the teacher and learner as well as learner and his/her mates. This learner-centered approach gives students a sense of ownership of their learning and enhances their motivation. Through these small group activities, the students are engaged in meaningful and authentic language use rather than in the merely mechanical practice of language patterns. Furthermore, CLT favors the introduction of authentic materials. It is considered desirable to give learners the opportunity to develop strategies for understanding language as it is actually used by native speakers. Communicative activities can create authentic situations where communication takes place. In addition, there are a variety of communicative activities (e.g. games, role plays simulations, and problem-solving tasks), which give students an opportunity to practice communicating meaningfully in different contexts and in different roles.

At the same time, students' reported that CLT approach can help learners' to increase their social interaction. It is fact that CLT mainly focuses on working in pairs or groups in side language learning classrooms, through this time learners from different social background interact each other and this can lead them to increase their social interaction.

*What is your perception about the role of the learners in the language classroom?*

This question was aimed to extract information regarding the practicability of communicative approach inside language learning classroom which centers learners' needs; following this **all** of the respondents described that it is true that communicative approach help students' learn more when they are engaged in activities that make them active participant, but most of the time the situation in their school did not suit condition to learn language through communicative approach rather they learn language through teacher centered approach. Likewise, all of the selected interviewees' reported that except classroom activities, communicative activities which ensure language competence are rarely practiced inside language learning classrooms, and more emphasis should be given to active modes of learning such as pair or group work in problem solving tasks in order to maximize the time allotted to each student for learning to negotiate meaning.



*Would you mention some of the techniques and activities in CLT Class?*

This was aimed at eliciting learners’ attitudes towards their role at communicative language learning approach, afterward all the target interviewees’ responded that learners’ should participate in classroom activities cooperatively rather than individualistically, be comfortable with listening to their peers in group work or pair work tasks, rely less on the teacher as a model, and take on a greater degree of responsibility for their own learning.

In addition, most of target interviewees reported that the role of the learner is negotiator between the self, the learning process, and the object of learning. Learners are actively engaged in negotiating meaning by trying to make them understood and in understanding others within the classroom procedures and activities. There are a variety of communicative activities (e.g. games, role plays simulations, and problem-solving tasks), which give students an opportunity to practice communicating meaningfully in different contexts and in different roles. In the process of the performance of these activities, students’ error correction may be infrequent.

Moreover, all interviewees’ claimed that students are expected to interact vigorously with each other in order to maximize the time allotted to each student for learning to negotiate meaning. Through these small group activities, the students are engaged in meaningful and authentic language use rather than in the merely mechanical practice of language patterns. During learning process of CLT, students’ are hoped to communicate orally and conquer all components of communicative competence and teacher is being motivator, assessor, facilitator, and corrector during students’ discussion or speaking in front of the class. In addition, the teacher also should make their lesson interesting so the students don’t fall asleep during learning English.

*Does your teacher give you problem solving activities in language classroom?*

All target interviewees’ claimed as they participates actively in various activities which focuses on real oral communication with variety of language without too focus on form of grammatical patterns if distinguished with non-communicative activities which only focus on how to construct the sentences that based on terms of grammatical during learning process of English. For example S5 and S7 argued as they participate voluntarily in classroom activities and home-take assignments in pairs or group.

*What are those activities given in the classroom?*

Regarding the next interview question on whether their teachers participates them in problem solving communicative activities which suit them or not, nearly all the selected interviewees argued that their teacher participates them only in classroom activities that not comfort them rather than exposing to do more communicative activities like; writing and exchanging letters, role-plays, simulation, dialogues, drama and simulation play which are activities maximizing communication opportunity. For example: they reported that mostly the teacher presents peer-evaluation, discussion and debating.

Frequently, the findings revealed that target students (grade-11) at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School have positive attitude towards using the communicative approach of language learning for the sake of effective communication by using the target language in a real context.

**5.3 Analysis of Classroom Observation**

In order to find out grade eleven students actual classroom practices observation sessions were conducted using a checklists. Three classroom observations were held for a week and they were conducted from three different teachers twice for each classroom. The lessons were on conditional clauses. They all were presented by the help of plasma television. The data were analyzed and discussed as follows.

Table 4: Classroom Observation Result

List of Observation	Yes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%
<b>1. The students are willing to participate in group and pair work.</b>	4	44.44	5	55.55
<b>2. The students ask questions to their teachers enthusiastically.</b>	1	11.11	8	88.89
<b>3. The learners’ are devoted to participate in problem solving activities.</b>	2	22.22	7	77.78
<b>4. The students’ show commitment to listen to teacher’s explanation.</b>	4	44.44	5	55.55
<b>5. Students’ are willing to participate in classroom activities maximizing communication opportunity</b>	-	-	9	100

<b>6. Students' are devoted to do the activities focus on language as a medium of communication.</b>	-	-	9	100
<b>7. Learners' actively interact primarily with each other rather than with the teacher in EFL classroom.</b>	-	-	9	100
<b>8. Students are more willing to take risk in communicative EFL classes than teacher centered classes.</b>	-	-	9	100
<b>9. In CLT classes, learners' are devoted to focus at meaningful communication rather than grammatical skills.</b>	-	-	9	100

The first research question was meant to obtain data concerning whether students' are willing to participate in group or pair works in language classrooms. During observation, the researchers and other co-observers checked that there is inactive participation of learners' in group or pair works which ranged (44.44%) inside language learning classrooms. In relation with this, the researchers observed various constraints that hamper learners' participation in group or pair works, those are related with lack of resources (facilities), large class size, arrangement of desks, lack of supplementary materials, students' English abilities and their low level of motivation to learn English, students' expectations, strong influence of the examinations (language aptitude), the textbook, students' discipline and teacher-centered approach were the most common problems that act against the effective implementation of communicative approach. From this, we can conclude that even if learners' possess favorable attitude towards communicative approach (i.e. reported in questionnaire and interview part), there is a mismatch between learners' attitude and real practice of the approach. The findings of this study are aligned with the study of by Nolasco and Arthur (1986), which was held at Moroccan secondary schools and listed out that students' interest, discipline, physical constraints (e.g., arrangement of desks), students' preference of grammar and exam practice, large class size, administrative problems and students' reluctance to use English when put into pairs and groups are the common factors that hampers an accomplishment of communicative approach.

In addition, the researchers get in touch with identifying whether learners' at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School are devoted to raise questions for their language instructors or not. Following this (11.11%) of students' in language classroom asks their teachers for further clarification of the course. The observation result confirms that students' prefer being quiet rather than asking their teachers for better clarification of the lecture.

Moreover, issue raised under the classroom observation check list was aimed to gain data on learners' active participation in problem solving activities; only (22.22%) are devoted to participate in problem solving communicative activities. This implies that the vast majority of learners did not participate in problem solving communicative activities except doing class works in pairs and groups. In addition, teachers not let them to practice meaning focused activities inside language classrooms. This shows that there is a clear discrepancy between learners' perception and their actual practice. In addition, issue raised under the classroom observation check list was aimed to elicit information on students' commitment to listen to teacher's explanation, (44.44%) learners are committed while (55.55%) are not committed to listen to teacher's explanation.

In addition, students' enthusiasm in participating in classroom activities maximizing communication opportunity e.g. (role play, drama, dialogue, simulation play, drama, dialogue, simulation, problem solving etc.) are observed through this study and the result reveals that students' have low access of participating in such activities as a result of different factors: like, uncomfortable arrangement of desks, overcrowded classes, lack of supplementary materials, students' English abilities and their low level of motivation to learn English, students' expectations, the textbook, students' discipline and teacher-centered approach.

Moreover, Students' are not willing to participate in classroom activities maximizing communication opportunity and they are not actively interacting primarily with each Other. Also the learners are not willing to take risk in communicative EFL classes than teacher centered classes and they are not devoted to focus at meaningful communication rather than grammatical skills.

In general, the result of classroom observation reveals that communicative approach inside language learning classroom is not well performed by the students'. In addition, many teachers do not give group or pair work activities

emphasizing on both fluency and accuracy or activities focusing on language as a medium of communication.

## VI. DISCUSSIONS

The first research objective was aimed to explore into learners' attitudes towards using the communicative approach in teaching English language regarding the behavioral aspect. The overall findings indicated that most of grade 11 students at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School possessed positive attitude towards using the communicative approach in teaching English language. However, the implementation of using communicative approach in teaching English language is not as required by the syllabus. This result is in line with the result of study conducted by Hailu (2004) which investigated in grade 11 and 12 school teaching oral skills in English through communicative activities. The results indicated that the learners held strong beliefs and positive attitudes toward CLT. Even though, the learners have attitudinal problem, because of the target language has not much value starting from the school students to the society. Their favorable beliefs and attitudes led them to try out CLT in the classrooms and adopt CLT successfully. Also, in line with the result of Tigist (2013) done at Bahir Dar University and Rao (2002) explored thirty Chinese EFL undergraduates' perceptions of communicative and non-communicative activities using quantitative and qualitative data showed that the participants favoring some communicative (e.g., student-student and student-teacher interaction, personal responses to students' exercises, and songs) and other non-communicative activities (e.g., audio-lingual drills, dictionary exercises, teacher's explanations of grammatical rules, error correction, and obedience to teacher's instruction). Meanwhile, the respondent learners professed that although they knew that CLT Principles are important to develop one's communicative competence and help to share ideas and experiences, it is difficult to make it effective because it wastes time and it doesn't go in harmony with the examination that they are accustomed to do and they are incapable of communicating (writing and speaking) in English.

Moreover, the second research objective was aimed to explore into the attitudes of learners' towards using the communicative approach in teaching English language regarding the cognitive aspect. The data gained through questionnaire, interview and class-room observation revealed that students at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School have favorable attitude towards using the communicative approach of teaching English language regarding the cognitive aspect.

This result goes in line with the result of Mohamad, entitled "EFL Students' Attitudes towards Learning English Language: The Case of Libyan Secondary School Students" that cognitive performance can be achieved if the EFL learners possess positive attitudes and enjoy acquiring the target language. Likewise, the result of this study matches with the study of Lakachew (2003) assessed EFL teachers' attitude towards the communicative approach and claims that the majority of respondents (teachers) have favorable attitude towards communicative language teaching. Most of the results of the 'average' scores of the attitude scale ranged between 3 and 4.5, which then suggest teachers have mildly positive attitude towards CLT. The mean results of few statements, in contrast, were less than 3, revealing teachers' mild disagreement with the statements. In addition, the mean results of each item failed to record the two extreme scores in the attitude scale, i.e., it is unlikely to find either 5 (strong agreement) or 1 (strong disagreement) in the teachers' responses of each statement, implying that teachers' moderate acceptance of the idea of communicative principles.

The third research objective was proposed to explore into the attitudes of students' towards using the communicative approach in teaching English regarding the emotional aspect at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School grade 11 in focuses. Based on the obtained data grade 11 students' at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School generally have positive attitude towards using the communicative approach of teaching English language regarding the emotional aspect. This result is in line with that in Al-Nofaie's (2010) that examined the attitudes of Saudi teachers and students towards using Arabic as a facilitating tool in English classes. It was revealed that the teachers and the students showed generally positive attitudes about using Arabic rather than English language. However, few of the respondents in this study had a positive attitude and wished to speak English fluently. This finding highlights the importance of encouraging the students to participate in collaborative dialogues and activities in which they can acquire the language effectively and this can enhance EFL learners to observe and assess their progress in learning English language.

Generally, the cognitive component of attitudes was found to be more influential on students' attitudes towards using communicative approach of teaching English than were affective or behavioral components. This result contributes to theoretical evidence of the adequate role that the cognitive component had on positive attitude formation toward language learning (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980). The cognitive aspect represents the highest average score of attitudes

towards using the communicative approach of teaching English. The findings indicate that the majority of the respondents showed positive cognitive attitude.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Learners' attitude towards using the communicative approach in teaching English language at Wolkite Yaberus Preparatory School in Grade 11 was explored as the main objective of the study. The major findings of this study are summarized as follows:

- The students at the study area have positive attitudes towards using the communicative approach in teaching English language. Students perceive most of the principles, goals, learner's role, features and advantages of using communicative language teaching approach.
- The majority of the students under the study area have favorable/ positive attitudes towards the communicative approach of language teaching with regard to their behavioral, cognitive and emotional aspects.
- The learners are not enthusiastic to participate in communicative language teaching classrooms whether in pair or group. The data obtained from the interviews and classroom observations revealed that learners are less enthusiastic in participating in communicative activities, practices and exercises that enhances adequate proficiency.
- Learners still believe teachers' correction of learners' errors is necessary, and mastery of English can hardly be obtained in absence of explicit grammar instruction, aspects that clearly lean toward a traditional learning philosophy.
- Overall, the cognitive component of attitudes was found to be more influential on students' attitudes towards communicative approach of learning English language than were emotional or behavioral components. This result contributes to theoretical evidence of the adequate role that the cognitive component had on positive attitude formation toward language learning.

Based on the findings, students are expected to participate in pair and or group works so as to carry out their responsibility in language learning classroom. School administrators in general and language department in specific should create conducive language learning opportunities inside and outside

of the school so as to enhance learners' to make use of the language. Establishing English club and declaring one day as an English day help learners' to use the language in school. Teachers should create opportunities for students' to actively participate in communicative activities and practices whether in groups or pair. Furthermore, they should integrate up-to-date materials and supplementary resources in addition to the English text books. This can help them capture students' attention to learn English successfully. The EFL students must be aware that communicative approach encourages EFL learners to collaborate and discuss their experiences and other issues regarding language learning. This can increase their attitude, enthusiasm and their motivation to acquire the language. Finally Ministry of Education (MoE) should work on situations maximizing the students' language proficiency and exposure at elementary grades. Students' should start using English language communicatively not at a higher level, but at the grass root level.

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