Analyzing Exercises in An English Textbook Entitled 'Think' (CEFR A1) Based on Communicative Language Teaching

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Abstract

Background: Recent studies found that some English textbooks do not support Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles that are suitable to be emphasised in teaching with the current emancipated curriculum in Indonesia.

Objective: This study attempts an analysis on exercises in an English textbook entitled "Think" (CEFR A1) by Cambridge University Press for seventh graders. The research was to analyze the extent to which the exercises in the textbook follow the principles of CLT, to explore the teachers' perspective in the use of textbooks to support CLT, and to describe the students' performances of the communicative classroom activities.

Methods: The research used a qualitative case study method employing document analysis, teachers' interview and classroom observations in a private Islamic Junior High School in Semarang, Central Java.

Findings: The results show that the textbook strongly promotes communicative competence dominated by task completion activities with a proportion of individual tasks excelling in pair/group works in them.

Conclusion: However, the large number of exercises makes this book seem like a workbook. Although the teachers have adequate understanding of CLT principles and the activities presented in the textbook, the interviews showed that time constraints meant that most of the time, they could only use task completion and role play. The results of the students' performance showed that most of them succeeded in practicing the role play well although the low achievers who had problems in practicing the dialogue needed better scaffolding and time during the tasks completion.

Keywords: CLT; content analysis; textbook; types of communicative exercises

Introduction

English language teaching in Indonesia has undergone complex changes and developments over time (Zein et al., 2020). The curriculum implemented has been reviewed periodically in such a way as to maximize the application of language teaching so that learning objectives are achieved. Currently, Indonesia is implementing Emancipated curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka) that covers several elements to ensure quality learning. These include a variety of learning strategies applying different methods, using various learning resources such as textbooks, videos, interactions between students and students and also students and teachers to build social competence, and developing 21st century skills such as communication, creativity, and teamwork. From these elements, we can see that communication is an important component. The need for good communication skills in English is increasing and at the present time, the urgency for English language education has created a huge demand.

To realize adequate communication skills in learning English as learning outcomes, a number of specific supporting factors are required as well as the existence of fundamental pillars of effective language education. Those factors include teachers and non-human factors such as teaching materials, facilities, and teaching methods (Idris & Jamal, 1992). Instructional materials/resources, environment, and students' conditions also influence their academic results. Therefore, teachers must be selective in choosing and using learning resources and actively and communicatively applying appropriate learning methods.

As learning resources, textbooks are indicated to be ubiquitous and widely used in classrooms (Woodward & Elliott, 1990). As early as 1913, the textbooks played an important role in instruction. Since then, many studies have confirmed the dominance of the textbook in the classroom. In Indonesia, one of the sources of instructional materials dominantly used is also textbooks. As textbooks transfer knowledge to the students, they play a key role in determining the students' achievement. In order to provide appropriate textbooks for specific groups of the students, English teachers should be involved in the evaluation process by identifying the textbooks' strengths and weaknesses in relation to their own teaching situation. Furthermore, Grant (1987) believes that there are no perfect textbooks and that the best textbooks are those that best suit the group of students. Such a book should suit the teacher, the students' needs, interest, and abilities, and also the needs of official public teaching syllabuses or examinations.

It is hoped that the use of textbooks will enable teachers to realize the curriculum's goal of developing students' communication skills. As a result, textbooks used by teachers must support the communicative exercises to make students communicative in class. The current learning pattern which is compatible with that goal is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as it reinforces writing, reading, speaking and listening skills in various contexts via interdependent communication and learning (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a student-centered approach that emphasizes real life communication. It focuses on meaningful communication, interactive activities, and authentic language use, as well. Besides, it encourages students to actively participate, collaborate, and develop fluency. Richards (2006) stated that CLT can be understood as a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom. Communicative language teaching sets as its goal the teaching of communicative competence including several aspects of language knowledge such as knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions, knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants, how to produce and understand different types of texts, and how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge.

CLT sees language learning from a very different perspective as resulting from processes like interaction between the learner and users of the language, collaborative creation of meaning, creating meaningful and purposeful interaction through language, negotiation of meaning as the learner and his or her interlocutor arrive at understanding, learning through attending to the feedback learners get when they use the language, paying attention to the language one hears (the input) and trying to incorporate new forms into one's developing communicative competence, and trying out and experimenting with different ways of saying things. CLT is applied through pair work activities, role plays, group work activities and project work. The type of classroom activities proposed in CLT also implied new roles in the classroom for teachers and learners. Students now have to participate in classroom activities based on a cooperative approach to learning while teachers have to assume the role of facilitator and monitor.

Several CLT-related studies have been conducted, showing English textbooks that follow CLT principles with communicative exercises and exploring teachers' understanding of CLT principles in the classroom. Firiady (2018) analysed six textbooks from the Center of English for International Communication (CEIC) at the Language Institute of Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta. The study found that the books accommodate CLT-based learning activities, which include functional communication and social interaction. Most of the CLT activities are information sharing tasks, such as class surveys and information gap activities. Besides, Alharbi (2020) examined an English textbook for middle schools in Saudi Arabia. His analysis showed that the book largely reflected CLT principles with a balance between accuracy and fluency. The activities provided are communicative in nature, providing students with ample opportunities for pair work and group discussion through information gap exercises. However, these activities generally lack authenticity, thus limiting students' freedom in using the target language. In addition, Ramadhanty (2022) conducted research to explore the use of materials and communicative exercises in the textbook 'Pathway to English' based on CLT for eleventh grade of Senior High School students. The result showed that there are all kinds of materials and all types of communicative exercises in the textbook dominated by task-continuity. Additionally, Rivera (2024) assessed that the 'English Expressways IV' textbook used in fourth grade high schools in Negros Occidental adhered to the principles of CLT.

In contrast to the previously mentioned researches, Goodarzi et al. (2020) examined three newly published English textbooks for junior high schools in Iran, known as 'Prospect Series'. The results showed that although designed to follow the CLT approach, the books had not fully fulfilled their communicative, cognitive and creative potential and still lacked some important elements of CLT. Furthermore, Nayeen et al. (2020) who analyzed an English textbook entitled 'English for today (EFT)' developed for higher secondary level found that the textbook is not effective to support the students' communicative skills. Moreover, Nguyen and Le (2020) conducted an analysis of 'English 6', one of the four mandatory English textbooks for students in grades 6 to 9 in all junior high schools in Vietnam since 2001. The study concluded that the book lacked variety in activities and tasks, with most of them focusing on form, thus not supporting the development of students' communicative competence. Still with the same result, Ahmad et al. (2023) reported that the contents of an ESL textbook entitled 'English 2', which is

used by grade 2 students in public schools and some private schools in Punjab, Pakistan. was not aligned with the principles of CLT, so it was considered less supportive of students' communicative competence development. In addition, Jamshid (2023) also revealed that intermediate English textbooks for Grade 11 & 12 of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Textbook Board do not incorporate all the principles of CLT as listening skill is completely not employed.

The previously mentioned studies focus more on the content of textbooks that refer to CLT. Meanwhile, when viewed in terms of the application of textbooks in CLT practices in the classroom, Dao and Newton (2021) observed that Vietnamese EFL university teachers using the 'New Cutting Edge – Elementary' textbook tended to reduce the communicative nature of the activities. Instead, they implemented a teacher-centered approach with explicit grammar explanations and drill exercises. Teachers also often replaced the variety of tasks in the textbooks with more traditional methods, influenced by concerns over the suitability of the tasks for low-ability students, exam pressure and time constraints. Likewise, Bui (2022) reported that the implementation of two English textbooks for grade 12 students in support of the Vietnam National Foreign Language Project 2020 faced various problems. The books were considered less effective in achieving the expected communicative competence development goals.

Based on the explanation mentioned before, as recent studies found that some English textbooks do not support CLT principles and how teachers and students perceive and practice CLT are rarely investigated, the writer is interested in conducting analysis on the English textbook entitled "Think" (CEFR A1) using CLT principles to investigate whether the communicative exercises in the textbook facilitate the students in learning language by exploring the following research questions: (1) What types of communicative exercises are found in the textbook? (2) What are the teachers' perceptions in the use of textbooks to support Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)? (3) How do the students perform the communicative classroom activities?

Literature Review

Textbook and EFL textbook

Before discussing textbooks specifically in the EFL context, the general meaning of textbooks needs to be understood. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, a

textbook is defined as "a book that teaches a particular subject and that is used especially in schools and colleges". Cunningsworth (1984, p. 1) elaborated the definition stating that a textbook is a written work produced by individuals who have good experience and qualifications and the content in textbooks generally undergoes careful testing through pilot studies in actual teaching situations before finally being published.

According to Singh et al., (2020), textbooks are one of the main resources in education that plays an important role in improving the quality of teaching and learning. Textbooks play a vital role in the learning process as primary instructional resources that support the attainment of learning objectives and targeted competencies (Surma et al., 2018; van den Ham & Heinze, 2018). In addition, Rahmawati et al. (2021) asserted that textbooks not only function as learning resources, but also as learning media used by teachers to deliver material systematically. These books are usually prepared in a planned manner by experts in the field of education and language, and are accompanied by other supporting teaching materials to help students achieve learning objectives effectively.

Another definition is proposed by Radić-Bojanić & Topalov (2016). They state that textbooks are undoubtedly the most popular teaching materials used in foreign language classes. Therefore, it is highly significant that textbooks include the essential elements of language and culture and that they correspond to learners' needs, cultural background and level of linguistic proficiency.

Turner (2022) believed that textbooks are an established educational resource which are undergoing a renaissance, with teachers increasingly interested in how they can be used to help students. She also adds that a textbook is a point of focus for students, providing clear and accurate support and potentially reducing the cognitive burden.

In English classrooms, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook is seen to be an almost universal element of English language teaching (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994). Moreover, Sheldon (1988) said as a further remark that the EFL textbook is the visible heart of any English Language Teaching (ELT) program. Moreover, Tomlinson (2012) stated that English textbooks are one of the most crucial components of language learning programmes. They provide learners with adequate inputs for language practice and serve as a reliable source of inspiration for teachers, especially those with less experience in planning and implementing classroom

instruction (McDonough et al., 2013; Richards, 2001). Similarly, Tomlinson and Masuhara (2017) emphasised that ELT textbooks not only provide rich input, but also encourage the intake process and produce purposeful language output. ELT textbooks are designed to integrate teaching and learning processes effectively. In fact, some scholars view textbooks as the main medium in English language learning (Mishan & Timmis, 2015; Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2017). In accordance with the definitions mentioned before, it is concluded that an EFL textbook is a reference that contains a collection of English materials and practices to support the ELT learning process.

Cortazzi and Jin (1999) referred to a textbook as a teacher, a map, a resource, a trainer and an authority. As a teacher, a textbook educates students about important information related to grammar, vocabulary and culture in English-speaking countries. As a map, a textbook is likened to directions that provide an outline of linguistic and cultural elements as a structured program guiding students and teachers to follow the steps that have been taken in previous learning to reach a destination which means achieving the learning objectives. A textbook is viewed as a resource as it contains a set of materials and activities that the teacher can choose. It can also serve as a trainer for novice teachers giving them valuable instructions, support and guidance. Lastly, as an authority, a textbook is seen as a valid and reliable tool written by experts and authorized by official publishers or ministries of education.

Textbook evaluation

The condition that occurs nowadays is that not all teachers are given the authority to choose which textbooks will be used for the teaching and learning process. Textbooks are accepted or rejected, depending on whether they cover the national syllabus set by the authorities. The decision to select textbooks can involve certain stakeholders within the school. So, whether the teachers like it or not, they have to use the textbook of the stakeholders' choice. In this situation, it is still important to be able to evaluate the books that the teachers use based on a reasonable and principled basis. This evaluation process is the first step in deciding how a book should be used in the classroom – and how it should be adapted.

Grant (1987) metaphorically describes textbook evaluation like buying a new coat because there are several factors that must be considered to determine which coat we will

ultimately choose. When we do this, there will be three questions asked. First, whether the book fits all or some aspects of specific needs, preferences, and characteristics. Next, if it does, we also have to evaluate how well it fits and how it compares with others that also fit. Lastly, after the teachers have had it for a time like one semester or academic year, whether the textbook still fits should be assessed.

According to Alshumaimeri and Alharbi (2024), evaluating textbooks is crucial to ensure that learning materials align with students' educational needs, particularly in EFL contexts that require awareness of linguistic and cultural differences. Given that textbooks often serve as the primary instructional tool in language classrooms, a rigorous evaluation framework is necessary to assess their alignment with learning objectives and cultural relevance. This enables the adaptation of materials to suit diverse educational settings. Supporting this view, Sievert et al. (2019) emphasized that a textbook's quality is reflected in its ability to enhance students' competence—the more it contributes to competence development, the more effective and high-quality it is considered.

Exercises in the textbook

Exercises can also be considered as tasks. Richards (2006, p. 22) states that tasks and exercises refer to the activities which give students the opportunities to negotiate meaning, expand their language resources, notice how language is used, and take part in meaningful intrapersonal exchange. Exercises and tasks function to drill the students' development skill and to provide a significant impact on student learning outcomes, motivation, cognitive load, higher-order thinking skills, and literacy.

Andersson-Bakken et al. (2020) and Gracin (2018) reported that textbooks generally contain hundreds or even more than a thousand tasks/exercises, depending on the subject. In the context of learning English as a foreign or second language (EFL/ESL), a number of studies emphasize the importance of practicing language in authentic and meaningful situations (Limberg, 2016). However, most exercises in textbooks tend not to provide enough space for students to practice authentic communication (Abid & Moalla, 2020; Limberg, 2016). Instead, those exercises focus more on grammatical aspects, drills, and repetitions.

Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a model used for learners to develop communicative competence, or simply put, communicative ability (Hymes, 1971). Historically, the CLT approach is rooted in Noam Chomsky's idea of communicative competence, which later became an important foundation in language learning. Celce-Murcia (2001) also adds that CLT reflects a certain model or research paradigm, or a theory, having the primary function of language use for communication. Apart from being a model, a paradigm, and a theory, CLT is also labelled as an activity that requires the students interact with each other and with other interlocutors to exchange information and solve problems; uses of authentic (non-pedagogical) texts and communication activities linked to "real-world" contexts; provides learner-centered approaches considering the learners' backgrounds, language needs, and goals and generally letting students to be creative and participate in decision-making throughout instruction (Wesche & Skehan, 2002, p. 208).

An intention to communicate marks Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This corresponds to what Larsen-Freeman (2000, p. 129) stated, "The most obvious characteristic of CLT is that almost everything that is done is done with a communicative intent. Students use the language a great deal through communicative activities". Moreover, Littlewood (1981) appended, "One of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combining these into a more fully communicative view".

CLT emphasizes the ability to understand and use language in the real context of everyday life (Hien, 2021). Furthermore, Nunan (1991) identified five main principles in CLT, which include encouraging students to make maximum effort in speaking the target language, using authentic materials in learning, making room for the development of students' language skills and learning strategies, promoting personal experiences as part of classroom activities, and connecting classroom tasks with life outside school. In line with this principle, Canale and Swain (1980) formulated four aspects of communicative competence in CLT. Those are grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. Bachman (1990) then grouped

communicative competence into two broad categories: organizational competence and pragmatic competence.

Furthermore, Brown (1994) emphasized six key characteristics of CLT. First, the learning objectives covers all dimensions of communicative competence, including grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic components. Second, instructional techniques are structured to actively engage learners in using language authentically and meaningfully. Third, fluency and accuracy are viewed as interrelated elements essential to effective communication. Fourth, students are expected to transfer their language abilities beyond the classroom, both in receptive and productive skills. Fifth, learners are encouraged to recognize their individual learning preferences and develop autonomous strategies for language acquisition. Sixth, the teacher's role transitions from a knowledge provider to a facilitator and guide, while students take a more active role in constructing meaning through real-life communicative interactions. Collectively, these principles reflect CLT's focus on meaningful language use rather than the mere acquisition of linguistic forms.

The roles of teacher and students in Communicative Language Teaching

Teachers and students will create collaboration and interaction applying CLT. However, they have different roles. The roles of teachers and students are like a guide in the journey of linguistics, because like a wise guide, the teacher guides students through the experiential path of language use. Like a guide who prepares the best equipment and route, the teacher provides learning materials and communicative situations that allow students to explore and develop their language skills.

Larsen-Freeman (2000) stated that teachers are supposed to facilitate communication in the classroom. One of the main tasks of this role is to create conditions that allow communication to occur. During the activities, the teacher acts as an adviser, answering students' questions and monitoring their performance. Teachers can note their mistakes/errors and correct them later with accuracy-based activities. An additional responsibility that can be undertaken is the teacher's role as a 'co-communicator' who engages in communicative activities with students (Littlewood, 1981).

Above all, students have a primary role as communicators who are actively involved in negotiating meaning. They endeavor to gain understanding of others and make themselves understood, despite their incomplete knowledge of the target language. In the student-centered approach, the teacher's role is no longer as dominant as in the teacher-centered method, so students are considered as more responsible managers of learning. This creates a learning dynamic where students have more control over their learning process (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Types of communicative exercises

To implement CLT, communicative exercises in textbooks are vital. There are several expert opinions categorizing types of communicative exercises/activities to achieve the learning objectives with CLT.

Larsen-Freeman (2000, p. 132–134) provides several techniques, materials, and exercises associated with CLT that teachers can use in the classroom. These include authentic materials, which are created for real-world purposes other than language learning; scrambled sentences, where students must unscramble sentences to restore them to their original order; language games, such as card games involving information gaps; picture strip stories, which narrate a story designed to be read in sequence as a narrative or chronicle; and role plays, where students engage in dialogues to practice communicating in different social contexts and roles.

Richards (2006, p. 18-20) describes different types of communicative exercises that have similarities with the concept of 'role play' proposed by Larsen-Freeman. These exercises include information gap activities, where students are asked to complete missing information, and jigsaw activities, which divide the class into groups with each group holding a piece of information to complete a specific task. In addition, there are task completion activities, such as puzzles, games, map reading and other activities that require students to utilize their language skills. Information gathering activities are also an important part, including surveys, interviews and data searches that involve students' language resources. Richards also proposes opinion sharing activities, where students compare values, opinions or beliefs, such as in a ranking task. Finally, gap reasoning activities are designed to train students to acquire new information through inference and practical reasoning based on given data. Besides, Nunan (1989, p. 119) also adds another activity called 'task continuity' as one of the activities in learning. It involves sequencing a series

of interrelated tasks, where successful completion of one task is a prerequisite for moving on to the next. Based on this principle, activities are organized not only according to the level of complexity influenced by input factors, learners, and the type of activity, but also according to the logic of the established themes and learning pathways.

CLT in Practice and Its Challenges

The use of CLT as an approach to improving students' communication skills is a common practice in language learning. However, although CLT has been widely accepted among educators in English-speaking countries in the western hemisphere, its adoption in the Asian region and other EFL countries has not spread evenly (Qasserras, 2023). Besides, Shofie and Putra (2024) assert that CLT is often applied at various levels of education because it is considered a popular approach based on various documented reports. However, its implementation in various contexts shows various challenges that hinder its effectiveness.

A number of studies show that concerns about the feasibility of CLT arise in many EFL contexts (Adem & Berkessa, 2022; Belinda et al., 2021; Çiftci & Özcan, 2021). In addition, Nam (2023) who researched English language teachers from Korea, North America, China and Uzbekistan, identified that external factors such as educational policies, class size and layout, learners' ability and motivation, were the main causes of less than optimal implementation of CLT. On the other hand, internal factors such as language skills, teaching motivation, tenure and methodological training also influence, with teacher competence being the most significant factor. This is also supported by the findings of Yook and Kim (2017), who concluded that external barriers are often the main obstacle to CLT practices.

Furthermore, Navruzov (2017) believes that the successful implementation of CLT is still far from expectations due to the lack of teacher competence, understanding of CLT principles, government support, and teaching resources. In Indonesia, similar conditions were also reported. Yanti (2019) stated that although teachers understand the concept of CLT theoretically, in practice they are not fully consistent. Barriers include lack of training, high workload, students' tendency not to use the target language, large class sizes, and grammar-based assessment. Rahmawati (2018) highlighted the role of the teacher, the use of Indonesian, and limited facilities as contradicting the basic principles of CLT, which emphasise the maximum use of the

target language. However, the teachers felt that the use of mother tongue was still necessary for students' understanding. Christianto (2019) also revealed similar challenges such as students' lack of willingness to speak in English, ineffective learning activities, unconducive classroom atmosphere, and imbalance of interaction between students.

Moreover, Suhartami and Amin (2023) categorized the challenges in implementing CLT into teacher-related and student-related factors. Teachers struggle with limited understanding of CLT principles, minimal exposure to the target language culture, time constraints for material preparation, and heavy workloads. On the other hand, students encounter issues such as low confidence, limited engagement, lack of motivation, and inadequate language proficiency. These findings are echoed by Alharbi (2021), who pointed out additional student difficulties during communicative activities, including trouble articulating ideas, anxiety, low participation, overreliance on the first language, and restricted learning time.

Method

In this study, the researcher used a case study qualitative research as a design of this research. A case study, according to Stake (1995, p. 11), is "the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances". A case study is also defined as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon/case in depth in a real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear and it relies on multiple sources of evidence, as well (Yin, 1981). Moreover, a method used in a case study is qualitative (Gerring, 2007). A case study qualitative method suits this research as it focuses on the analysis about how far the exercises of textbook "Think" CEFR A1 can facilitate the implementation of CLT.

The data involved in this study are the exercises of a textbook entitled "Think" (CEFR A1) for seventh grade of Junior High School students, written by Herbert Puchta, Jeff Stranks and Peter Lewis-Jones published by Cambridge University. Besides, the researcher also provided results of a semi-structured interview with two English teachers at a Middle School in Semarang to know their perspectives in the use of textbook to support CLT. Furthermore, to observe how the students perform the CLT activities from the textbook, classroom observations were carried out. There were two classes observed; 7A and 7B, each of which was conducted once.

The procedures in data collection were divided into three sections; data from the exercises in the textbook, teachers' interview, and classroom observations. First, regarding the data collection from the textbook as the primary resource, as it contains twelve chapters, the researcher took the whole chapters of the textbook to be analyzed starting from unit 1 to 12. The steps of collecting the data were done by reading the entire textbook; then listing all chapters in the textbook; finding out the communicative exercises; classifying them; and the last, coding each exercises following frameworks based on the communicative exercises in CLT according to the combination theory of Nunan (1989), Larsen-Freeman (2000), and Richards (2006). Next, interviews with teachers and classroom observations were recorded to collect research data. Interview recordings were transcribed to ensure accuracy and then analyzed to understand teachers' views and practices. Classroom observations were also analyzed to complement the data, thus providing a comprehensive picture of the learning process.

Findings

This section provides the answer of the three research questions. Thus, the results of the exercises categorization, the teacher's interview and the classroom observations are elaborated as follows.

Communicative Exercises Types

There are 232 communicative exercises in total which are found in the textbook. Those exercises are divided into two results categories; single and combined types of communicative exercises.

Table 1. Single types of communicative exercises found in the textbook

Kinds of Activities	Total of Activity	Percentage
Task Completion Activities	79	46,20%
Opinion Sharing Activities	62	36,26%
Scrambled sentences	8	4,68%
Role Play	6	3,51%
Information Gathering Activities	5	2,92%
Authenticity Principles	4	2,34%
Task Continuity Activities	4	2,34%
Information Transfer Activities	2	1,17%
Information Gap Activities	1	0,58%
TOTAL	171	100,00%

From table 1, task completion activities are dominant in the textbook which reaches 46,20% (79 exercises). Examples of those activities are seen in figure 1.
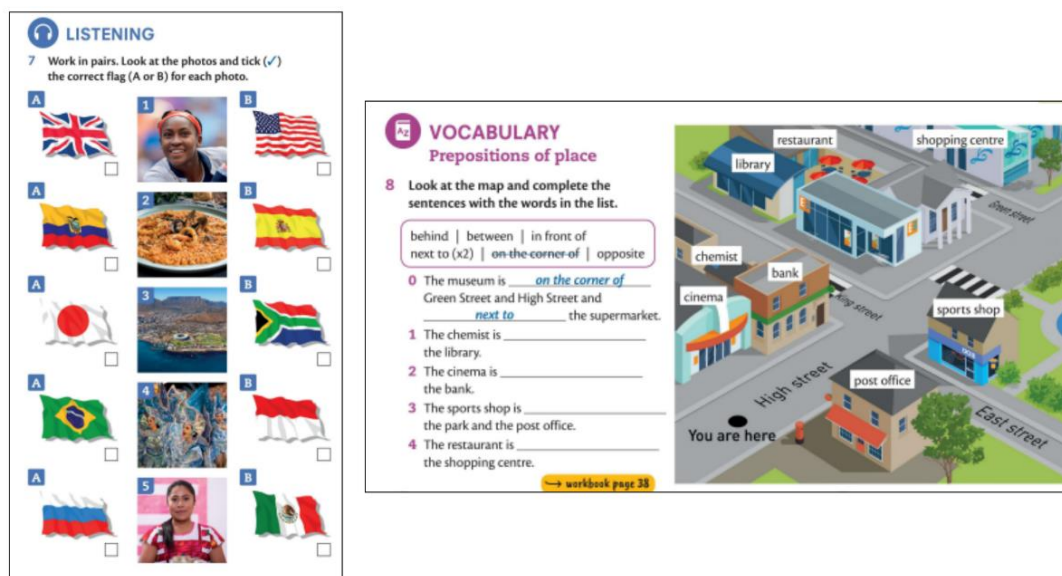
Figure 1. The samples of communicative exercises that represent task completion

From the examples of the task completion activities in figure 1, which can be done individually or in groups, students are asked to work together to answer the questions by pairing pictures with matched information. They have to discuss with their friends how to pair photos with the appropriate country flag. In another exercise in task completion, students are required to complete the sentences from the reading map that is provided to teach them to make meaningful choices when carrying out practice with the correct prepositions.

The second most common types of exercises found in the textbook are opinion sharing activities. In these tasks, it is mandatory for students to compare values, opinions, beliefs, or preferences. There are 62 exercises (36,26%) which belong to this category. All activities are in pairs. Examples of opinion sharing activity are provided on figure 2.
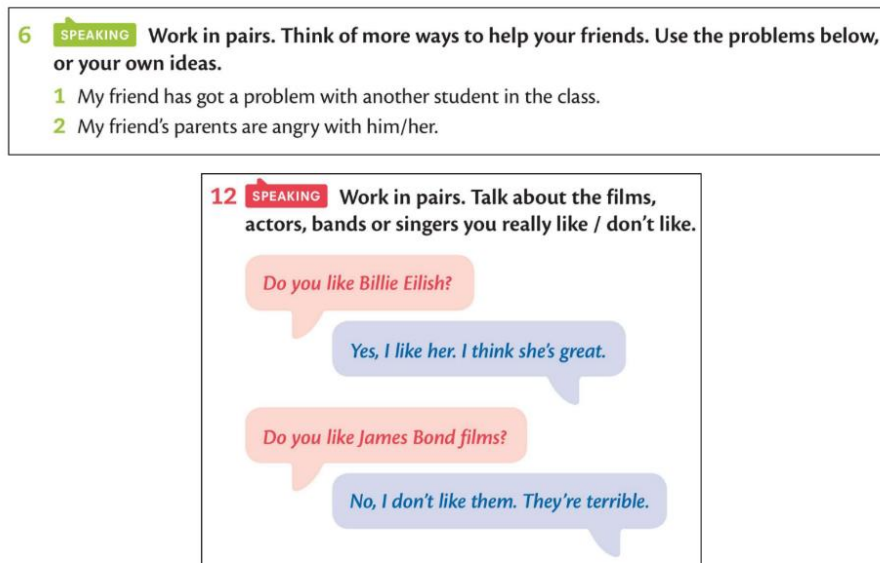
Figure 2. The samples of communicative exercises that represent opinion sharing activity

Learning activities on the pictures ask students to practice expressing their opinions. They may have the same or different perceptions of the topic to be discussed. The opinion sharing activities in this textbook involve students in various activities, such as comparing perspectives on a problem or situation, discussing to list solutions, and comparing things they like and dislike. All these activities are designed to actively train students' speaking skills.

Next, eight exercises of scrambled sentences tasks, constituting 4,68%, are found. Scrambled sentence exercises are exercises in which students are asked to think and use problem-solving skills. In this textbook, all the scrambled sentences exercises ask students to individually arrange the dialogues or short text in the correct order so that coherent and cohesive dialogues will be formed. The examples can be seen in figure 3.
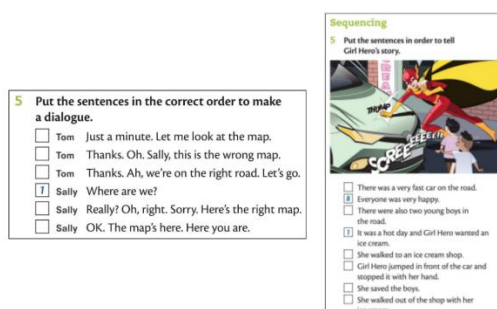
Figure 3. The samples of communicative exercises that represent scrambled sentences

In the exercises in figure 3, students are asked to unify a dialog or a text. They should arrange sentences logically to create a coherent and cohesive dialogue or text. They will be aware that if a text lacks coherence and cohesion, the message conveyed can be misinterpreted. By reconstructing those written discourse, students will gain a deeper understanding of how sentence structures contribute to meaning in different contexts.

In the meantime, role play which refers to a learning activity that presents roles that exist in the real world into a role performance in class/meeting reaches 3,51% (6 exercises) in the textbook. Students will act or pretend to be someone else so that they will find in that something various, such as new experiences, meaningful experiences, and imagination. The following pictures are the examples of role play tasks.

Figure 4. The samples of communicative exercises that represent role play

From figure 4, we know that students are asked to play roles as a waiter and a customer and as a customer and a sales assistant. The exercises present contextualized drills where learners create dialogs that may be new for them, but they have been predetermined by the teacher. Controlled (cued) instructions provide direct control over the meanings that are expressed but not over the language that is used to express them.

Following that, information gathering tasks are found covering five exercises (2,92%). In applying information gathering principles in the classroom, it is essential for students to use their linguistic resources to collect information through surveys, interviews, and searches. In this case, students try to gather a lot of information by talking and communicating with their friends.

When they look for information, they immediately practice their speaking skills. The example of information gathering activity is attached in figure 5.
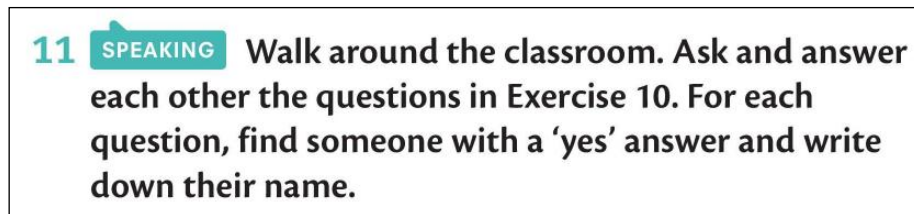

Figure 5. The sample of communicative exercise that represents information gathering activity

Activity on the figure 5 guides students to do a mini-survey as they have to collect information by interviewing their classmates. From this activity, students will interact with different types of responses from classmates; those who answer 'yes' or 'no'. Afterwards, they will learn to categorize the results of the survey by listing the names of their classmates who answer 'yes'. This activity engages students to learn to communicate directly with classmates which includes aspects of listening and responding well to questions.

The sixth type of communicative exercises found in the textbook are authenticity principles. Authenticity is pushed in applying CLT as a language classroom intended as a preparation for survival in the real world. Classroom activities are expected to mirror authentic sources. In the textbook, we can find 4 exercises (2,34%) using authenticity principles involving questionnaire, WhatsApp messages, brochure, and microblog, as provided in the following figure (Figure 6).
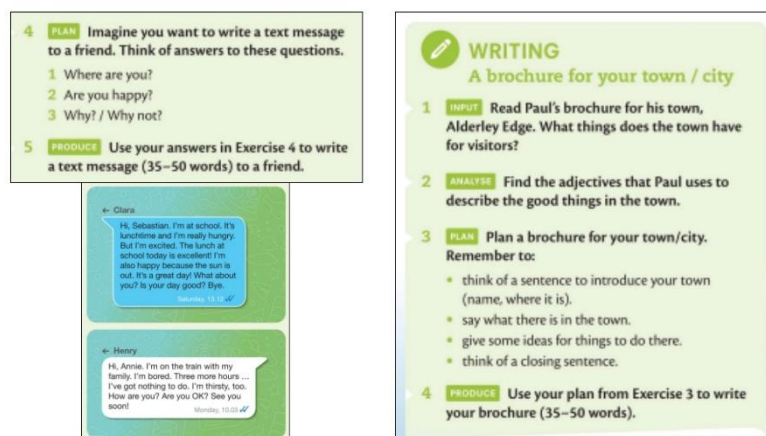
Figure 6. The samples of communicative exercises that represent authenticity.

From the two example exercises in figure 6, students are asked to write a message through WhatsApp (WA) with the example presented in the left image and create a brochure about the city where they live in the right picture. They will relate to these activities because they use WA to communicate daily so this activity is as if they are just chatting with their friends. Brochures are also media that they often find, even the closest example is that they can find their school's brochure advertisement so they are familiar with it. All authentic materials in the textbook involve individual writing activities.

Besides, there are task continuity activities that appear four times (2,34%) in this textbook. Task continuity exercises are activities designed to encourage students to build and expand their communication from one task to another. These exercises connect and support previous learning, creating a narrative flow and real-world application of language skills. They are actually found many times, but more in combination with other exercises that will be discussed later. Figure 7 describes the example of task continuity exercise.

Figure 7. The sample of communicative exercise that represents task continuity activity

The exercise in figure 7 displays task continuity that involves the integration of speaking and listening skills in a connected way. Firstly, students have to complete a table about four family members and describe them. After that, they are required to share their information with

partners to complete another table and finally they present the results of completing the previous task. This exercise is categorized as task continuity activity because if the students do not complete tasks 10 and 11 then they cannot complete task 12 as well. In this case, students are taught to exchange/negotiate meaning to complete the preceding activity. They also learnt collaboration to exchange information so that each table is fulfilled.

The subsequent category of exercises based on CLT is information transfer activities. This type of task is an activity that requires students to transform information/ translating data in one type and represent it into another; from text to graphic stimuli, such as charts, graphs, tables, diagrams, figures, maps, and so on, and vice versa. There are 2 exercises (1,17%) belonging to the information transfer principle. One of them can be seen in figure 8.

Figure 8. The sample of communicative exercise that represents information transfer activity

In figure 8, it can be seen that students have to change the form of information that is previously displayed through the table into meal plans. That activity engages students in meaning-focused communication. They will be able to add their own ideas and interpretation of what their pairs like. It also provides a framework for self-access activities that is beneficial to enhance students' understanding skills as it helps them test their abilities with correct data from completed tables.

Finally, information gap activities become the least type of CLT exercises found in the textbook. The notion of these activities is one of the important aspects of communication in CLT referring to the fact that in real communication, people normally communicate to get information they do not possess. There's only one exercise (0,58%) using information gap activities in the textbook in which students are divided into pairs and each of them is given one set picture of people with similar pictures but having differences. They have to find out six differences between the two pictures. Figure 9 is the example.
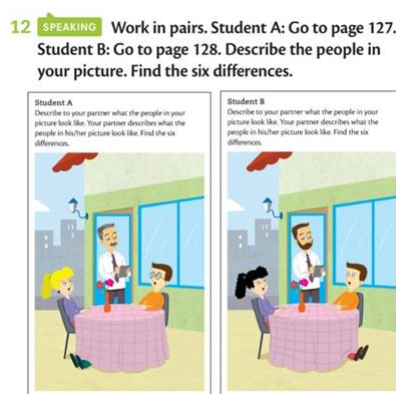
Figure 9. The sample of communicative exercise that represent information gap activity

The task shown in figure 9 gives students an opportunity to draw their available vocabulary, grammar, and other communication strategies to complete a task. It will help them improve their vocabulary and further improve their fluency in English.

After exploring the single communicative exercises in the textbook, combined activities were also found. The following table shows the proportion of combined types of activities.

Table 2. Combined types of communicative exercises in the textbook

Kinds of Activities	Total of Activity	Percentage
Task Continuity Activities & Opinion Sharing	37	60,66%
Task Continuity & Role Play	11	18,03%
Task Continuity Activities & Task Completion	5	8,20%
Task Continuity Activities & Information Gathering	4	6,56%
Information Gap & Opinion Sharing	2	3,28%
Task Completion Activities & Opinion Sharing	2	3,28%
TOTAL	61	100,00%

What is meant by combined communicative exercises is a combination of two types of communicative tasks. Task continuity is found to be the most dominant activity combined with other activities like opinion sharing (60,66%), role play (18,03%), task completion (8,20%), and information gathering (6,56%). These activities are assumed to be combined because if students do not complete the previous tasks, they cannot complete the next exercises and the continuity activity follows the principles or concepts of the other activities. The following figure (figure 10) presents some examples of combined activities of task continuity and other activities.

Figure 10. The sample of combined communicative exercises of task continuity and other types

Picture A in figure 10 is an example of task continuity and opinion sharing. Students have to complete task 6 first so that later they can compose preference sentences and then they can share their ideas. Similarly, picture B requires Task 8 to be completed before students can engage in role-play. This exercise effectively combines both approaches. Picture C, also based on task continuity, promotes collaboration through requiring students to pair utterances with specific roles to complete a subsequent dialogue. Finally, picture D shows that students leverage the skills developed in the previous two tasks to practice information gathering.

The textbook also features a notable combination of exercise types comprising opinion sharing activities collaborated with information gaps and task completions. Each of these subcategories only appears with a frequency of 3.28%, but their combined presence amplifies the complexity and engagement of learning activities. Figure 11 showcases such examples.

Figure 11. The sample of combined communicative exercises of opinion sharing and other types

As attached in figure 11, the exercise in picture A shows that students obtain information about what things that make their partners happy and what do not. They share the information they don't know by asking each other questions, then they write down the information they get on the table and present the results of the information exchange to the whole class. Therefore, the exercise combines information gap and opinion sharing. Exercise in picture B, on the other hand, combines task completion and opinion sharing where in the same task, students complete sentences with plural animals from the list of words listed in the previous task then they compare each completed sentence with their pairs.

Teachers' Views on Using Textbook with CLT Practices

In the findings section, Teacher's perception of textbook usage in the CLT environment was investigated from the results of interviews and classroom observations. Teachers were asked some interview questions relating to how they describe their teaching and learning in the classroom. Then, it led to the discussion of CLT. In terms of the exact CLT term, teacher 2 understood it very well while teacher 1 was not familiar with the term CLT. This is reflected in what the teachers said in excerpt 1.

Excerpt 1. Teachers' knowledge of CLT

"To be honest, I'm not familiar with the term." (T1)

"I learnt about this approach in college. As I recall, it's a language teaching approach that emphasizes interaction as the means and ultimate goal of learning. It's student-centered so it can be interaction from student to student or teacher to student or with themselves and it's more about teaching students to communicate, either in writing or orally. So, all communication skills are taught through this approach. Isn't that right?" (T2)

Although teacher 1 was not familiar with the term CLT, conceptually, his understanding of real-life communication skills mirrored that of teacher 2. Extracting information was further explored by raising questions that build a deep substantial grasp related to CLT theories.

The first is about the student teacher role. The researcher asked whether a language teacher should take a main role as the transmitter of knowledge or the facilitator of learning and whether a learner should take a role of knowledge receiver or a negotiator. Excerpt 2 will present the teachers' answers.

Excerpt 2. Teachers' perception of the role of teacher and students in CLT approach

"For me, sometimes I like being a transmitter of knowledge and sometimes being a facilitator of learning. Because both of them are needed by the students. So far, I'm sure that they can find the material by themselves in social media and many other media, but sometimes they need to be guided. So, when they learn English, they can focus on the material that they are going to study." (T1)

"Both of them are necessary. Sometimes they should be a receiver and sometimes they should be a negotiator. In practice, when they speak or write, when they convey ideas or messages, they have to be negotiators, so that their ideas are conveyed, students must also have knowledge of grammar and vocabulary so that they can learn meaning. Now that's where they play a role as receivers of knowledge. So, both are important. (T2)

"Facilitator of course. Since today students can learn from many resources. Cell phone, Google, internet and also some applications. Even, we can just download and install in our devices. So, they can learn from many other resources actually." (T1)

Both teachers agree that students now can access information from anywhere. Therefore, teachers should be facilitators who guide, not spoon-feed. However, according to teacher 2, some students also need to be spoon-fed.

Next, the teacher was asked questions regarding which should be emphasized more in teaching, whether communication or mastery of language patterns. The provided quotes (Excerpt 3) illustrate the varied viewpoints adopted by the teachers.

Excerpt 3. Teachers' perception of what to emphasize in teaching learning process

"Both of them, as I told you before, they are related to each other so they need both of them; Speaking as communication and grammar as language pattern knowledge." (T1)

"Actually, it should be communication, but you know that since this is the first semester, I still plan to make my students master more vocabularies and in the second semester, I plan to make them use as many as possible the vocabularies they have mastered in communication. That's the plan." (T2)

From the statements in Excerpt 3, it is assumed that although recognizing the importance of vocabulary expansion, T1 believes that communication and language patterns (represented by grammar) are equally important and interrelated. Building vocabulary and language patterns can be seen as a stepping stone to effective communication. Thus, striking a balance between

theoretical knowledge and practical application is crucial. On the other hand, T2 sees communication as the ultimate goal of language learning.

Starting to go deeper into the practice of teaching and learning activities that involve communication, it was found that both teachers use individual and group works which they interpreted as follows.

Excerpt 4. Teachers' practices on individual and group works

> "Yes, I do. So, after I deliver my teaching, I invite the students to make a group and then I give them maybe a case to solve together and they can cooperate with each other to solve the case." (T1)
>
> "Yes, mostly. I like to divide them into a group of 4 or 3 and then I'll give them the assignment or task that are in the textbook, for example, 'do exercise on page 20', to finish by them so they can discuss it with their groups. Besides, I also often do this. From the group discussion, after explaining the material, I discuss the exercise by pointing out a few students so that they can explain the answers and reasons why they answer that way." (T2)

Based on Excerpt 4, Teacher 1 encourages cooperation and joint problem solving in groups by prioritizing active learning and critical thinking through student-driven exploration and discovery. In addition, teacher 2 prefers small groups consisting of 3-4 students using predetermined exercises from the textbook, such as solving problems on certain pages and appointing certain students to explain their answers and reasons during group discussions after completing assignments so that students favor exercises guided by the teacher with clear solutions to strengthen existing knowledge. Both teachers value group work to facilitate discussion and interaction among students. A T1 approach may encourage deeper understanding and critical thinking, while a T2 approach may be more efficient for covering certain material.

The results of the interviews with both teachers showed the alignment between what they explained and what was practiced in the classroom, as observed by the researcher during the observation. After delivering the materials, both teachers implemented collaborative learning by dividing students into small groups. However, Teacher 2, who previously stated in the interview that he usually forms groups of 3-4 students, on this occasion asked students to work in pairs.

In terms of the communicative exercises in the textbook, both teachers acknowledge that the textbook can support students' communication practice. However, they rarely use the exercises in the textbook and more often just adapt them while still following the chapters in the textbook. Their focus predominantly lies on task completion and role-playing activities, as evidenced by excerpt 5.

Excerpt 5. Teachers' practices on task completion and role play activities from the textbook

"Yeah, for grammar completions and others…. Hmm.. the students can discuss with their friends, but sometimes I let them do the works individually." (T1)

"Role play or dialogue practice because I ask them to have oral tests related to the materials given. Hmm… Group discussion, I think, is communicative, as well. Storytelling is also." (T2)

"Rarely, maybe it's more like I modify it for speaking assessment." (T1)

"So, I'm more about inviting students to discuss the questions on completion exercises that they did with their friends earlier and from there I invited interaction by asking why the answer was this or that, but for certain tasks I also ask them to do the exercises individually. And for role play, I often use it more for speaking assessment. For example, in this first semester the students will have an assessment. Mr. DD and I agreed to take the students' grades in the self-introduction, talking about family, asking and giving directions, and listening time from which unit…. Hmm I forgot. But we don't follow the exercises one hundred percent so we modify them more simply." (T2)

While teachers rely solely on role-play to assess speaking skills, their other communicative practice is essentially discussion-based task completion. Surprisingly, they refrain from using other types of communicative exercises contained in the textbook. Even the role-playing activities carried out in class are not direct adaptations, these activities take inspiration from textbooks but are modified to suit the teacher's specific goals.

Upon further investigation, there are three reasons why teachers do not maximize the use of communicative exercises in the textbook which are expressed differently by the two teachers in excerpt 6.

Excerpt 6. Teacher barriers in using communicative exercises in the textbook

> ".... although for me most of the units which contain more than one theme in each are confusing dan too many." (T1)
>
> "and to use all the exercises in the book certainly won't be enough time, so that's why I use communicative exercises inspired by the textbook only for speaking assessment....." (T1)
>
> "It is more on the time and the students themselves. I have little time to involve those exercises as there are only 4 hours in a week. Also, some low achievers with low-level English proficiency and those who resist communication are also challenges for me." (T2)

The teachers prefer structured exercises and teacher-controlled methods due to time constraints and difficulties in managing open communication activities. T1 felt that some textbook units with multiple themes were confusing and overwhelming, making it difficult to select and adapt individual exercises to specific learning objectives. This is due to the structure of textbooks being similar to workbooks. T2 cited low-achieving students and students with low English proficiency as barriers, as well as students who resist communication which may be due to a lack of motivation or engagement.

Students' performance on the communicative classroom activities

Based on the classroom observations, it was found that both teachers executed the role play in different ways. The first teacher divided the students into five groups of five students each. They were asked to make a dialogue about daily activities, and only two people would perform representing their group. Meanwhile, the second teacher gave a sheet of exercise to each student. Students were asked to fill in the daily activity table, then, in pairs, practice the dialogue with their partners. This method is in accordance with the concept and principles of role play in general, because it involves all students actively and provides opportunities for students to practice dialogue independently.

While the teachers' implemented role play activities differ from the exact structure presented in the textbook, it draws inspiration from the exercise outlined on page 69 of unit 7, as illustrated in figure 12.
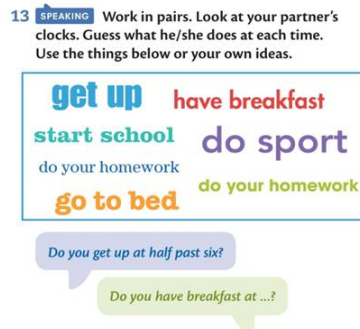
Figure 12. The sample of communicative exercise being modified by teachers

The teachers modified it by directing the students to find out the time, instead of guessing the activity or directly telling the activity. The following is an example of a dialogue prepared by students.
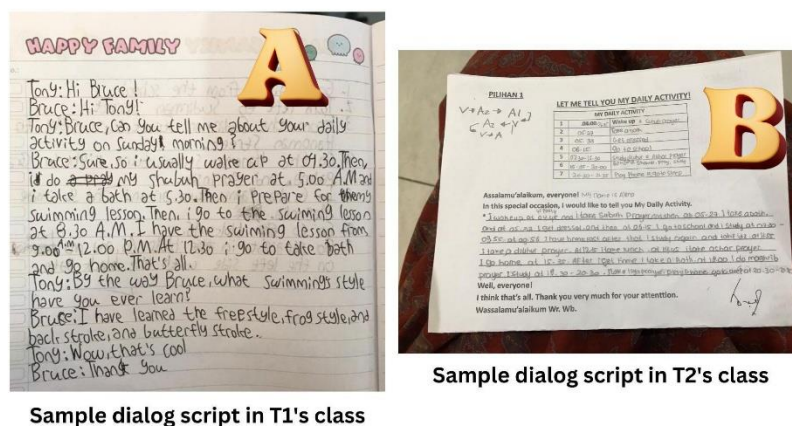
Figure 13. The sample of students' dialog scripts

In picture A in Figure 13, we can see one pair of students in teacher 1's class doing a role play. They had to memorize the dialogs. Student 1 played the role of Tony and student 2 played the role of Bruce. They switched roles to have a dialogue. In picture B in Figure 13, the students in the class exchanged tables and asked each other when their friends were doing something. From observation, most students could do the role play well. However, there were some students who still had difficulty reading the time. They couldn't read time that involved minutes, for example '04.50', would be read 'four five'. After finishing the performance, the teachers gave

feedback in the form of evaluating what was lacking in the student's performance and after that recapped what had been learned that day.

Discussions

Based on the findings, the textbook "Think" (CEFR A1) strongly supports the communicative approach (CLT). This can be seen from the various types of communicative exercises presented, both for individual and group work. All language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are also involved in the exercises, so this textbook supports the development of accurate, fluent, and meaningful language skills. The strength of this textbook lies in the variety of communicative exercises provided, which is in line with Kurniawan and Sumani (2022) as well as Nguyen and Le (2020) view. They state that the materials in CLT should support teachers in developing students' communicative competence, which can start from the use of formal textbooks as the basis of learning.

However, there are a few things to consider in the use of this textbook. First, the task completion exercises that dominate the textbook are mostly for individual works. This is not in accordance with the communicative approach which emphasizes group or pair works. Next, the number of communicative exercises in the textbooks is considered too many, making it difficult for teachers to cover all of them in a limited time. In one unit, one type of exercise is often presented more than once, such as task completion exercises, sharing opinions, and task combinations. This imbalance indicates a lack of efficiency in the organization of learning tasks. The same was reported by Bakken and Andersson-Bakken (2021), who found an uneven distribution of tasks across different sections in the textbook, a phenomenon that also occurred in the case of other textbooks.

This book tends to resemble a workbook because most of the content consists of tasks, while the amount of material presented to build students' understanding is very limited. This is in line with the definition of a workbook according to Ufuk et al. (2013), who defines it as an instructional tool containing a series of questions and information to help students understand complex ideas systematically. In contrast, a textbook, as described by Cortazzi and Jin (1999), should not only contain exercises but also include learning materials. The workbook should function as supplementary sources, as Fahruraji and Chandra (2023) stated, while students still

need a textbook with adequate material before doing the practice questions. Norberg and Nordlund (2020) added that EFL textbooks are usually complemented by workbooks, where the two form a specific unity in a complex conceptual system, as suggested by Byrd (2001).

This pattern of dominance of exercises over materials in the textbook is likely influenced by the cultural factors of the authors/publishers (Charalambous et al., 2010) who come from the UK. In the context of a country where English is the mother tongue, students at the secondary school level generally do not need explicit grammar material. Textbooks from such countries tend to prioritize the development of functional language skills, such as speaking and writing, over detailed theoretical explanations. However, teachers can still get around this limitation. This textbook can still be utilized due to the variety of communicative exercises they offer. However, it is important for teachers to equip students with theoretical material in each unit covered, considering that students at the junior high school level in Indonesia still need a strong knowledge base. This practice has actually been implemented by the teachers through the provision of additional materials in the form of oral presentation before the students work on tasks.

Furthermore, how teachers perceive the textbook in a CLT classroom should also be discussed. Theoretically, teacher 2 understands CLT better than teacher 1. T1 was not familiar with the term CLT but when being asked with other questions and through classroom observations, he had implemented CLT. It was also found that both teachers were aware of CLT in general but they could not maximize CLT activities in the textbook due to time limitation. It was also reported by Dao and Newton (2021), time constraints are a major obstacle for teachers in maximizing the use of communicative exercises in the classroom. In addition, in the use of communicative exercises, they only use task completion and role play and teachers only use speaking activities for assessment exams.

There was a discrepancy between teachers' perceptions and practices uncovered in this study relating the way teacher 1 practiced role play in his lesson. The way of group work where five people had to work together to create a dialog that would only be performed by two people could lead to problems because not all group members have the same opportunity to participate in creating the dialog. The possibility of unfairness in assessment is also possible if one group will get the same score, regardless of the ability of each group member to deliver the dialog. This

can lead to unfairness in assessment, because not all group members have the same opportunity to perform.

This suggests that teachers need to be provided with training or mentoring to implement CLT effectively and encouraged to use different types of speaking activities to improve students' speaking skills in a meaningful way, not just for exams. Time limitation is indeed one of the biggest challenges in implementing CLT in the classroom. This is because the implementation of CLT requires more time than traditional learning approaches. So, to address this, teachers can choose a combination of communicative exercises that suit the learning objectives and students' ability levels or use project-based learning methods, such as project work or problem-based learning. These methods can provide opportunities for students to use language in a real way to solve problems.

Based on the observation of students' performance, most of them were able to practice dialogue through role play. However, in the bilingual class taught by teacher 1, concerns exist that students could practice dialogue because they memorized, not because they improved their skills. This was different from the regular class taught by teacher 2. Students were only asked to prepare an activity table, and then they would practice conversation spontaneously.

In terms of ability, the students from the regular class did still have some mistakes, for example in reading the clock. Based on the performance, it is recommended for the teacher to re-teach how to read the clock in English for those students who cannot yet in the next few meetings before moving on to the next chapter. Students' limited English communication skills are among the factors that reduce the effectiveness of the CLT approach in classroom practices, as noted by Alharbi (2021), Christianto (2019), Nam (2023), Suhartami and Amin (2023), and Yanti (2019), although only a small proportion of students in this study faced this issue.

At the end of the lesson, both teachers invited students to evaluate what still needed to be improved and reviewed the learning in the chapter (how to read the clock from minutes to hours or hours to minutes). This strategy is in line with the CLT principle, where errors are tolerated as they are considered a natural outcome of developing communication skills (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards, 2006). Error correction was not done while students were dialoguing, so the teacher did not interrupt them. Instead, the teacher discussed the errors for evaluation at the end of the lesson.

Conclusion and Implication

This study aims to investigate the use of the textbook "Think" (CEFR A1) in supporting Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), explore teachers' perceptions of the utilization of the textbook to support CLT, and evaluate students' performance in carrying out communicative classroom activities.

In the material evaluation, it was found that the textbook strongly provides a wide range of communicative exercises, including single and combined tasks in the form of opinion sharing activities, information gathering, information gap activities, information transfer, role play, the principle of authenticity, task continuity activities, and scrambled sentences dominated by task completion activities with a proportion of individual tasks excelling pair/group works. However, the large number of exercises makes this book seem like a workbook.

Although the teachers showed positive belief in CLT, the interviews showed that time constraints meant that they could only use task completion and role play. Task completion was used for exercises after the material explanation in individual and group work, while role play was done in groups and pairs, especially for oral exam assessment. There was a discrepancy in the implementation of the role play, where the dialog was composed by five people in one group but only performed by two people as group representatives. Nevertheless, the students' performance results showed that most of them could successfully practice the role play well.

The results of this study have practical implications for teachers and the textbook writers. Teachers can utilize this book with various communicative exercises in different types of activities. Meanwhile, textbook writers are advised to reduce the number of exercises so as not to make it a workbook, spread the types of communicative exercises in different units, and add types of communicative exercises that do not exist, such as jigsaw activities, language activities, picture strip stories, reasoning-gap activities, and so on. Furthermore, for researchers who focus on CLT, it is recommended to analyze other CLT-based books and recommend them as references to English teachers or even develop a textbook model that fully supports CLT.

The limitation of this study lies in the classroom observation that was only conducted once, so it couldn't provide an in-depth picture of how teachers use communicative exercises in the textbooks. Therefore, future researchers in similar fields to this study should involve

classroom observation with a longer intensity (e.g. for several weeks/months) in order to explore further how communicative exercises are used in learning.

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