

A COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING GRAMMAR: THEORY AND PRACTICE¹

Siaw-Fong Chung

National Taiwan University

ABSTRACT

Since the introduction of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), many textbooks have been written to incorporate communicative activities, authentic materials and personalized contexts. However, where the teaching and learning of grammar is concerned, most textbooks do not reflect CLT principles. As demonstrated in this paper, grammar activities in some Malaysian and Taiwanese textbooks retain the structural method of teaching grammar. This paper suggests five methods so that grammar activities can be made more communicative by retaining some practices of the structural syllabus.

Introduction

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) materialized in the West in the 1960s and has extended to the Eastern countries over the last 20 years. Since then, CLT principles have formed the foundation of English language syllabi for countries such as Malaysia and Taiwan. In Malaysia, CLT was adopted as early as the 1970s but in Taiwan, the switch from the structural to communicative approach only started in the 1990s. Before CLT was introduced, the structural syllabus was the mainstream approach in most Asian settings including Malaysia and Taiwan. Yalden (1987:61) summarized the essence of CLT thus:

It is based on the notion of the learners as communicators, naturally endowed with the ability to learn languages. It seeks to provide learners with the target language system. It is assumed that learners will have to prepare to use the target language (orally and in written form) in many predictable and unpredictable acts of communication which arise both in classroom interaction and in real-world situations, whether concurrent with language training or subsequent to it.

¹ I would like to thank John Kullman of Canterbury Christ Church University College, Canterbury, England, for his comments on the previous version of this paper. My appreciation also goes to Professor Kathleen Ahrens of National Taiwan University and the reviewer(s) of the *English Teacher* for reading and commenting on this paper. Any remaining errors are my sole responsibility.

After CLT was implemented, many English textbooks were designed attempting to accommodate the expectations of the communicative syllabus. When grammar teaching is concerned, CLT focuses on “communicative proficiency rather than mere mastery of structures” (Richards and Rogers, 1986:64). However, how well communicative proficiency can replace the structural approach is a question that many ELT practitioners are interested in. Considering the influence of the structural practice which is deep-rooted in the Asian culture, it will be a debatable issue as to how CLT comes into play in the Asian classrooms.

In the following sections, the components of the structural and communicative approaches are first outlined. In order to find out whether CLT principles are incorporated into grammar exercises in textbooks, this paper then analyses several grammar activities from Malaysian and Taiwanese textbooks and reports related findings. Finally, five activities based on CLT are recommended.

Structural and Communicative Syllabi

The structural view of language sees grammatical structures as the underlying units of the language system. These units of language are structurally rule-governed. The audiolingual syllabus² is also derived from the structural view and it was practiced in Taiwan and Malaysia before the implementation of the CLT. This syllabus comprises activities that focus on correct pronunciation, spelling convention and grammatical forms. Drills are also used in the audiolingual classroom because repetition and memorisation are believed to be important. However, the CLT syllabus has redefined the teaching of grammar, teachers’ and students’ roles, use of materials and teaching-learning methodology. Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) describe the CLT syllabus as follows:

1. a. Meaning (function) is emphasised
- b. Contextualisation is important
- c. Language learning is learning to communicate
- d. Language is created through repeated trials and errors
- e. Fluency is primary whereas accuracy is secondary.

² Also referred as ‘Audiolingual Method.’ Some also refer to the ‘Communicative Syllabus’ as the ‘Communicative Approach’ (Richards and Rogers, 1986). This paper terms both as ‘syllabi’ because it is the course outlines that are referred to in this paper.

In addition to these features, CLT also emphasizes learner-centeredness and the use of original materials. Howatt (1984) divided CLT into strong and weak versions. The strong version is in support of communicative features whereas the weak version suggests the integration of structural practice into the communicative elements.

This paper is of the view that both structural and communicative elements have a role to play in EFL and ESL especially in the Asian setting. This is due to two main reasons: First, the norms and practices of the structural syllabus have been embedded in the Asian cultures for decades. For instance, in a survey carried out by Maley (1986:104) on the Chinese of Mainland China, it was found that the Chinese view the teacher as the “textbook” or the *guru* that “has the knowledge.” Therefore, to learn is to convert knowledge in the textbooks to memory. This belief is adopted even in today’s Taiwanese society (despite some efforts to move toward CLT).

Second, communicative proficiency will become easier to achieve only when one has grasped the necessary knowledge of language (such as grammar). For societies whose first (and second) language is not English, there is still a need for structural practices so that the foundation of linguistic knowledge can be built up before further communicative tasks are given. Yalden (1987:94) suggests the proportional approach in course designing. In this design, students learn more form than meaning at an early stage and as time increases (and as students’ language proficiency improves), the intervention of communicative functions increases. At this later stage, the emphasis on form can be gradually reduced.

In order to examine whether the textbooks comply with either the structural or the communicative syllabus, the next section will take examples from the Malaysian and the Taiwanese textbooks. The reason for selecting these two countries is that both have strong practices of the audiolingual syllabus in their language learning history. Despite this similarity, the more interesting question is how CLT is received in these two countries when their English positions differ (English is a second language in Malaysia but a foreign language in Taiwan) and when one English dialect is used instead of another (Malaysia uses British English while Taiwan uses American English). This paper compares grammar activities in the textbook in these two countries because grammar is the hardest component to teach with CLT approach.

Comparison of Malaysian and Taiwanese English Textbooks

In this section, excerpts of grammar activities are taken from textbooks so that comparisons can be made regarding the treatment of grammar in the Malaysian and Taiwanese contexts.

Malaysian Textbooks

The Malaysian English language syllabus is outlined by the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) of Malaysia. The attempt to incorporate communicative language teaching can be seen in the aims of the Form Four English Language Syllabus which emphasises daily communicative needs and occupational needs:

To equip them [students] with the skills and knowledge of the English language to communicate in certain everyday activities and certain job situations, and also to provide points of take-off for various post-secondary school needs... (Ministry of Education, 1992:1)

However, when grammar is presented in textbooks, it usually does not reflect the aim of the communicative syllabus. An analysis of the *KBSM English Form Four* (Noor Azlina Yunus and Angeline Spykerman, 1996) shows that most of the grammar activities still feature the traditional pattern rather than conforming to the principles of the communicative syllabus. Even though some parts of the textbooks attempt to integrate the communicative elements, most exercises are mainly structural with the inclusion of grammar-rule explanation, as shown in Table 1 below³.

Table 1: Grammar Exercise taken from Noor Azlina Yunus and Angeline Spykerman (1996:211-212)

We form the passive of perfect tenses with *have/has been* + past participle and *had been* + past participle.]

Present perfect tense

	Subject	Verb	Object	'Doer' or Agent
Active	Professor Kazan	<i>has trained</i>	the dolphins	to speak English.
Passive	The dolphins	<i>have been trained</i>	to speak English	by Professor Kazan .

Past Perfect Tense

Active	Professor Kazan	<i>had trained</i>	the dolphins	since birth.
Passive	The dolphins	<i>had been trained</i>	since birth	by Professor Kazan.

We can leave out the 'doer' or agent if it is obvious who the person is.

9. Write the newspaper headlines as sentences using the passive form of the present perfect tense.

1. *Thousands of books damaged in warehouse fire*
2. Valuable Koran Stolen from Museum
3. Cost of Imported Books Criticised by Public

³ All textbook excerpts in this paper are re-typed by the author. None of these excerpts are taken from one complete page of the textbooks.

The first row in Table 1 is the explanation of the grammar rule. The second and third rows show the decomposed components of the perfect tenses. The decomposition of sentences into *subject*, *object*, *verb* and *agent* is the common method employed by the structural syllabus. The last row shows an attempt to incorporate authentic material (i.e., newspaper headlines) into the grammar exercise. Other than this, the general pattern is transformational, i.e., to show how sentences are converted from one form to another.

In the other sections of this textbook, communicative activities are selectively placed in different sections of the chapters. In the chapter from which the above example is extracted, there are attempts to link the theme *Book Report* to the contents of the chapter (with insertion of novel readings). This makes the context of the reading task communicative. In addition, there is also speaking practice placed as pre-reading activity in which students have to work in groups to come up with a book list.

Nevertheless, where grammar is concerned, the context used ('training dolphins' in Table 1) is not immediately related to the theme of the chapter. This alternation of communicative and traditional activities is reflected throughout the textbook. Traditional practice patterns such as sentence transformation (as in Table 1) and substitution tables (see Table 2) are seen in this textbook.

Table 2: Substitution table on present perfect tense (Noor Azlina Yunus and Angeline Spykerman, 1996:97)

There <i>has been</i> a	sharp gradual slight	rise/increase fall/decrease/dip	in•
(The price) <i>has</i> (Numbers) <i>have</i>	<i>risen/increased/gone up</i> <i>fallen/decreased/dipped</i>	sharply gradually slowly	since • between • and • during •

[• to be filled with information from a chart]

Similar to the transformational exercise, a substitution table decomposes sentences into parts of speech. The way sentences are broken down into their grammatical units is also part of the methodology of the structural syllabus.

To verify the observation regarding the grammar exercises, two other textbooks are examined for similar purposes. These textbooks are *English Form 4* (Lee, Roberts and Chew, 2002) and *English Form 5* (Lee, Roberts and Chew, 2003). In *English*

Form 4 by Lee *et al.* (2002:41-43), the present perfect was presented as in (2) below:

-
2. Explanation of rules for present perfect tense
Transformational exercise (from *use a computer* to *I have used a computer since Form 1*)
Revision of simple present and simple past tense
Exercise for present perfect, simple present and past tense (gap filling)
-

The presentation of activities in this textbook is similar to that in Noor Azlina Yunus and Angeline Spykerman (1996), i.e., rules are presented before the exercise. This textbook has integrated grammatical forms by providing revision and combined exercises after introducing the present perfect tense.

Compared to *English Form 4* by Lee *et al.*, the present perfect tense in *English Form 5* (by the same writers) shows an increase in difficulty in terms of the explanation of rules. The Form Five textbook starts with a short paragraph containing examples of the present perfect tense, followed by an explanation of grammar rules. The order of presentation is shown in (3) below (Lee *et al.* 2003:91-92).

-
3. Short paragraph containing the present tense
Explanation of rules (with the decomposition of the perfect tense and an emphasis on time line) (see Table 3)
Gap filling activity
Sentence completion activity (in an interview between a reporter and an interviewee)
-

Therefore, one can see that the Form Five textbook is still rule-based and the expectation for linguistic awareness is higher. This can be seen in the illustration in Table 3 (reproduced from the figures in Lee *et al.* 2003:91).

In Table 3, the reason for using the present perfect tense is explained, which is a more advanced way of explaining the grammatical form than by giving the decomposed elements of *has/have + past participle*, as in the Form Four textbook. This Form Five textbook also provides a communicative context (the interview) for the use of the perfect tense.

Table 3: Excerpt of explanation from *English Form 5* (Lee *et al.*, 2003:91)

We use the present perfect tense to talk about an action in the past which has a result in the present. The following diagram illustrates this:

PAST **PRESENT**
 ☆
The helicopters arrived. **(time of speaking)**
Result: The helicopters are here now.

To refer to this past event which has a result in the present, we say:
 The helicopters **have arrived.**
 |
 present perfect

Here is another example

PAST **PRESENT**
 ☆
Pollution from the oil spill damaged the coral reef. **(time of speaking)**
Result: The coral reef is damaged.

To refer to this event in the past, we say:
 Pollution from the oil spill **has damaged** the coral reef.
 |
 present perfect

In general, all three Malaysian textbooks examined in this paper show that traditional teaching practice is still reflected in the design of grammar activities. The next section will investigate whether this is also the case in the Taiwanese textbooks.

Taiwanese Textbooks

An examination of the Taiwanese senior high school English textbooks (*Senior High School English* (1999, Books One and Two) shows the following features:

- a. Both books One and Two provide translation in Chinese, a characteristic that is not found in Malaysian English textbooks. Below is an example of the list of vocabulary items from the *Senior High School English Book 1* (1999:128).

© 22. **outtake** [aʊt`tek] *n.* [C] a part of the film taken out of the final version 剪掉的鏡頭

23. **insist on** to be very firm on sth 堅持

◆ The driver insisted on parking his car in front of the building.

- b. Both books One and Two place high priority on vocabulary. The overt emphasis on the vocabulary items is not the feature of CLT as it may interfere with the natural flow of communication.
- c. Both books attempt to include communicative or creative activities at the end of every chapter.

Table 4 shows an example of a grammar activity from this textbook. The example in Table 4 first gives the construction of the target sentence written in the form of "...N which + V...(which = N)." Then several examples are given so that students know what the construction is like. Lastly, students are asked to form their own sentences. This example reflects a typical structural practice in grammar teaching. Similar to the Malaysian textbooks, the communicative part comes in through the use of real life contexts (such as the life of *Paul Newman* and life in *Harvard University* in the Taiwanese textbook (Book 2)). However, the grammar exercises are largely structure-based. In other words, the implementation of CLT has only impacted the 'contextualisation' of content but not the teaching of grammar.

In order to verify whether grammatical exercises receive similar treatment in other Taiwanese textbooks, two other textbooks were examined. These textbooks are *Far East English Reader for Senior High Schools* (Shih, Lins and Brooks, 1999, Volumes One and Three). Both these volumes provide a vocabulary list in English and Chinese. All chapters are organised according to a theme, as in the Malaysian textbooks.

Table 4: Grammar Exercise taken from the *Senior High School English Book 2*. (1999:87)

C.	...N which + V...(which = N)	
Examples:	{	Jim works for a company. The Company makes computer.
	→	Jim works for a company which makes computers.
	{	A dictionary is a book. The book gives us meanings of words.
	→	A dictionary is a book which gives us the meanings of words.
Combine the following pairs of sentences by using the structure given above:		
1.	{	I am reading the novel. You lent me the novel last week.
	→	_____
2.	{	The answer is right. You told me the answer.
	→	_____

Chapter 9 of Volume One (one of the chapters that teaches the perfect tense) starts with the past continuous tense, followed by the past perfect tense. This paper will focus on the section with past perfect tense only. The order of presentation is as in (4) below.

(4) Substitution table and examples with short context

Practice (*Read the situations and finish the last sentence using the past perfect*)

As shown in (4), there are only two sub-sections for the perfect tenses. An example of the practice section is shown in (5) below (Shih *et al.*, 1999:141).

(5) 1. The airplane took off at 9:10.

Sarah arrived at the airport at 10:00.

When Sarah arrived at the airport, *the airplane had taken off*. [answer given in textbook]

Although the grammar section starts with a substitution table which shows the decomposed sentence containing the past perfect tense, the practice exercise shows some level of contextualisation. This helps students relate the use of language to their immediate surroundings. However, as mentioned earlier, the communicative activities usually come after the explanation of rules.

Comparatively, Chapter 11 of Volume 3 (which is a more advanced level) begins with the past perfect tense with examples, as shown in (6) below (Shih *et al.*, 1999:175).

(6) Examples:

- Foyot's was such an expensive restaurant that I had never thought of going there.
 - The prices were much higher than I had expected.
-

Only these two examples are given. The practice section comprises two tasks. The first task requires the student to complete a passage using the past tense or the past perfect tense. Two are shown in (7) below (Shih *et al.*, 1999:176)

- (7) 1. Actually I didn't want to see that movie because I _____ (see) it before.
2. Still I _____ (go) to the movie with Jenny because I _____ (promise) her I would last week.
-

From the examples in (7) (as well as other examples earlier), one can see that there is an emphasis on accuracy and not on communication. As for the second task, more contextualised use of the past perfect tense is allowed. The following are instructions for this task (Shih *et al.*, 1999:177):

Bill is twenty years old. His family loves to travel. Hence, he has had some experiences that many young people of his age have not had. That's why he likes to share his adventures with his friends. Look at the chart below and complete Bill's statements.

The chart shows a time line of Bill's age and the activities he took part in at a particular age. For instance, before age 6, there are the phrases that say *saw the Statue of Liberty* and *visited the pyramids in Egypt*. Then, the students are asked to fill in sentences such as those in (8).

- (8) 1. By the time I went to senior high school, I had been to many different places. [answer given in textbook]
 2. By the time I was six, I _____.

In this volume, although there is an attempt to make the exercise more communicative by providing the context of Bill's activities, the communicativeness of the context is not further pursued in the grammar exercise (cf. (8)).

Based on these exercises, the conclusion regarding the Taiwanese textbooks is that they are still structure-based, with emphasis on accuracy rather than fluency. To summarize this section, Table 5 below displays some of the similarities and differences between the Malaysian and Taiwanese English textbooks.

Table 5: Comparison of English Textbooks in Malaysian and Taiwan

Malaysian Textbooks	Taiwanese Textbooks
1. No translation into mother tongue.	Vocabulary items are translated into Chinese.
2. A subject or theme for each unit.	A subject or theme for each chapter. Topics contain American influence.
3. Grammar is largely structural and in isolation. Language points consist of the conventional tenses, articles, proverbs, etc.	Grammar is structural and focuses on the usage of particular grammar structure such as 'It's time for...' and the use of relative 'which'
4. Materials are modified passages	Materials are modified passages

Based on Table 5, the treatment of grammar in both textbooks is not based on CLT principles. In a study on Taiwanese and Japanese English textbooks Huang (1999), found that both the audiolingual and communicative approaches are present in the junior-high English curriculum. This is also evident in the comparison of grammar activities in this paper. This shows that the structural pattern of grammar practice is retained, and that grammar teaching in Asian settings is less impacted by the implementation of CLT in comparison to other areas.

Incorporating Communicative Tasks

This section addresses the question of how CLT can be implemented in Asian classrooms, whilst taking into account students' needs and interests as well as their language background. This paper is of the view that both meaning and form can be

emphasised at different stages of the activities, a reflection of Yalden's (1987) proportional approach to course designing. This view is also supported by Wu (1998), who suggests that structural activities in textbooks need to be supplemented by communicative activities. Five activities are suggested: games, natural contexts, activities that balance skills, personalisation, and adjustment of teacher role.

I. Games

The notion of using games in the communicative classroom is not new to ESL and EFL teachers. Still, there are different attitudes towards the role of games in a classroom. Although a negative view tends to treat games as time-fillers or time-wasters (Rixon, 1981:1), they can make a lesson more relaxed and memorable. In a survey on Taiwanese Junior High School English by Cheng (1998), students nominated games and contests to be their most favorite activities, followed by singing and group discussions. This indicates that the use of games is one of the ways to attract students' interests in learning.

To use games in the classroom, Rixon (1981:1) suggests three key principles: a) think about games; b) know their ingredients and c) know how to vary them. Figure 1 shows the application of these principles to teach the perfect tenses.

In this activity, teachers set the rules (the players, the penalties, etc.). The ingredients in the preparation of this game are an empty track (the continuous squares), targeted sentences, dices and moving chips. Figure 1 takes the tracks as in the game *Monopoly*. Another example of tracks comes from the *Snakes and Ladders* game (continuous squares that are arranged in zigzag format from top to bottom). These 'templates' of tracks can be saved in the computer and retrieved whenever needed. Teachers can change the sentences in the squares according to lesson objectives. For example, to practice *It's time (for somebody) to V (Verb)* (Senior High School English, Book 2. 1999:23), teachers can place cue words such as *mother* and *cook* in a square and *brother* and *go home* in another. Teachers can also teach according to students' proficiency levels by manipulating this basic knowledge of games.

The activity shown in Figure 1 focuses both on form and meaning. It suggests supplementation to the traditional exercises found in the Asian textbooks. When playing the game, students practice forms unconsciously by way of communication. A successful communicative activity helps to generate the target language unconsciously but at the same time makes students enjoy what they are doing.

11. BONUS! Get an extra turn!	10. Go Back Three Squares!	9. The idea of using e-mails for submitting homework (worry) many teachers.	8. Everybody (get) used to using textbooks for teaching, but not computers.	7. Mr. Lee of my school (object) to this idea since it has been introduced.
12. I (never think) of studying computer but now I am forced to.				6. My friend (improve) in her computer knowledge.
13. My mum (never hear) about CD-Rom.				5. I (learn) how to use CD-Rom before.
FINISH START HERE	1. Teaching using computers (start) in the 1990s.	2. My school (buy) 20 computers last semester.	3. The government (give) our school some funds.	4. I (have) computer lessons in school.

Figure 1: Example of a board game

II. Natural Contexts

The context used in a communicative task plays a crucial role. Meaning (or use) materializes with the help of authentic contexts because contexts not only bring out the speakers' roles but also the time and place in which a communication takes place. The teaching of perfect tenses, for example, needs to specify the time line of the present and past.

For the perfect tenses, this paper suggests the activity *Spot the Changes*. This activity is an adaptation of Ur's (1988) comparison of changes on an island in the past and in the present. This activity is suggested because when spotting changes,

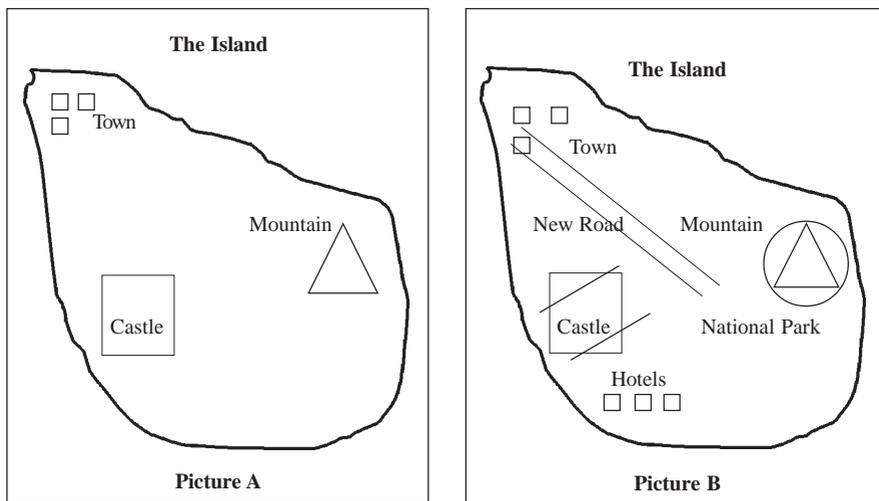


Figure 2: Spot the changes

one has in mind a reference point of time and place. For example, for the sentence *Your hair has become longer now*, the present length of the hair is compared to a particular point in the past. The reference of time, especially, is an important element in practicing the perfect tenses. In the activity in Figure 2, contextualisation helps build a sense of the present passive perfect tense. In this activity, the students are asked to name the changes that have taken place in Picture B compared to Picture A.

To vary the activity, teachers make the maps more interesting. Some examples of sentences generated from this activity are as in (9) below.

- (9) a. The castle *has been pulled down* in Picture B.
- b. The mountain in Picture A *has been developed* into a National Park.
- c. A new road *has been built* in Picture B.

When students' are not able to carry out the activity, a pre-teach stage may precede the communicative activity. Vocabulary terms such as *pulled down*, *removed* and *developed* can be introduced prior to the free communicative activity. Littlewood (1981) proposes the need for 'pre-communicative activity' in which drills and controlled practice provide the required skills for upcoming activities. In this case, teachers can focus on teaching the past participle form and vocabulary items in the pre-communicative activity.

As evidenced in our evaluation of textbooks, contextualisation is seldom present in the grammar activities, making reproduction of sentence patterns difficult. Therefore, natural contexts are helpful because there is a clear indication of place and referent time.

III. *Balancing Skills*

When the communicative syllabus is concerned, continuity and balance in teaching the four skills are emphasised. Chang (2000) highlighted the importance of communicative skills such as “initiating, sustaining, closing a conversation” to enhance communicative competence among Chinese students. However, Chang’s suggestions tend to overlook the importance of reading and writing. For instance, reading comprises ‘real life skills such as reading for gist, reading for information’ (Grant, 1994:79) as well as skimming and scanning. Writing includes all kinds of genres as well as creative thinking skills that should be balanced with (the overly emphasised) speaking skills.

An activity that balances between form and meaning is the *Information Gap* activity. In this activity, one student has the information that the other lacks. Thus, students have to exchange information (through oral practice) in order to complete a table, map, or paragraph. The *Information Gap* activity can also be varied to form exchanges between speakers in situations such as: a) asking for directions from a map and information from a table or chart; b) asking for a third person’s well being; and c) interviewing a famous person.

The *Information Gap* activity practices listening and speaking, reading and writing at the same time, i.e., students skim and scan (reading skills) for missing information, exchange information (listening and speaking) and jot down the missing information (writing) and use thinking skills in the process.

IV. *Personalisation*

Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) mention that a language curriculum is written based on generalisations regarding learning and usage. Similarly, textbooks are designed with a ‘generalised audience’ in mind. In order to address specific students’ needs and interests, adaptation and personalisation of textbooks is necessary (Cunningsworth, 1995). If a communicative style is suitable for a particular class, a communicative activity should be designed and vice versa.

For personalisation, this paper suggests the application via role-play. Below is an example of personalised role-play.

Table 6: Cue cards for role-play for the past perfect tense

Example: You saw Muthu running towards the bus stop, but he was too late to catch the bus (miss). *Muthu had missed the bus.*

You saw Lim in the Pudu railway station looking worried. You could see her bag inside her train. The train was moving. (leave)

Example: You saw Muthu running toward the bus stop, but he was too late to catch the bus (miss). *Muthu had missed the bus.*

You saw the ticket inspector of the Intrakota* bus talking to Rahim. Rahim was searching his pockets and looking embarrassed. (lose)

* Intrakota is a bus company in Malaysia.

Personalisation does not mean changing the whole textbook. For instance, in Table 6, the following adaptations have been made.

- (10) a. Name of characters in the role-play (*Muthu* and *Rahim* are common Malaysian names)
- b. Venue (*Pudu* railway station)
- c. Proper name (*Intrakota* bus)

Although these features are small, they create a sense of closeness between the students and the tasks. Students want to know what is written in the cue cards. It will be more interesting if the character's name is taken from the students in the class. This can add fun to the learning process and reduce fears of learning a language.

V. *Adjustment of Teacher Role*

Even though CLT proposes that teachers to step back and “make space for the learners” (Spaventa, 1980, as cited by Littlewood, 1992:98), the lessening of teacher control may be difficult. For the Taiwanese and Malaysian settings, a variable Control-and-Warmth approach (Borich and Tombari, 1993:302) may be adopted, i.e. some classes may employ a High-Control-Low-Warmth stance, whereas others may adopt a Low-Control-High-Warmth stance. The total withdrawal of teacher control may discourage introverted students from participating in class, while too much control may stifle participation or creativity altogether.

Conclusion

The examination of the selected textbooks has revealed that the implementation of CLT in both Malaysian and Taiwanese settings has little influence on the teaching of grammar. This paper has suggested a number of communicative tasks to supplement the structural activities in the textbooks. Nevertheless, the methods discussed herein will only be effective when teachers are ready to incorporate CLT principles into their lessons.

References

- Borich, G. D. and Tombari, M.C. 1995. *Educational Psychology: A Contemporary Approach*. New York: Harper Collins College.
- Chang, S-J. 2000. "No More English-Savvy Dummies or Fluent Fools: A Communicative Approach of Teaching English Conversation" *English Teaching and Learning*, 25 (1), 40-59.
- Cheng, Y-Y. 1998. "Adapted Whole Language Teaching in an English Class in Junior High School." Master Dissertation. Department of English. National Kaoshiung Normal University, Kaoshiung.
- Cunningsworth, A. 1995. *Choosing Your Coursebook*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Finocchiaro, M. and Brumfit, C. 1983. *The Functional-Notional Approach: From Theory to Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Grant, N. 1987. *Making the Most of Your Textbook*. New York: Longman.
- Howatt, A.P. R. 1984. *A History of English Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Huang, H-l. 1999. "A Comparative Study of the Junior-high English Curriculum Standards and Textbook in Taiwan and Japan." Master Dissertation. Graduate Institute of Comparative Education. National Chi Nan University, Nantou.
- Lee, A., Roberts, L. and Chew, M. 2002. *English Form 4*. Johor Bahru: PGI Cipta Sdn. Bhd.
- Lee, A., Roberts, L. and Chew, M. 2003. *English Form 5*. Johor Bahru: PGI Cipta Sdn. Bhd.
- Littlewood, W. 1981. *Communicative Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Littlewood, W. 1992. *Teaching Oral Communication: A Methodological Framework*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Maley, A. 1986. "Xanadu- 'A Miracle of Rare Device': The Teaching of English in China." ed. by Valdes, J. M. *Cultural Bound: Bridging the Cultural Gap in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ministry of Education. 1992. Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah Huraian Sukatan Pelajaran Bahasa Inggeris Tingkatan IV. Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Education.
- Nan-I High School Editing Committee. 1999. *Senior High School English Book 1*. Tai-Nan: Nan-I.
- Nan-I High School Editing Committee. 1999. *Senior High School English Book 2*. Tai-Nan: Nan-I.
- Noor Azlina Yunus and Angeline Spykerman. 1996. KBSM English Form Four. Shah Alam: Fajar Bakti.
- Richards, J.C. and Rodgers, T. 1986. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching: A Description and Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shih, Y-H, Lin, M-S and Brooks, S. (1999). *Far East English Reader for Senior High Schools, Book One*. The Far East Book Company.
- Shih, Y-H, Lin, M-S and Brooks, S. 1999. *Far East English Reader for Senior High Schools, Book Three*. The Far East Book Company.
- Spaventa, L. (ed.) 1980. *Towards the Creative Teaching of English*. London: Allen and Unwin.
- Ur, P. 1988. *Grammar Practice Activities: A Practical Guide for Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yalden J. 1987. *Principles of Course Design for Language Teaching*. NJ: Prentice Hall International.