Teaching Practices: A Case Study Of Communicative Language Teaching In Institute Of Lahore, Pakistan

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Abstract

The undertaken study is an extended effort to explore the efficacy of communicative language teaching in accordance with English language teaching and learning. The broadened scope of the study to investigate not only the factors which hinder the effectiveness of this pedagogy but also encompass the methods to overcome this problem. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is the most dominant method of language teaching in manycountries of the world. It is considered as a revolutionary method for teaching English as a second language (Farhad, 2013). CLT has been adopted in many EFL countries but it has been observed by many researchers that implementing CLT in EFL countries has faced many problems. Types of problems are varying to different countries. It includes educational system and government resources. The perception of ESL teachers, who adopt CLT, can be varied and it plays majorrole in teaching of English language in private language institutes of Pakistan. Therefore, the target is to investigate barriers in applying CLT in Language centers of Lahoreand teachers' perceptions about the theory and practice of CLT at private English language institutes of Lahore. This is a mixed study of private English language institutes. The data collection tools for this study are interviews, observations and questionnaire. The qualitative datais analyzed through thematic analysis and quantitative data is analyzed using statistical analysis. The findings reveals that the contextual factors such as Teacher's dominant role in class, focus on rules of Grammar, Lack ofknowledge of communicative activities, Subordinate role of learners and effects of other traditionalapproaches, i.e., overuse of traditional methods and large classes are observed in clash with the nature of CTL. This study helps ESL teachers, privateinstitutes, management and policy makers in knowing the resistance and working on it.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, ESL, Private Language Teaching Institutes, GTM.

Introduction

Learning or teaching a second language has always been very crucial because in previous human histories of world, we see people have always been in need to learn second language due to number of reasons (i.e., political, economic, social etc) (Phillipson,1997). Currently world is having the idea of Communicative Language Learning which is implemented for attaining communicative competence among learners. Communicative language teaching (CLT) approach was introduced in 1970's (Mazumder, 2011). CLT is one of those major methods which focuses on all four skills of language.

If we look at the Pakistani context, learning English is very important reason being it is the official language of Pakistan and all the legal and governmental documentation is done in that language.

The perception of ESL teachers is diverse for adopting CLT. There are many reasons for different views on adaption of CLT. According to Chowdhury (2012) It is because the old syllabus of English which were mainly based on the collection of prose, poetry and grammatical lessons. The exercises of lessons were not interactive and also it supports very less in learning English as a second language (Chowdhury, 2012)

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is the most dominant method of language teaching in many countries of the world (Vongxay, 2013; Alharabi, 2013; karim, 2004; Akram & amp; Mahmood, 2011). Li (1998) states that CLT approach was introduced in Europe in 1970s, gives importance to the language skills which are reading, writing, speaking and listening. It focuses mainly on language in use in real situation of life. For example, use of language with different people in different situations. According to Warschauer & amp; Kern (2000).

Pakistani students have awareness of the importance of English language. Therefore, they work hard for learning English language through different private institutes. Private institutes offer three levels program of English language and its duration is around one year. They also offer diploma program of six months and also different courses in English, it includes IELTS and TEFL.

The syllabus for teaching English language is also different almost in every center. In some centers, ESL teachers do not follow any book for teaching; instead, they arrange materials and activities from internet for teaching English language while other centers prefer to teach different books of Oxford University Press (Pakistan). Oxford's books are specially designed for English language learning and the main purpose of these books is to improve and enhance English language skills, with a lot of practice in reading, listening, speaking and writing skills. (Pakistan, Oxford University Press, 2015).

Aim of study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the practice of Communicative language approach in three private English language institutes of Lahore. The findings of this research recommend some measures that may bring change in teaching and learning situation of CLT method at private English language institutes. The participants of this study were teachers of different English Language institutes. The method of data collection was through semi-structured interviews and participant observation via zoom meetings and questionnaire filled through emails.

Objectives of the Study

Following are the main objectives of this study:

- To explore teachers' perceptions about Communicative Language Teaching in practice.
- To understand what difficulties and barriers are faced by EFL teachers in incorporating CLT approach in their teaching and learning situation.
- To know what are the major benefits of using CLT in English language classrooms in private English Language Teaching institutes.
- To explore what activities are done in order to promote English language learning through CTL.

Research Questions

1. What is EFL teachers' perception about use of Communicative language teaching in private English Language Teaching institutes?

2. What is EFL teachers' perception about their own use of Communicative Language Teaching Private English Language Teaching institutes?

3. What are the major challenges, difficulties, if any, in applying Communicative language teaching in private English Language Teaching institutes?

4. What can be possible ways to effectively apply communicative language teaching private English Language Teaching institutes?

Literature Review

According to Larsen-Freeman (2000) there are many teaching methods, for example Grammar Translation Method, Direct Method, The Audio Lingual Method, The Silent Way, Desuggestopedia, Community Language Learning, Total Physical Response and Communicative Language Teaching. According to Warschauer & Kern (2000) CLT is one of the most important methods of Teaching language and it slowly and gradually supersede the old methods of teaching language.

"Communicative language teaching (CLT) refers to both processes and goals in classroom learning."(savignon, 2015). By both processes and goals in classroom, we mean that it is not only the goal of CLT to make learners learn the target language but using the target language is also the mean through which learners learn the language. CLT believes in the idea of "use the language to learn the language." Communicative language teaching, in today's era, is very trending approach

to second language teaching all over the world. Because unlike other previously used traditional approaches, it doesn't only focus on linguistic competence only, but this is a broader approach of language teaching which sees language learning with broader perspective. The very concept was originated after the failure of traditional teaching methods and approaches.

Li & Ellis (as cited in Chowdhury, 2012) assert that numerous research scholars have conducted research studies on Communicative Language Teaching approach, to check whether it is suitable approach to be implemented in EFL context. Many famous researchers (Munby,1978; Widdowson,1978; Littlewood,1981; Johnson,1982; Brumfit,1984; Yalden,1987; Nunan,1989; Berns,1990; Lee&VanPatten,1995; as cited in Yaqoob et al., 2015) considered "CLT an idealist approach". The above-mentioned scholars have pointed out that ESL teachers of many countries have faced many obstacles in applying CLT in language learning classrooms.

Li (1998) conducted a research study at a Canadian University in 1998, the participants were 18 EFL secondary school teachers who were studying there. The major purpose of this research study was to identify their perceived issues in implementing CLT approach. The mode of data collection was through questionnaire and interviews. 18 teachers filled questionnaire and among them 10 teachers were also interviewed. The problems reported from participants were following, the teachers, students, education system and use of L1.

Anderson (1993) conducted research study on CLT in China. He found the following problems, which become the reason of hindrance in applying CLT in China. The problems, which he mentioned, were lack of teachers' training, suitable text materials and students who were not familiar from communicative activities and also do not pay attention to communication skills.

Few but very important research studies were conducted on Communicative Language Teaching approach in Pakistan. Among them are the studies of (Muhammad, 2016), (Rahman et al., 2015), (Khan et al., 2015), (Ali et al., 2014), (Ahmad & Rao, 2013), (Soomro et al., 2013), (Zeeshan, 2013), (Mahmood, 2012) (Akram & Mahmood, 2011).

Zeeshan (2016) conducted study on students' attitudes towards CLT and GTM. The context of the study were two government secondary schools of Queeta and Balochistan. It was a survey study and the participants were from both genders and their number was 204 in total. These participants were in majority from Tenth grade class and the very little number of the participants were from class 9th. The researcher used purposive sampling technique. He adopted the ideas from the questionnaire for the survey from the studies of Li (1998) and (Karim, 2004). He also conducted Pilot study before the actual research, in order to check the reliability of the questionnaire. He wrote 18 questions and analyzed the data with the help of SPSS version 12.

The findings of his study indicated that students from both sides (boys and girls) showed positive attitude for CLT approach whereas for GTM showed little preference or become neutral. Ahmad and Rao (2013) conducted mixed methods research. The purpose of their research was to analyze the need of CLT approach in teaching of English language at schools and colleges of Pakistan. Their study was divided in to two parts. The first part of the study was experimental

whereas the other one was survey study. In the first part of the study, the objective of the researchers to check the difference in learning between learners of GTM method and CLT approach. For this purpose, forty students of Intermediate class were participated in the study for three months. The sample of the study was selected from intermediate text book and then the participants were divided in to two groups. Each group was taught with different method, either GTM method or CLT approach. Pre- test and post-test was conducted.

The result proved that CLT approach is more effective than GTM. In the second part of the study, researchers used survey study to investigate the perceptions of Pakistani teachers about CLT and issues that creates problem in applying CLT at higher secondary level. The problems which were highlighted by teachers were in four categories. It includes issues that belong to teachers, students' related issues, educations system and theory and practice of CLT.

Methodology

In this study, mixed method was used to collect the data based. The study involves observation, interview and questionnaire. Bryman (2006) and Greene, et al. (1989) said that mixed method study is useful in a way that it ensures validity to the study, makes it completer and more comprehensive, and provides accurate inferences. Since data is analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative study therefore, there are less chances of uncertainty (as cited by Doyle, 2009).

The study was divided in three stages. In the first stage, research observed three English language classrooms in the Language teaching center of Lahore. In the second stage, research interviewed the English teachers. At last, researcher shared questionnaire to English language teachers via google form. The questionnaire was adapted from the study of Sarab, et al. (2016). Purposeful (convenience) sampling was used in this study, only those respondents were selected for collecting data who were easily available and who have taught English to ESL learners through communicative language teaching approach. "Convenience sampling involves choosing the nearest individuals to serve as respondents and continuing that process until the required sample size has been obtained or those who happen to be available and accessible at the time" (Cohen, 2007, 113). The researcher chose three private language teaching centers of Lahore. Names are not shared due to the privacy reasons. All the participants in this were basically English language teachers who had more than 2 years of experience in teaching English to non-native speakers of English.

Firstly, the data was collected through observations and interviews and the purpose of this tool was to get ideas, opinions and self-reported experiences regarding the topic (Fraenkel &Wallen, 2009). The interviews were taken via zoom. The researcher had selected semi-structured interviews which were used mostly when the deep information is required in research study by the researcher on a particular topic (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). The data of interview was analyzed through thematic analysis technique. Fraenkel &Wallen (2009) describes analysis as a procedure that helps researcher to "to study human behavior in an indirect way, through an analysis of their communication".

The next data collection tool is observation. Observations as a tool can be used when a researcher from any field wants to collect the primary data on the specific topic. Creswell (2012) explains observation that it is a method for collecting correct information "by observing people" at a research field. I adopted role of participant observer in this research study. Participant observer roles according to Creswell (2012) are adopted when a researcher himself participates in activities in the research field. The main reason behind conducting classroom observations is to discover numerous problems and also confirms those problems regarding implementing CLT which will be indicated by the participants of the research. In this study researcher observed 03 classes at private English language institutes of Lahore. These classes were online and most of the ESL teachers conducted classed via zoom.

Data Analysis

The data extracted from observation is transcribed first and after that codes are given in order to organize the data into smaller volume.

Figure: 1 exhibits the codes of transcribed data.

4.2.1 Coding of the Data

Data Extracts	Codes
Teacher was dominant authority in classroom.	1. Teacher's dominance 2. Suppressed students 3. Teacher's authority
Students were not allowed to talk during lecture since their mic was on mute for the whole class.	4. Fixed routines 5. Strict rules 6. Students as silent hearers
Teacher asked students to share responses in the chat box and directly pointed their mistakes.	7. No room for mistakes 8. Focus on perfect grammar
Teacher asked students to repeat the vocabulary again and again that was taught in the last class. They were also asked to memorize it and make sentences. E.g: Parts of Speech	9. Chain drills 10. Practice 11. Repetition
Teacher rejected one of the questions during her lecture when the student tried to unmute mic. Even the question was ignored in chat box too.	12. Questions are not appreciated 13. Dependent students 14. Students are marginalized

Teacher called students for surprise but perfect pair presentation (Students of beginner's level). This time, teacher asked them to mute their mic.	15. Surprise tasks 16. Students are seen as perfectionists
Teacher criticized some students on choice of presentation topic.	17. Teacher's choice is important 18. Teacher has priority
Teacher corrected mistakes of students while they were presenting.	19. Errors are forbidden 20. Restrictive routines
Teacher focused many topics in a single day. Speaking, writing, vocabulary, sentence formation were covered in a single class.	21. Students are empty containers 22. Merging of concepts
Students were supposed to copy whatever teacher writes on the board shared via zoom.	23. Traditional method 24. Passive participants 25. Receivers
Teacher used grammar exercises, more focus was on rules. All exercises were shared on the screen and students were asked to write their answers in the chat box.	26. Traditional norms 27. Rules are important 28. Parroting
Teacher deleted words from board and ask students to recall what was written on the board.	29. Memorization 30. Board decides knowledge
More lecture-based learning than pair or group activities that could engage learners.	31. Student's role is eliminated 32. Lack of creativity 33. Lecturing method
Teacher scolded a pair of presenters because they were shy to unmute their mic.	34. Discouraging students 35. Lack of esteem in students
Teacher threatened students if they do not unmute their mic to give presentation, they will not give them marks.	36. Teacher as power 37. Pressure of marks
Teacher knows everything.	38. Teacher as depositor of knowledge 39. Knowledge is fixed

Figure: 4.2.1 Data Extracts and codes

4.2.2 Categorizing of the Similar Codes:

Codes of transcribed data, in second step are further organized in themes. I have put similar or relatable codes of data into "themes or Categories".

Figure 4.2.2 is drawn according to it.

Codes	Themes/ Categories
1. Suppressed students 2. Students as silent hearers 3. Dependent Students 4. Students are marginalized 5. Student's role is eliminated 6. Empty Containers 7. Passive participants 8. Receivers	1. Student's role is very subordinate to his teacher.
1. Teacher's dominance 2. Authoritative teachers 3. Teacher has knowledge 4. Teacher is depositor of knowledge 5. Teacher has power	2. Teacher is powerful. He has to operate the class and he has authority to do everything/ anything.
1. Fixed routines 2. Strict rules 3. Lack of creativity 4. Knowledge is fixed 5. Restrictive routines	3. Students and teachers have to follow some rules and routines.
1. No room for mistakes 2. Students are seen as perfectionists 3. Errors are forbidden	4. Students are not allowed to make mistakes.
1. Memorization 2. Chain drills 3. Recitation 4. Repetition 5. Merging of concepts 6. Parroting	5. Students are supposed to memorize grammar so they are unable to understand the concepts of language.
1. Traditional method	6. Lectures are still given to students like before on every topic with the use of

2. Traditional norms	

3. Lecturing method 4. Questions are not appreciated 5. Board decides knowledge 6. Pressure of marks	blackboard and students learn language for the sake of marks.

Figure 4.2.2 codes categorized into themes

4.2.3 Analysis of Themes to form theories:

In later step, researcher has combined related themes in order to summarize data extracts into few words, to explain what data says as a whole. For this, themes are pluralized to generate theories.

Here Theory 1 is generated by adding theme 1, 2 and 3. In the same way Theory 2 is product of addition of theme 4, 5 and 6.

Thus:

Theory 1= Theme1+ Theme 2+ Theme 3.

Theory 2= Theme4+ Theme5+ Theme 6.
Figure 4.2.1a plots the process.

Figure 4.2.1a

1. Student's role is subordinate to his teacher.

2. Teacher is powerful, he has to operate the class and he has authority to do everything/ anything.

3. Students and teacher have to follow some rules and routines.

Theory 1

Following strict rules and routines, teacher has to be authoritative being in class and students are teacher's followers and listeners.

Figure 4.2.2a

4. Students are not allowed to make mistakes.

5. Students are supposed to memorize grammar rules so they're unable to understand the nature of language.

6. Learners are still given students like before on every board with the use of board and students learn language for the sake of marks.

Theory: 2

Students are still taught through traditional approaches, they are not supposed to do errors for which they memorize rules of language.
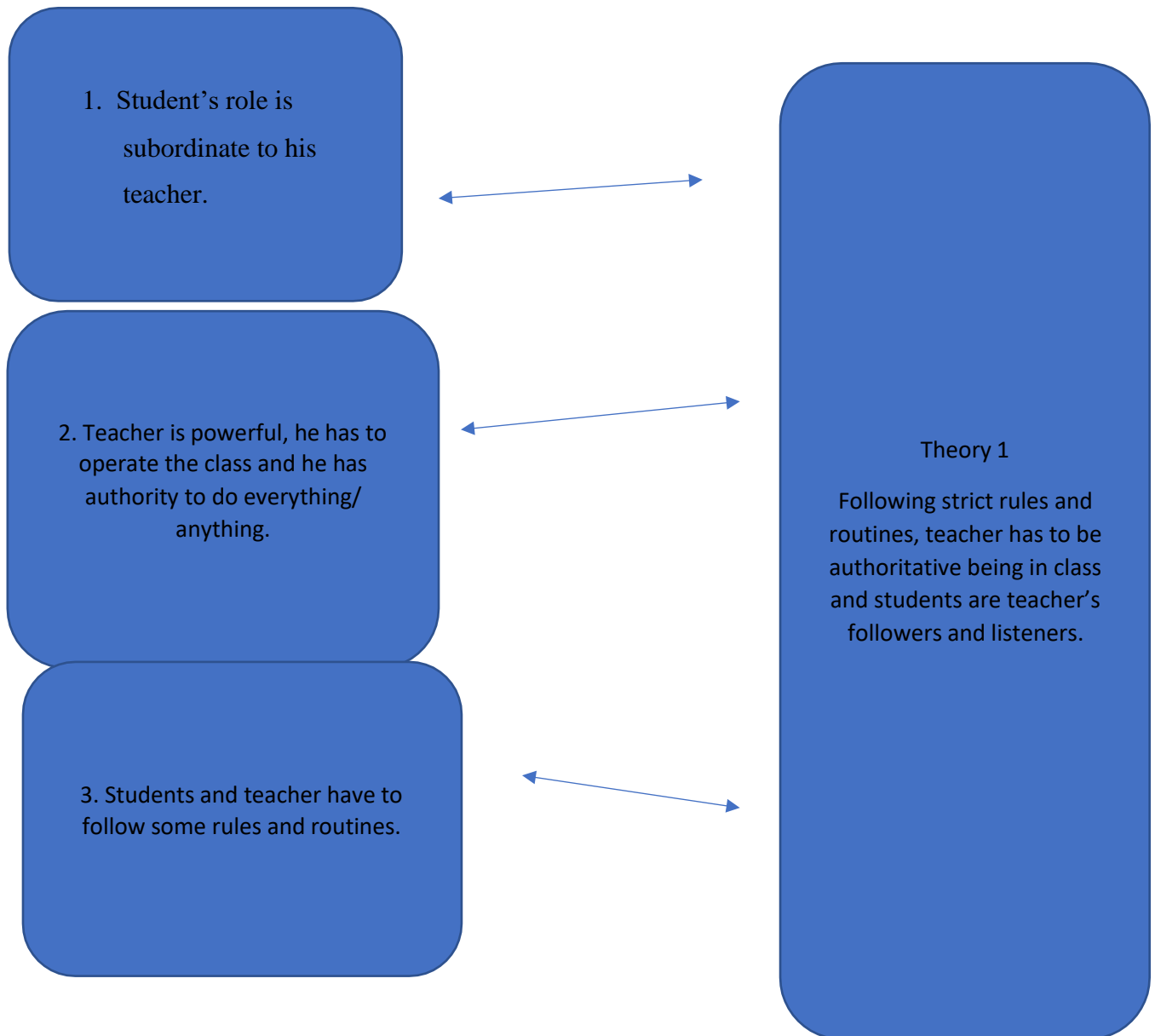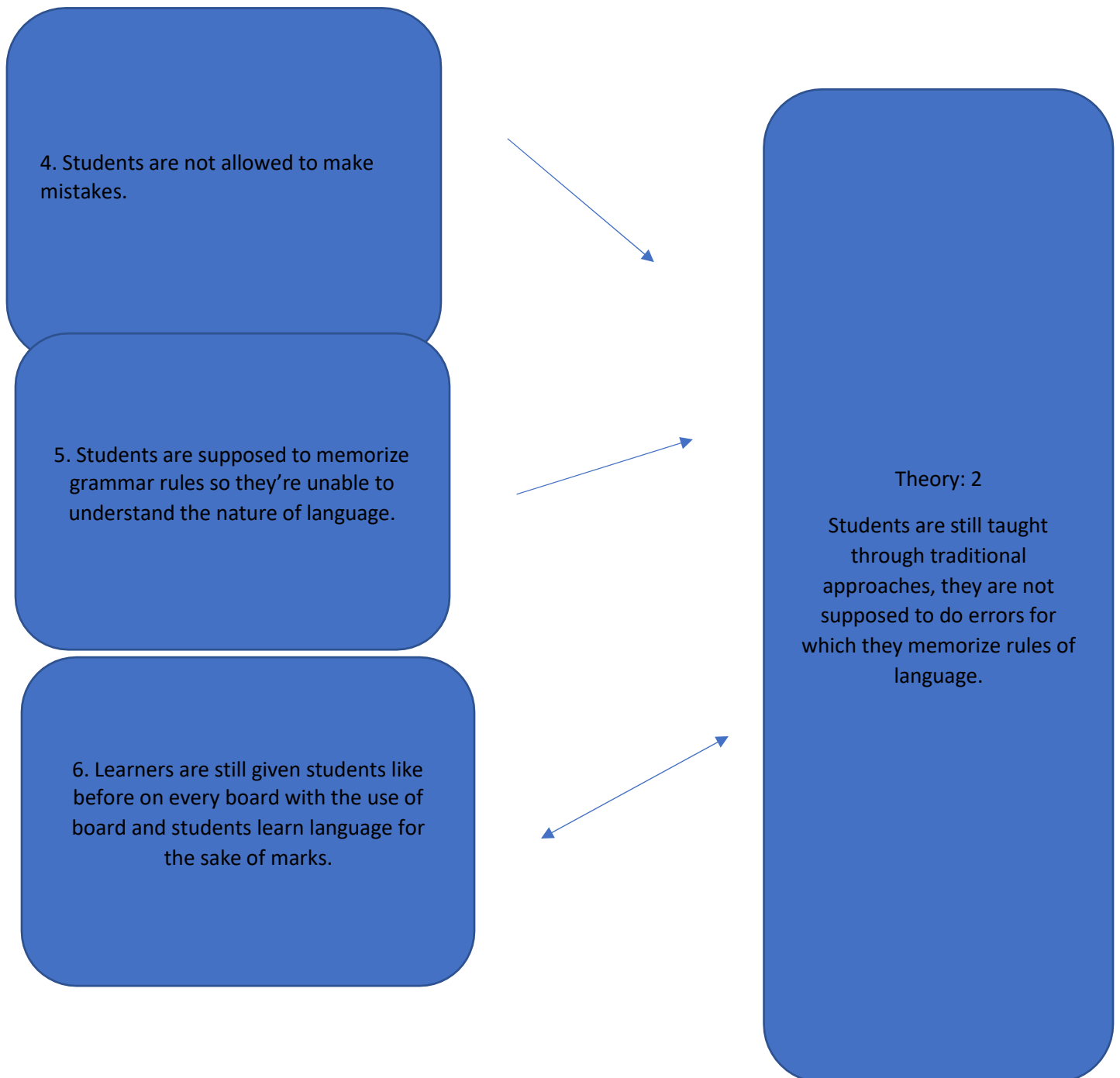
4.3 Data Findings from Interviews of Teachers:

The data extracted from observation is transcribed first and after that codes are given in order to organize the data into smaller volume.

1.3.1   Coding of the Data

"Responses from teachers"	"Codes"
"I personally believe, CLT is waste of time because students gossip in groups, they do not learn language."	1. Gossip groups 2. Waste of time 3. The decline of learning 4. Informal interaction
"If you allow students to ask questions, they try to be over smart and ask impossible questions in this way class environment is affected negatively."	5. Questions are disregarded 6. Negative atmosphere of classroom
"It is demand of our institute's authorities that we apply communicative activities in class but I think these disturb the classroom."	7. Institute's demand 8. Disturbance in class
"We cannot initiate teaching with these communicative activities without giving any grammar input to students."	9. No grammar input 10. Less learning 11. More time consumption
"I am the product of Grammar translation method and I am an English teacher and I also think this grammar knowledge can help my students too. That is why I prefer teaching with this method over CLT."	12. GTM produces successful learners 13. CLT is not preferable 14. Grammar knowledge is important
"CLT can be reliable but we are short with resources."	15. Lack of resources 16. Not affordable
"We should focus on grammar more because it is the tool to succeed in competitive examinations."	17. Grammar is priority 18. It's tool to succeed
"If you make your students autonomous, they take it for granted and do not respect their teacher"	19. Irresponsible students 20. Wrong use of autonomy 21. Inattentive students

"We do not have proper guide to use CLT in classrooms."	22. No guide 23. No access 24. Unreachable
"I am not trained to use such activities that's why I use blackboard."	25. No training 26. Support of blackboard 27. No knowledge of activities
"Students work better if you make them struggle for marks and grades."	28. Good grades are goals 29. Better work for the sake of marks
"CLT is not suitable for good writers, it doesn't focus on grammar."	30. Not suitable 31. Doesn't produce good writers
"It is difficult to handle a classroom when we apply group activities, it becomes more like a market."	32. Difficult in handling 33. Noise 34. Lack of focus
"CLT is not workable here in Pakistan."	35. No results 36. Difficult application 37. Not workable in Pakistan

Figure 4.3.1

4.3.2 Categorizing Similar Codes

I have put the similar coeds into one category in order to make related themes out of them.

Figure 4.3.2 explains the way.

"Related Codes"	"Themes/ Categories"
1. Negative atmosphere of Class 2. Difficult in handling 3. Difficult application 4. Disturbance in class 5. Decline of learning	1. "CLT is difficult to apply in classrooms because it doesn't create good learning atmosphere.
1. No Grammar input 2. Grammar knowledge is important 3. Grammar is priority	1. "CLT doesn't provide grammatical knowledge which is very important to be a good writer in competitive exams

4. Tool to succeed 5. Doesn't produce good writers 6. No results	also it doesn't have significant results in the end.
1. Good grades are goals 2. Irresponsible students 3. Wrong use of autonomy 4. More informal interaction 5. Waste of time 6. Better work for marks 7. Gossip groups 8. Inattentive students 9. More time consumption 10. Less learning 11. Lack of focus 12. Noise	2. In CLT students are tend to be self-dependent. In this process, they become careless because they do not have fear of teacher, moreover, they gossip rather than learn in group activities, they waste more time in small learning.
1. Questions are disregarded 2. Successful product of GTM	3. Grammar translation method is reliable to give successful users rather than CLT. GTM disregard questions because it teaches whole to students so that they do not have to ask anything.
1. Not workable in Lahore 2. Not preferable 3. Lack of resources 4. Not affordable 5. No training 6. No guide 7. Institute's demand 8. No knowledge of activities 9. No access 10. Support of blackboard 11. Unreachable	4. Chances of application of CLT in Lahore are lesser because here we do not have proper guide, resources, training, and access to knowledge of communicative activities. Here CLT is only demand of language institutes to their teachers while they end up with using blackboard and grammar lectures, after using communicative activities.

Figure 4.3.2

4.3.3 Analysis of Themes to Form Theories:

In later step, I have combined related themes in order to summarize data extracts into few words, to explain what data says as a whole. For this, themes are pluralized to generate theories.
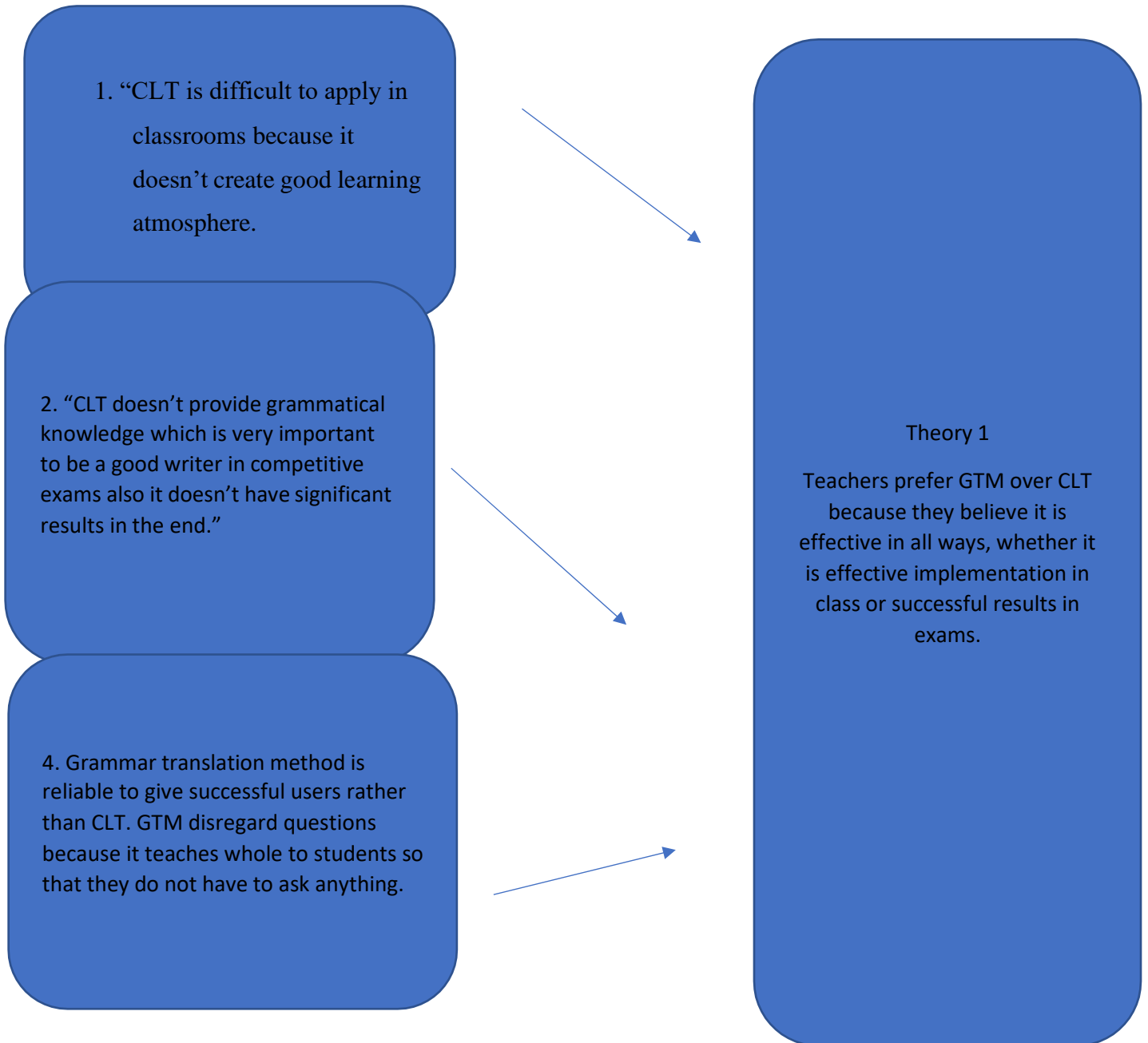
Here Theory 1 is generated by adding theme 1, 2 and 3. In the same way Theory 2 is product of addition of theme 4, 5 and 6.

Thus:

Theory 1= Theme1+ Theme 2+ Theme 4.

Theory 2= Theme3+ Theme5.

Figure 4.3.1a

1. "CLT is difficult to apply in classrooms because it doesn't create good learning atmosphere.

2. "CLT doesn't provide grammatical knowledge which is very important to be a good writer in competitive exams also it doesn't have significant results in the end."

4. Grammar translation method is reliable to give successful users rather than CLT. GTM disregard questions because it teaches whole to students so that they do not have to ask anything.

Theory 1

Teachers prefer GTM over CLT because they believe it is effective in all ways, whether it is effective implementation in class or successful results in exams.

3. In CLT students are tend to be self-dependent. In this process, they become careless because they do not have fear of teacher, moreover, they gossip rather than learn in group activities, they waste more time in small learning.

Theory 2

CLT makes students autonomous which means irresponsible, moreover, in Lahore, teachers are not trained for CLT this is why its results are not fruitful.

5. Chances of application of CLT in Lahore are lesser because here we do not have proper guide, resources, training, and access to knowledge of communicative activities. Here CLT is only demand of language institutes to
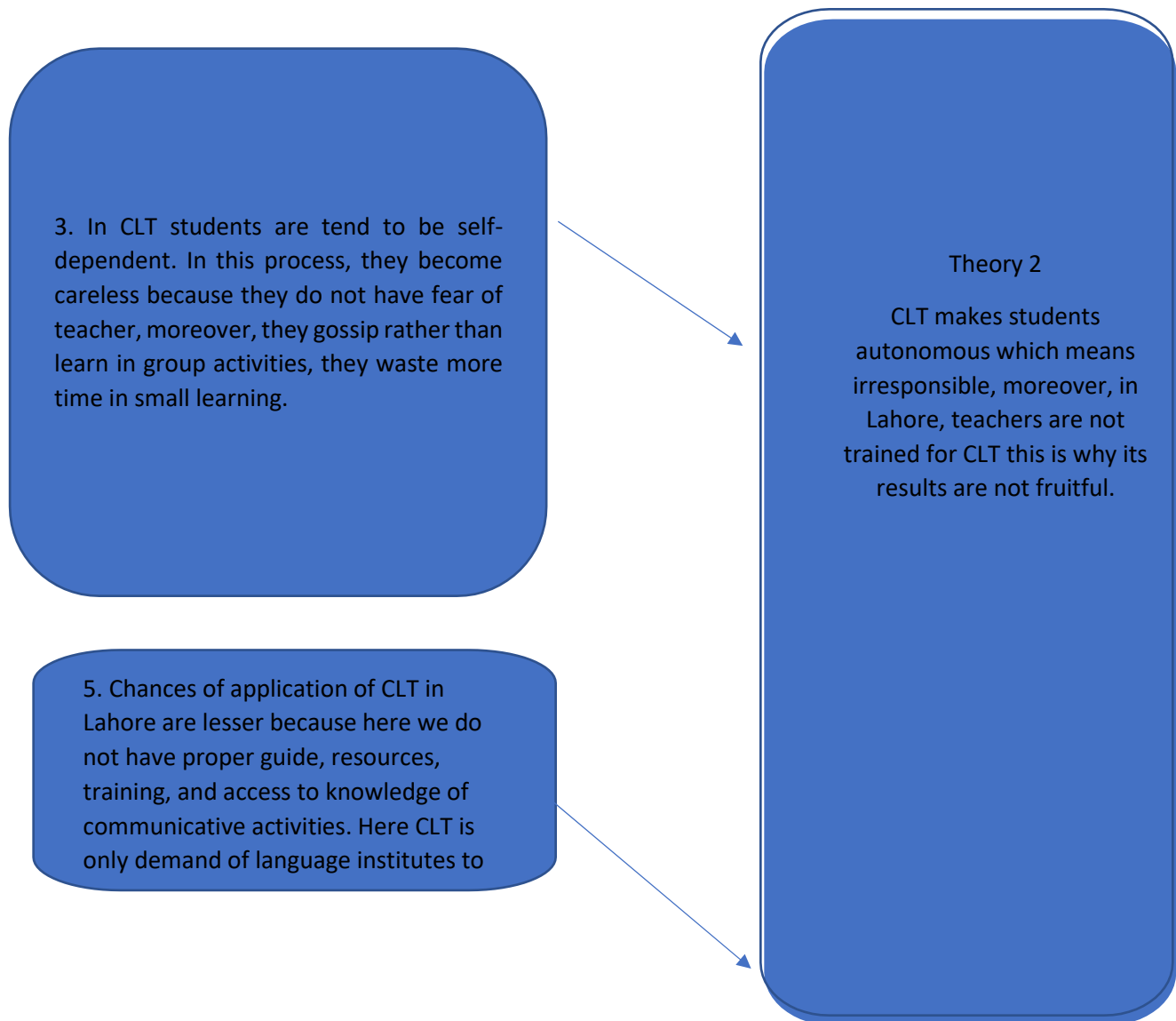
Figure 4.3.2a

Result and Discussion

The current study reflects that there are multiple difficulties in effectively applying CLT in English language teaching centers of Lahore, because teacher is the dominant authority in classrooms. Like traditional methods of teaching, students are forbidden to ask any question and they are not autonomous here. Students are supposed to copy whatever teachers write on board and teachers' as well as students' focus is on grammar exercises more than communicative competence. Though the pandemic has shifted people from physical classes to online classes, it still does not bring change in the teaching practices employed in language classrooms.

Moreover, the researcher noticed that teachers don't prefer CLT in their classroom. They are rigid in their teaching approach. They don't provide opportunities to learners to communicate in L2. This might be because of the large number of students in the class, syllabus suggested by the heads

of institute and learners' interest as well. During interviews and observations, researcher found that teacher's perceptions towards CLT are also not positive. They think that CLT is of no use because group activities hinder learning and it becomes more like market. It is also believed by teachers that students learning through CLT have poor grammar due to which they do not pass competitive examinations. This is why students are still taught by traditional approaches, they are not supposed to do errors for which they memorize rules of language and following strict rules and routines, teacher has to be authoritative being in class and students are teacher's followers and listeners.

However, the researcher did quantitative study in order to make her study more valid and reliable. During quantitative analysis, the data was much bigger than interview and observation so the researcher found that teachers are interested towards CLT method, they want to bring CLT related activities in the classroom but they are unable to do that because of time, material, availability of the material/activities and interest of learners. Teachers had some views that CLT should be used in classroom but were not satisfied with the outcome it may generate in. Therefore, on the practical grounds, CLT was not seen to be implemented.

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