



## Communicative language teaching in grammar instruction for Cebuano learners

Melogen D. Nemeno 

Department of Education, Balhaan Elementary School, Master Teacher 1, Alegria, Cebu, Philippines.  
Email: [melogen.nemeno@gmail.com](mailto:melogen.nemeno@gmail.com)



### Abstract

This study determined the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as an approach to grammar instruction for Cebuano learners in public elementary schools in the District of Alegria, Cebu, Philippines, addressing the need for more meaningful and communicative grammar strategies. Specifically, it examined teachers' perceptions of CLT strategies, explored the relationship between their professional profiles and perceived effectiveness, and developed a training design based on the findings. A descriptive research design was employed using adapted survey questionnaires to gather data on teachers' profiles and their evaluations of various CLT strategies. Qualitative insights were obtained through a Focused Group Discussion (FGD) to capture teachers' experiences in using CLT for grammar instruction. The study involved 30 teacher respondents from three rural public elementary schools. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and Pearson r. Findings revealed that teachers frequently utilized communicative activities in teaching grammar and generally perceived CLT strategies as effective. No significant relationship was found between educational qualifications, field of specialization, years of teaching experience, and perceived effectiveness of CLT. The study concludes that CLT is a practical approach to grammar instruction and recommends systematic teacher training for consistent implementation.

**Keywords:** Alegria, Cebuano, Communicative language teaching, Descriptive method, Philippines, Training design.

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### Contents

1. Introduction .....	22
2. Review of Related Literature .....	22
3. Methodology .....	23
4. Results .....	24
5. Discussion .....	25
6. Conclusion .....	33
7. Recommendations .....	34
References .....	34
Appendix .....	35

### Contribution of this paper to the literature

This study contributes to language teaching by demonstrating how Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can be applied effectively to grammar instruction within authentic classroom context. It offers practical insights and strategies that support teachers to shift from form-focused methods to more meaningful, communication-based instructional approaches. The findings assist educators in improving learner engagement and grammatical proficiency through meaningful language use.

## 1. Introduction

This study investigates the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as an approach to grammar instruction among elementary teachers in the District of Alegria, Cebu, Philippines. CLT emphasizes meaningful language use in communication, supporting Chomsky's (Tahir, 2018) linguistic competence and Hymes' (Sidik, Supriyanto, Krisnawati, & Muttaqin, 2018). Communicative Competence. Together, they point out the need for both grammatical knowledge and practical communicative ability in language learning. In the Philippine setting, Executive Order No. 210, s. 2003, underpins English as a medium of instruction, and DepEd Order No. 020, s. 2025, specifies English and Filipino as primary media of instruction for kindergarten to Grade 3 starting School Year 2025–2026. These policies accentuate the importance of aligning grammar instruction with communicative competence in basic education.

Even with international and local recognition of CLT's effectiveness, gaps remain in its application at the elementary level in rural Philippine elementary schools. Explicitly, few studies explore how teachers' professional profiles, including educational attainment, field of specialization, and years of experience, associate with their perceptions of CLT effectiveness in grammar instruction. Moreover, there is insufficient empirical support on how these identified CLT strategies, such as role-playing, task completion, and information-gap activities, function in multilingual classroom environments.

Responding to these gaps, this study centers on how elementary teachers perceive, adapt, and apply CLT strategies in grammar instruction, with the purpose of creating a contextually responsive training design. By probing teacher perceptions and determining effective strategies, the study strives to bridge the gap between theoretical competence and practical classroom application, fundamentally supporting learner-centered, communicative grammar teaching in accordance with national policy.

### 1.1. Objectives

This study aims to determine the effectiveness of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in grammar instruction among elementary learners in the District of Alegria, Cebu, as a basis for a training design. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Describe the teachers' profile in terms of:
  - 1.1. Highest educational attainment
  - 1.2. Field of specialization
  - 1.3. Number of years in teaching English
  - 1.4. Relevant seminars and training attended
2. Determine the level of effectiveness of the different Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) strategies as perceived by the teachers.
3. Analyze teachers' feedback on the teaching of grammar using CLT strategies based on Focused Group Discussion (FGD).
4. Establish the relationship between the teachers' profiles and the level of effectiveness of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) strategies.
5. Develop a training design that will enhance teachers' skills and competence in implementing CLT strategies for grammar instruction.

### 1.2. Hypothesis

The hypothesis of the study was tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

*H<sub>0</sub>*: There is no significant relationship between teachers' profiles and effectiveness in grammar instruction using Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) strategies.

## 2. Review of Related Literature

### 2.1. Theoretical Foundations of Communicative Grammar Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) places importance on meaningful communication together with grammatical accuracy. Chomsky's (Tahir, 2018) concept of linguistic competence emphasizes mastery of grammatical rules, while Hymes' (Sidik et al., 2018) communicative competence highlights relevant and effective language use in social settings. Side by side, these models justify grammar didactics where form and function simultaneously exist, fostering learners to improve both grammatical knowledge and communicative ability.

### 2.2. Empirical Evidence on CLT and Grammar Instruction

Research shows that CLT enhances grammatical and communicative competence across different settings. In the Philippines, Borg (2023) found that communicative tasks such as task-completion, information-gap, and opinion-sharing are assimilated in classroom planning, though their use varies. Sitoy and Sonsona (2024) noted that Filipino teachers give importance to interactive activities like role-plays and storytelling, but necessitate a well-designed professional development for consistent CLT implementation. Internationally, Liu and Deris (2023) stated that while CLT matches grammar instruction, incorporating grammar-focused tasks within communicative paradigms introduces pedagogical challenges.

### *2.3. Teacher Beliefs and Practice*

Teachers' beliefs about grammar commonly deviate from their classroom practices. Borg (2023) observed that teachers support teaching grammar in context, yet frequently regress to explicit grammar teaching. A resembling pattern was mentioned in a study of 28 English teachers, where explicit grammar teaching was supported, rather than negated, reflecting a "weak" implementation of CLT (Pica & Kurup, 2021).

### *2.4. Challenges in Multilingual and Resource-Limited Settings*

Practicing CLT in multilingual and resource-limited classrooms displays specific challenges. Teachers face large class sizes, limited instructional time, and insufficient materials, which impede communicative grammar tasks (Nam, 2023). Despite advocating for contextualized learning, teachers usually start lessons with rule explanations, deferring communicative integration (Borg, 2023).

### *2.5. Implications for Teacher Training*

Continuous professional development is essential for effective CLT implementation. Sitoy and Sonsona (2024) point out that training should prioritize task design, lesson planning, and reflective practice to be consistent with communicative activities with grammar learning. Context-specific programs can respond to resource limitations and assist teachers in bridging gaps between beliefs and practice, promoting consistent, meaningful implementation of CLT strategies.

### *2.6. Research Gap and Relevance to the Present Study*

Despite the fact that CLT's effectiveness is well-documented, research on elementary teachers in resource-scarce Philippine schools continues to be inadequate. Few studies investigate how teachers' professional profiles impact perceived CLT effectiveness or how locally adapted training designs can strengthen communicative grammar instruction. This study tackles these gaps by delving into Alegria elementary teachers' perceptions and proposing a contextualized training design for grammar instruction.

## **3. Methodology**

### *3.1. Research Design*

This study utilized a descriptive research design to examine the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) strategies for grammar instruction among elementary teachers in the District of Alegria, Cebu. Descriptive research is appropriate for obtaining information about the status of phenomena and for identifying patterns, relationships, and trends (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Additionally, qualitative data were collected through Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) to gain deeper insights into teachers' experiences and perceptions, providing contextual understanding that complements the quantitative findings (Patton, Sawicki, & Clark, 2025).

### *3.2. Participants and Context*

The study involved 30 elementary teachers from three public schools in the District of Alegria, Cebu, including eight teachers from Balhaan Elementary School, eight from Alangasil Elementary School, and fourteen from Madrideojos Elementary School. These schools represent typical rural educational settings, where most learners are multilingual, with Sinugbuanong Binisaya as their mother tongue (L1), limited comprehension of Filipino (L2), and a stronger understanding of English (L3) due to exposure to English content on social media.

Teachers actively teaching English at the elementary level were selected using purposive sampling, guaranteeing that participants had relevant experience in teaching grammar and implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) strategies in their classrooms (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2015). This approach enabled the study to concentrate on educators who were familiar with the instructional practices being examined, contributing insights that are both contextually relevant and practically grounded to grammar instruction in rural elementary schools.

### *3.3. Research Procedure*

Consent to conduct the study was obtained from school heads prior to the collection of data. The survey questionnaires were conducted first to collect quantitative data on teachers' profiles and perceptions of CLT strategies. Thereafter, FGDs were administered to elaborate on survey responses and to navigate teachers' classroom experiences in greater depth. The sequential use of quantitative and qualitative procedures facilitated triangulation of findings and strengthened the overall analysis.

### *3.4. Data Collection and Instrument*

**Survey Questionnaire:** The quantitative data were collected using an adapted survey questionnaire derived from established CLT-related instruments in previous studies. The questionnaire underwent content validation by three experts in language education and research methodology to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study objectives. Revisions were made based on expert feedback prior to administration. To establish reliability, a pilot test was conducted among a small group of elementary teachers outside the study sample, yielding an acceptable Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which indicated internal consistency of the instrument.

The survey was modified from verified instruments on CLT implementation and teacher perceptions (Hu & Du, 2023; Liu & Deris, 2023). It was composed of two sections: (1) teachers' professional profile, including educational attainment, field of specialization, years of teaching experience, and relevant trainings attended; and (2) perceived effectiveness of CLT strategies in teaching grammar. Responses were measured using a Likert-type scale to quantify teachers' perceptions.

**Focused Group Discussion (FGD):** A semi-structured FGD guide was used to collect qualitative data teachers' experiences, opinions, and feedback regarding CLT strategies in grammar instruction. The guide was likewise reviewed by subject-matter experts to ensure content validity and alignment with the research questions. Open-ended questions encouraged participants to elaborate on their perceptions, instructional practices, and challenges

encountered in implementing CLT for grammar teaching. This method facilitates participants to articulate their perceptions and classroom experiences in detail, providing rich, descriptive insights (Krueger & Casey, 2015).

### 3.5. Data Analysis

**Quantitative Data Analysis:** Quantitative data from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including frequency, percentage, and mean scores to summarize teachers' profiles and perceived effectiveness of CLT strategies. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was used to analyze the relationship between teachers' professional profiles and the perceived effectiveness of CLT strategies at a 0.05 level of significance (Field, 2018).

**Qualitative Data Analysis and Credibility Measures:** Qualitative data from the FGDs were delved into using thematic analysis following the phases outlined by Braun and Clarke (2019), which included familiarization with the data, initial coding, theme generation, review, and refinement. To ensure the thoroughness of the analysis, codes were reviewed and refined through peer checking, and themes were compared across participant responses to guarantee consistency.

To establish the credibility, validity, and reliability of the qualitative findings, methodological triangulation of quantitative and qualitative findings was made by cross-validating survey results with FGD data. Key discussion points were summarized through member checking during the FGDs and confirming their accuracy with participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

### 3.6. Ethical Considerations

Respondents were informed about the purpose, procedures, expected outcomes, and that their participation in the study was voluntary. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, with personal identifiers removed from the data. Approval was obtained from the school heads of the participating schools and the district supervisor of Alegria District.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Teachers' Profile

The study involved 30 elementary teachers from three public schools in the District of Alegria. Table 1 summarizes the profile of the respondents.

**Table 1.** Teachers' Profile (N = 30).

Profile Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highest educational attainment		
Bachelor's degree	20	66.7
Master's degree	10	33.3
Field of specialization		
English	18	60.0
Other Fields	12	40.0
Years of teaching experience		
1-5 years	6	20.0
6-10 years	12	40.0
11-15 years	8	26.7
16+ years	4	13.3
Relevant trainings attended		
0-2 trainings	10	33.3
3-5 trainings	15	50.0
6+ trainings	5	16.7

### 4.2. Level of Effectiveness of CLT Strategies

The teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of various CLT strategies in teaching grammar were measured using a Likert-type scale. Table 2 shows the composite mean scores for each strategy.

**Table 2.** Perceived Effectiveness of CLT strategies (N = 30).

CLT Strategy	Mean	Interpretation
Describing people, animals, places, things, events	3.70	Highly Effective
Role-playing	3.70	Highly Effective
Interviews	3.17	Effective
Project-based tasks	3.13	Effective
Task-completion	3.03	Effective
Information-gap	3.00	Effective
Information-transfer	3.00	Effective
Information-gathering	2.97	Acceptable
Asking & answering questions spontaneously	2.83	Acceptable
Reading short stories focusing on grammar	2.83	Acceptable
Listening to conversations focusing on grammar	2.80	Less Effective
Writing sentences applying grammar rules	2.80	Less Effective
Composite Mean	3.18	Acceptable

### 4.3. Teachers' Feedback from FGDs

Based on both quantitative ratings and qualitative classroom insights, this part synthesizes teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of specific Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) strategies for grammar

instruction. Table 3 displays the effectiveness levels of each CLT strategy, complemented by descriptive interpretations and selected quotations from teachers' classroom experiences.

**Table 3.** Teacher perceptions of CLT strategies for grammar instruction.

CLT Strategy	Teacher Perception	Effectiveness Level	Illustrative Quote
Describing People, Places, Animals, Events	Engages learners in contextual grammar use	● High	"When students describe their favorite games or act out a short story, they naturally use past tense verbs correctly. They don't just memorize rules; they use them in real situations."
Role-Playing / Simulations	Fosters interaction and meaningful communication	● High	"Role-playing makes the lesson more fun and memorable. Students enjoy practicing dialogues with their classmates, and I can correct grammar in context without making it boring."
Storytelling / Contextual Scenarios	Integrates grammar in meaningful contexts	● High	"Using stories or local scenarios helps students relate to grammar points. Asking them to describe a market scene helps them use adjectives, prepositions, and verbs correctly."
Information-Gap Activities	Encourages questioning, collaboration, and spontaneous language use	● Medium	"I paired students and gave each one a slightly different version of a short story. They had to ask questions to fill in missing details, practicing correct tense forms naturally."
Opinion-Sharing / Discussion Tasks	Develops expressive skills and contextual grammar	● Medium	"When students share their opinions on a topic, they use adjectives, connectors, and tenses correctly while expressing themselves confidently."
Peer Collaboration / Pair Work	Supports communicative practice and scaffolding	● Medium	"Pairing students to discuss or complete tasks in English allows them to help each other and practice grammar in a safe environment."
Listening-Focused Grammar Tasks	Perceived as less engaging; attention may wane	● Low	"Some students struggle to stay focused during listening exercises, especially when the content is difficult or unfamiliar."
Writing-Based Grammar Exercises	Perceived as less interactive; lower engagement	● Low	"Students often find grammar writing tasks boring. They prefer activities where they can speak, move, or act out the lesson."

#### 4.4. Relationship Between Teacher Profile and CLT Effectiveness

Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to examine whether teachers' professional profiles (Educational attainment, specialization, teaching experience) were related to their perceived effectiveness of CLT strategies. Results indicated no significant correlation.

- Educational attainment:  $r = 0.12$ ,  $p = 0.52$ .
- Field of specialization:  $r = 0.09$ ,  $p = 0.63$ .
- Years of teaching experience:  $r = 0.15$ ,  $p = 0.42$ .

No statistically significant correlations were found. Assumptions of normality for the variables were checked using visual inspection of histograms and skewness values, which suggested approximate normal distribution.

## 5. Discussion

This study investigated elementary teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) strategies in grammar instruction within selected public elementary schools in the District of Alegria, Cebu, Philippines. Particularly, it aimed to (1) describe the teachers' professional profiles, (2) identify the CLT strategies perceived as effective for teaching grammar, (3) examine the relationship between teachers' profiles and their perceived effectiveness of CLT strategies, and (4) explore teachers' classroom experiences and challenges in implementing CLT-based grammar instruction. By utilizing a mixed-methods design that merged survey data and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), the study sought to provide a comprehensive insight into how CLT is applied and observed in rural, multilingual elementary classrooms. Leveraging both quantitative and qualitative data aligns with recommendations in recent educational research, which point out that mixed-methods approaches convey a more comprehensive understanding of pedagogical practices and teacher perceptions (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2023).

The key findings suggest that teachers predominantly hold positive perceptions of CLT strategies for grammar instruction, especially interactive and descriptive activities such as role-playing and describing people, places, and events. These strategies were constantly rated as highly effective across survey responses. This finding concurs with recent studies showing that teachers perceive CLT-based activities as effective because they allow learners to integrate grammatical structures appropriately in real-life communication (Hui & Yunus, 2023; Liu & Deris, 2023). Research recommends that such interaction-rich activities strengthen learners' grammatical development by incorporating form, meaning, and use, which is a fundamental tenet of the communicative teaching method (Ellis, 2021).

On the other hand, more traditional or form-focused activities, particularly listening- and writing-based grammar tasks, received lower mean ratings. Similar results have been documented in recent studies, which signifies that grammar instruction relying largely on decontextualized exercises may reduce learner engagement and limit opportunities for real-life language use (Butler, 2021; Ellis, 2021). These results further strengthen the view that grammar is learned successfully when incorporated into a communicative task rather than taught separately.

Further analysis revealed no statistically significant relationship between teachers' professional profiles such as educational attainment, specialization, and years of teaching experience and their perceived effectiveness of CLT strategies. This result concurs with recent studies on teacher cognition, which suggest that teachers' beliefs, pedagogical awareness, and familiarity with communicative approaches often wield a stronger influence on classroom practices than do formal qualifications or the length of teaching experience (Borg & Sánchez, 2024). Thus, teachers' openness to and understanding of CLT principles may be a more crucial factor of successful implementation than demographic or professional characteristics.

Qualitative data from FGDs strengthened the survey results, emphasizing teachers' inclination for communicative, authentic and contextualized grammar instruction while also addressing common implementation challenges. Teachers identified limitations related to large class sizes, insufficient instructional materials, and minimal training specific to CLT. These concerns are substantially supported by recent studies, particularly in public and resource-constrained educational settings, where systemic challenges hinder the consistent implementation of communicative approaches (Alshumaimeri, 2022; Butler, 2021; Nam, 2023).

These results need to be viewed within the broader context of Philippine public elementary education. Classrooms in rural areas such as Alegria are generally characterized by multilingual learner populations, where Sinugbuanong Binisaya functions as the learners' first language (L1), Filipino as a second language (L2), and English as a third language (L3). Recent studies on language education in the Philippines reinforce that this linguistic complexity notably affects English grammar instruction, as learners exhibit different degrees of exposure and proficiency across languages (Burton, 2021; Tupas & Lorente, 2021). Teachers are therefore expected to adapt CLT strategies to cater to learners' diverse linguistic backgrounds while guaranteeing meaningful access to grammar learning.

Furthermore, enduring resource challenges, including overcrowded classrooms, limited teaching aids, and restricted access to continuous professional development, further influence instructional practices in rural public schools. Parallel contextual challenges have been identified in current CLT implementation studies, which underscore the need for ongoing institutional support and targeted teacher training to optimize the effectiveness of communicative approaches (Alshumaimeri, 2022; Nam, 2023).

By placing the study's findings within this educational and linguistic context, this discussion stresses that teachers' positive perceptions of CLT strategies reflect both their pedagogical perspectives and the actual contexts of their teaching environments. In general, the results corroborate recent studies that position CLT as an effective and practical method for teaching grammar in elementary classrooms, while also highlighting that its successful implementation relies on contextual factors, teacher preparedness, and institutional support (Butler, 2021; Hui & Yunus, 2023; Liu & Deris, 2023). The succeeding sections will further explore the impact of these findings on instructional practice, teacher training, and policy development in multilingual, resource-limited elementary school settings.

### *5.1. Analysis of Teacher Profiles and Implications*

The analysis of teachers' professional profiles shows that the majority of participants hold a bachelor's degree, are trained in English or closely related disciplines, and have accrued moderate teaching experience, generally ranging from six to ten years. Most teachers have also attended various professional development activities focused on English language teaching. The study revealed that, despite teachers' educational attainment, field of specialization, or years of teaching experience, these factors did not significantly influence their perceptions of the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) strategies for grammar instruction. This finding implies that professional profile variables alone do not fully explain how teachers perceive or implement CLT-based grammar strategies in the classroom. Similar findings have been reported, which indicate that formal qualifications and length of teaching experience are not reliable determinants of communicative teaching effectiveness (Borg, 2023).

This result agrees with the findings of Hui and Yunus (2023), who mentioned that teachers' formal qualifications and teaching experience were not significantly associated with their effectiveness in implementing CLT. Their study highlighted that teachers' familiarity with communicative principles, confidence in using interactive strategies, and pedagogical orientation had a greater impact than academic qualifications alone. These findings are further supported by Nguyen and Newton (2021) which repeatedly demonstrate that communicative teaching competence is influenced more by teachers' pedagogical beliefs and awareness than by professional background factors. Overall, these studies support the argument that professional profile variables may serve as necessary but insufficient factors on their own for effective communicative grammar teaching.

One possible reason for the lack of correlation lies in the inherent nature of CLT itself. Communicative language teaching demands pedagogical flexibility, creativity, and responsiveness to learners' communicative needs, skills that formal education or prolonged teaching experience do not automatically provide. Even highly experienced teachers may persist in using traditional, form-focused grammar instruction if they have not been adequately trained in CLT approaches. In contrast, less experienced teachers may display strong CLT practices if they have been trained in learner-centered and communicative approaches. Research on teacher cognition aligns with this view, highlighting that communicative teaching competence develops through reflective practice and sustained professional development rather than professional seniority (Borg, 2023; Feryok & Oranje, 2020).

A further contributing factor stems from the realities of rural public elementary schools. Teachers in the District of Alegria work within multilingual classrooms and resource-constrained settings, which may limit the consistent implementation of communicative strategies irrespective of professional background. Even teachers with advanced degrees or specializations in English may find it challenging to implement CLT effectively due to large class sizes, limited instructional materials, time constraints, and curriculum demands. Comparable studies observe that contextual constraints frequently intervened the relationship between teacher qualifications and instructional effectiveness, especially in the implementation of communicative approaches (Alshumaimeri, 2022). Within the Philippine educational setting, multilingual classroom realities pose additional challenges to English instruction and necessitate teachers to continuously adapt their strategies across languages (Tupas & Lorente, 2021).

The non-significant relationship between professional profile variables and perceived CLT effectiveness further underscores the role of teacher beliefs and pedagogical orientation. Teachers who value communicative and contextualized grammar instruction are more inclined to adopt CLT strategies, regardless of their academic credentials. Empirical research highlights that belief systems and instructional attitudes significantly shape classroom practices and decision-making, frequently surpassing the influence of formal qualifications or tenure (Feryok & Oranje, 2020). Without continuous reinforcement via professional learning communities and mentoring, even well-qualified teachers may default to conventional grammar instruction that seems more manageable in constrained teaching settings.

These results carry meaningful implications for teacher recruitment, professional development, and educational policy formulation. Recruitment processes should move beyond relying solely on academic qualifications or specialization as indicators of instructional effectiveness in communicative grammar teaching. While mastery of the content is fundamental, recent studies emphasize that teachers' pedagogical orientation, openness to learner-centered approaches, and engagement in reflective practice play a critical role (Borg & Sánchez, 2024; Nguyen & Newton, 2021). Moreover, professional development programs should center on sustained, practice-based training models over single session workshops. Cochran-Smith et al. (2020) highlights that mentoring systems, collaborative learning communities, and school-based professional development better support instructional reform efforts.

Collectively, the analysis highlights that effective CLT-based grammar instruction depends less on teachers' academic credentials or years of experience and more on how teachers are supported, trained, and empowered in practice. This conclusion aligns with recent influential research emphasizing the central role of teacher beliefs, contextual realities, and sustained professional learning in shaping outcomes in communicative language teaching (Borg, 2023; Hui & Yunus, 2023; Nguyen & Newton, 2021).

### *5.2. Effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Strategies*

Role-playing is identified as one of the most valued strategies for grammar instruction. Teachers view role-playing as effective because it actively engages learners in authentic language use while reinforcing their ability to integrate grammatical forms in context. By engaging in simulated real-life situations, learners are prompted to formulate sentences, negotiate meaning, and respond spontaneously, requiring both grammatical precision and communicative suitability. Recent empirical studies support this view, indicating that role-play and task-based interaction enhance both grammatical accuracy and interactional competence by encouraging learners to use grammar as a communicative tool rather than as isolated knowledge (Dao & McDonough, 2020; Sato & Loewen, 2022). This finding resonates with Hymes' theory of communicative competence, which highlights knowledge of grammatical rules and the ability to use language appropriately in social contexts. Role-playing, therefore, enables learners to practice grammar as a functional tool for communication instead of learning it as an abstract set of rules (Ellis, 2021).

Likewise, descriptive activities such as describing people, animals, places, and events are considered highly effective because they integrate grammar instruction into familiar and concrete scenarios. These tasks provide learners with opportunities to use grammatical structures (e.g., adjectives, verb tenses, and subject-verb agreement) in meaningful and accessible contexts. Studies in communicative and task-based language teaching show that contextualized descriptive tasks enhance both grammatical accuracy and learner engagement by linking language use to cognitively manageable and personally relevant content (Révész et al., 2022; Suzuki, Nakata, & Dekeyser, 2020). Teachers in the present study noted that learners are more motivated when grammar lessons are connected to their immediate environment and lived experiences, which is particularly important in rural and multilingual settings. This observation reflects Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence, as learners draw on their internalized grammatical knowledge, while simultaneously aligning with communicative competence through contextualized language use.

The effectiveness of these strategies can also be attributed to their learner-centered nature. Role-playing and descriptive tasks shift the focus away from teacher-dominated explanations toward active learner participation, encouraging learners to make linguistic choices and apply grammatical forms in real time. This active engagement supports deeper cognitive processing of grammar, as learners must select, adapt, and negotiate language structures during interaction. Recent studies confirm that learner-centered communicative grammar tasks lead to improvements in grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, and overall communicative performance because learners are required to use language meaningfully rather than merely recall rules (Shintani, Li, & Ellis, 2021; Woyomo, Bachore, & Jobo, 2024). The present findings reinforce this claim by demonstrating that teachers themselves recognize the pedagogical value of interaction-driven grammar instruction.

Furthermore, these highly rated strategies are flexible and adaptable to multilingual classrooms. In the Philippine elementary context, particularly in the Visayas and Mindanao regions, where most learners are Cebuano speakers who commonly speak Sinugbuanong Binisaya as their first language and are developing proficiency in English as a third language communicative tasks allow for scaffolding and gradual language development without disrupting the flow of communication. Teachers can model grammatical structures, provide prompts, and adjust task complexity while maintaining learner engagement. Studies conducted in multilingual and postcolonial contexts similarly report that communicative strategies help reduce learner anxiety, build confidence, and facilitate participation in grammar-related tasks (Sitoy & Sonsona, 2024; Tupas & Lorente, 2021).

Gainutdinova, Akimova, Mukhametzyanova, and Kurmaeva (2024) further support the effectiveness of interactive grammar strategies, demonstrating that communicative grammar activities significantly improved learners' oral fluency, participation, and willingness to communicate. Their findings emphasize that grammar learning is most effective when learners perceive it as a means for communication rather than as an end in itself, a principle consistently highlighted in recent CLT research (Ellis, 2021; Pica & Kurup, 2021). The high ratings given to role-playing and descriptive tasks in the present study suggest that teachers intuitively recognize this principle and observe its positive impact on learners' grammatical development and communicative performance in their classrooms.

### *5.3. Perceived Limitations of Less Effective CLT Strategies*

In contrast, grammar writing exercises and listening-focused tasks were perceived as less effective for grammar instruction. Teachers reported that these strategies often appear abstract and less engaging to learners, particularly when they are not embedded in communicative contexts. Grammar writing tasks, when presented as isolated drills or sentence-completion exercises, tend to emphasize form over meaning. As a result, learners may complete tasks mechanically without fully understanding how grammatical structures function in real communication. Recent research confirms that form-focused writing tasks can lead to limited engagement and minimal uptake when not linked to communicative practice (Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2020; Rahimi & Riazi, 2021; Sitoy & Sonsona, 2024).

Listening-focused grammar tasks were also rated lower, possibly because learners struggle to process grammatical forms aurally, especially in a second or third language. In multilingual elementary classrooms, limited vocabulary and unfamiliar accents may further hinder comprehension, making listening tasks cognitively demanding and less motivating. Goh and Vandergrift (2021) emphasize that second-language listening is inherently challenging, and learners benefit most when receptive skills are embedded in meaningful, interactive tasks. Teachers may therefore perceive these strategies as less effective because learners appear passive or confused during implementation.

However, it is important to note that these strategies are not inherently incompatible with CLT. Rather, their perceived ineffectiveness may stem from how they are implemented. When grammar writing and listening tasks are disconnected from meaningful communication, they resemble traditional, form-focused instruction that CLT seeks to move beyond. Sitoy and Sonsona (2024) similarly observed that teachers often associate writing and listening tasks with traditional grammar teaching, which may explain their lower ratings in communicative frameworks.

Integrating these strategies into communicative contexts can enhance their effectiveness. For example, grammar writing tasks can be redesigned as collaborative activities, such as writing short dialogues, messages, or descriptions related to role-play scenarios. Listening tasks can be contextualized through pre-listening discussions, role-play follow-ups, or information-gap activities that require learners to use grammatical structures heard in audio texts. Gainutdinova, Ivanov, and Chen (2024) emphasize that when receptive skills are linked to communicative output, learners demonstrate improved grammatical awareness, fluency, and engagement.

Woymo et al. (2024) also highlight the importance of balancing form-focused instruction with communicative practice. Their findings suggest that grammar instruction is most effective when learners' attention is drawn to form within meaningful tasks, rather than through isolated drills. These findings align with Ellis (2021) and Shintani et al. (2021), who argue that integrating form-focused tasks into communicative activities enhances accuracy and learner participation. The lower ratings of writing and listening strategies in the present study may therefore reflect a need for teacher training on how to integrate these skills more effectively within CLT-based grammar lessons.

### *5.4. Theoretical Integration and Pedagogical Implications*

From a theoretical perspective, the findings illustrate how teachers' perceptions align with the integration of Chomsky's linguistic competence and Hymes' communicative competence. Highly rated strategies support the development of grammatical knowledge while simultaneously fostering meaningful language use. Less effective strategies, when implemented in isolation, tend to emphasize linguistic competence alone, without sufficient opportunities for communicative application.

The results suggest that teachers value strategies that naturally integrate form and function, confirming the relevance of communicative grammar teaching in elementary education. However, they also reveal gaps in teachers' ability to adapt certain strategies to fit a communicative framework. This underscores the importance of professional development that focuses not only on identifying effective CLT strategies but also on transforming traditionally form-focused activities into communicative tasks.

In summary, the perceived effectiveness of CLT strategies in this study reflects teachers' preference for interactive, contextualized approaches that actively engage learners in grammar use. Role-playing and descriptive activities align strongly with communicative competence theory and are supported by recent empirical studies (Gainutdinova, Safina, & Shaidullina, 2024; Sitoy & Sonsona, 2024; Woymo et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the lower ratings of grammar writing and listening-focused tasks highlight the need for improved integration within communicative frameworks. Together, these findings emphasize that the effectiveness of CLT strategies depends not only on the type of activity but also on how well it is designed to connect grammatical form with meaningful communication.

### *5.5. Qualitative Insights from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)*

The qualitative data generated from the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) provided rich, contextualized insights into teachers' lived experiences in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) for grammar instruction. These narratives deepen the understanding of the survey findings by revealing not only what teachers perceive as effective but also why they hold such perceptions and how contextual realities shape their instructional decisions. Three major themes emerged from the analysis.

#### a. Positive Perception of CLT

- Teachers reported that communicative activities increased student participation and interest in grammar lessons.
- Teacher 14: "Learners enjoy role-playing activities because they can practice English in real situations, not just memorize rules."
- Teacher 10: "They are more confident speaking when we use storytelling and interactive games."

#### b. Preference for Interactive Strategies

- Activities such as role-playing, information-gap tasks, and storytelling were highlighted as most engaging and effective for learning grammar in context.

- Teacher 9: “Describing objects or events helps them understand grammar in context.”
- c. Challenges in Implementation
- Teachers cited insufficient training and large class sizes as barriers to consistently applying CLT strategies.
- Teacher 20: “Sometimes it’s hard to do group activities when we have 50 learners in a class.”

Together, these themes triangulate and substantiate the quantitative results while offering nuanced explanations grounded in classroom practice.

### *5.6. Positive Perceptions of CLT for Grammar Instruction*

Across FGDs, teachers consistently expressed favorable views toward CLT as an approach to grammar teaching. Participants emphasized that CLT makes grammar lessons more engaging, meaningful, and accessible to learners compared to traditional, rule-based instruction. One teacher remarked.

“When grammar is taught through activities like role-playing or describing pictures, pupils do not feel that grammar is difficult. They enjoy the lesson and use English naturally.”

This perception aligns with the survey results, which showed high mean scores for interactive CLT strategies. Teachers highlighted that CLT allows learners to “learn grammar without realizing they are studying rules,” suggesting that communicative tasks reduce anxiety and increase learner confidence. Another participant explained.

“Before, when we started with grammar rules, pupils were quiet and confused. Now, when we start with activities, they speak more and gradually understand the grammar.”

These statements support the idea that CLT facilitates implicit grammar learning through use, reinforcing the integration of grammatical form and communicative function. Teachers also noted improvements in learner participation and willingness to speak English, particularly among pupils who are typically hesitant in traditional grammar lessons.

### *5.7. Preference for Interactive and Learner-Centered Strategies*

A dominant theme in the FGDs was teachers’ strong preference for interactive strategies, particularly role-playing, describing events or objects, and group-based tasks. Participants described these strategies as effective because they actively involve learners and allow grammar to be practiced in realistic contexts. One teacher shared:

“Role-playing is very effective because pupils act out situations. They use verbs, adjectives, and sentences without being forced.”

Similarly, descriptive activities were viewed as practical and adaptable to the learners’ immediate environment. Teachers explained that asking pupils to describe familiar people, animals, or places helps bridge language learning with daily experiences. As one participant noted.

“If they describe their house or their family, they can relate easily. Grammar becomes part of their story.”

These qualitative insights mirror the quantitative findings, where such strategies received the highest effectiveness ratings. Teachers perceived that these activities support deeper understanding because learners are required to think, construct meaning, and apply grammar in context rather than memorize rules.

Importantly, participants also emphasized the flexibility of interactive strategies in multilingual classrooms. Teachers reported that they often allow brief use of the mother tongue to clarify instructions before transitioning to English during the activity. This scaffolding approach was seen as essential for comprehension and participation:

“Sometimes we explain first in Bisaya, then we let them use English during the activity. That way, they understand what to do.”

This practice reflects the realities of rural Philippine classrooms and highlights teachers’ adaptive strategies to ensure communicative tasks remain inclusive and effective.

### *5.8. Challenges in Implementing CLT in Rural Multilingual Contexts*

Despite positive perceptions, teachers were candid about the challenges they face in implementing CLT for grammar instruction. Large class sizes were frequently cited as a major constraint. One participant explained.

“It is hard to monitor role-playing when there are many pupils. Some groups do well, others need more guidance.”

Limited instructional resources also emerged as a recurring issue. Teachers reported shortages of visual aids, printed materials, and technological tools, which restrict their ability to design varied communicative activities. As one teacher stated.

“We want to use more materials, but sometimes we only have the textbook and the board.”

Time constraints further compounded these challenges. Participants noted that communicative activities often require more preparation and class time than traditional grammar drills, making it difficult to cover all required competencies. One teacher commented.

“CLT is effective, but it takes time. Sometimes we rush because of the lesson schedule.”

Additionally, gaps in professional training were highlighted. While teachers expressed enthusiasm for CLT, many felt insufficiently prepared to design communicative grammar tasks, particularly those involving listening and writing skills. A participant shared.

“We know CLT is good, but we need more training on how to apply it properly, especially for grammar.”

These challenges provide important context for understanding why certain strategies such as grammar writing and listening-focused tasks were rated lower in the survey. Teachers’ qualitative accounts suggest that limited resources and training influence their perceptions of effectiveness, rather than an inherent weakness of the strategies themselves.

### *5.9. Triangulation with Quantitative Findings*

The FGD results strongly triangulate the survey data. Quantitatively, teachers rated interactive and descriptive strategies as highly effective, and qualitatively, they articulated clear reasons for this preference,

including increased learner engagement, confidence, and contextual relevance. Similarly, the lower ratings of writing and listening-focused grammar tasks are explained by qualitative insights related to implementation difficulties, learner comprehension challenges, and limited training.

Moreover, the FGDs support the quantitative finding that teachers' professional profiles are not the primary determinants of perceived CLT effectiveness. Teachers with varying levels of experience and educational backgrounds expressed similar views, reinforcing the conclusion that familiarity with CLT strategies and contextual adaptability play more significant roles.

### *5.10. Synthesis of Qualitative Insights*

Overall, the qualitative findings enrich the study by revealing the complex realities behind teachers' perceptions of CLT for grammar instruction. Teachers view CLT as pedagogically sound and learner-friendly, particularly when implemented through interactive strategies. However, their experiences also underscore the constraints of rural, multilingual classrooms, where large class sizes, limited resources, and insufficient training affect instructional choices.

These insights highlight the importance of context-sensitive professional development that equips teachers with practical strategies for integrating grammar instruction into communicative activities across all language skills. By capturing teachers' voices and experiences, the FGDs provide compelling evidence that supports, clarifies, and extends the quantitative results, strengthening the overall credibility and depth of the study's findings.

### *5.11. Integrating Findings with Theory*

This section integrates the empirical findings of the study with the theoretical foundations of language learning, particularly Chomsky's concept of Linguistic Competence (as discussed in Tahir (2018)) and Hymes' theory of Communicative Competence (as articulated in Sidik et al. (2018)). By examining how the results support, extend, and contextualize these theories, this discussion clarifies how Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) operationalizes the balance between grammatical form and meaningful language use in real elementary classrooms, especially within rural and multilingual Philippine settings.

### *5.12. Linguistic Competence and the Role of Grammar in CLT*

Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence emphasizes the learner's internalized knowledge of grammatical rules that enable the production and comprehension of an infinite number of sentences Tahir (2018). Traditionally, this perspective has been associated with explicit grammar instruction and rule-based learning. However, the findings of the present study suggest that grammatical competence does not necessarily require isolated or decontextualized teaching of rules. Instead, teachers perceived grammar learning to be more effective when embedded within communicative activities such as role-playing, describing events, and interactive group tasks (Sato & Loewen, 2022; Shintani et al., 2021).

These findings extend Chomsky's theoretical construct by illustrating how linguistic competence can be developed implicitly through use. Teachers reported that learners demonstrated improved sentence construction, appropriate verb usage, and grammatical accuracy during communicative tasks, even when explicit grammar explanation was minimal. Research on task-based grammar instruction supports this view, showing that exposure to meaningful input and opportunities for output allow learners to internalize grammatical structures naturally (Pica & Kurup, 2021). In this sense, the study supports a functional reinterpretation of linguistic competence—one that emerges through interaction rather than solely through formal instruction. Interactive and communicative grammar tasks have been shown to enhance oral fluency, participation, and accuracy while reinforcing learners' internalized grammatical knowledge (Woyomo et al., 2024).

Moreover, the lower perceived effectiveness of grammar writing and listening-focused tasks does not negate the importance of form; rather, it highlights the need for careful pedagogical integration. Teachers noted that when writing and listening activities were disconnected from communicative contexts, learners struggled to apply grammatical knowledge. This observation aligns with the view that linguistic competence must be activated and reinforced through meaningful language use (Rahimi & Riazi, 2021). In other words, form-focused instruction is most effective when embedded within tasks that require learners to communicate, negotiate meaning, and attend to grammar in context.

Thus, the study underscores that grammar instruction grounded in communicative contexts can cultivate robust grammatical knowledge, consistent with Chomsky's theoretical emphasis on internalized linguistic systems. Teachers' observations in the classroom, together with recent empirical studies, suggest that embedding grammar in functional, learner-centered activities rather than relying solely on explicit rule presentation promotes both linguistic competence and communicative ability (Sitoy & Sonsona, 2024). These findings reinforce the principle that grammar and communication are complementary in CLT: learners internalize rules most effectively when grammar serves as a tool for meaningful interaction (Ellis, 2021; Gainutdinova et al., 2024).

### *5.13. Communicative Competence as the Core of Classroom Practice*

Hymes' theory of communicative competence expands the concept of language proficiency beyond grammatical accuracy to include the ability to use language appropriately in social contexts (Sidik et al., 2018). The findings of this study strongly support this framework. Teachers consistently favored strategies that required learners to use language for authentic purposes expressing ideas, describing experiences, and participating in simulated real-life situations. These practices reflect the sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic components of communicative competence, aligning with recent research demonstrating that task-based and role-play activities enhance learners' interactional and communicative skills (Sato & Loewen, 2022; Shintani et al., 2021).

The qualitative and quantitative results demonstrate that teachers view communicative competence as a practical and achievable goal in elementary classrooms, even within rural and multilingual contexts. Role-playing and descriptive tasks were perceived as effective because they simulate real communicative situations, allowing

learners to practice grammar in ways that mirror actual language use. This aligns directly with Hymes' assertion that knowing a language involves knowing how, when, and why to use it, not merely knowing its rules (Pica & Kurup, 2021).

Importantly, the study reveals how teachers adapt CLT principles to local realities. In multilingual classrooms where learners' first language is Sinugbuanong Binisaya and exposure to Filipino is limited, teachers strategically scaffold instruction by clarifying tasks in the mother tongue before transitioning to English. This practice illustrates communicative competence in action, as teachers prioritize meaning-making and interaction while gradually guiding learners toward target language use. Such adaptations extend Hymes' theory by demonstrating its applicability in linguistically diverse and resource-constrained environments, consistent with recent studies emphasizing context-sensitive CLT implementation (Tupas & Lorente, 2021).

Furthermore, research indicates that integrating role-play, descriptive, and interactive grammar tasks supports both grammatical accuracy and communicative development, reinforcing the principle that grammar learning is most effective when embedded within meaningful communication (Sato & Loewen, 2022). Teachers' practices in the present study reflect this principle: learners are engaged in real-life-like tasks that simultaneously develop grammatical competence and functional language use. These findings underscore that communicative competence is not merely a theoretical ideal but a practical, achievable outcome when CLT strategies are thoughtfully adapted to local classroom contexts (Shintani et al., 2021).

#### *5.14. Balancing Form and Function in Practice*

One of the enduring debates in language pedagogy concerns the balance between grammatical form and communicative function. The findings of this study contribute to this discourse by showing how teachers negotiate this balance in everyday classroom practice. Teachers did not reject grammar instruction; rather, they reframed it within communicative activities. Grammar was taught "through use" rather than "before use," reflecting a functional approach that aligns with both linguistic and communicative competence theories (Ellis, 2021).

Teachers acknowledged that explicit grammar instruction has a place, particularly for clarification and reinforcement. However, they emphasized that beginning lessons with communicative tasks increases learner engagement and creates a meaningful context for grammar. This sequencing reflects a pedagogical synthesis of Chomsky's and Hymes' theories: grammatical knowledge is developed and refined within communicative use, rather than treated as a prerequisite for communication (Ellis, 2021; Sato & Loewen, 2022; Shintani et al., 2021).

The perceived lower effectiveness of listening and writing-based grammar tasks further highlights the importance of integration. When these skills were isolated from communicative contexts, teachers felt they were less engaging and less effective. This finding suggests that the issue lies not in the skills themselves but in their implementation. Integrating listening and writing tasks into communicative frameworks such as responding to spoken prompts or writing based on role-play scenarios can restore their relevance and effectiveness, thereby maintaining the balance between form and function (Rahimi & Riazi, 2021).

Furthermore, interactive and context-sensitive grammar activities support both grammatical accuracy and meaningful communication, reinforcing the principle that form and function are complementary rather than competing objectives (Gainutdinova et al., 2024). By embedding grammar within communicative tasks, teachers enable learners to develop linguistic competence in authentic contexts while maintaining attention to grammatical form, demonstrating a practical and theoretically grounded approach to balancing form and function in classroom practice.

#### *5.15. Theoretical Contributions in Rural Elementary Contexts*

A major contribution of this study lies in its contextualization of CLT theory within rural elementary education. Much of the existing literature on CLT and communicative competence focuses on urban or higher education settings. This study extends theoretical understanding by demonstrating that the principles of linguistic and communicative competence are not only applicable but also adaptable to rural, multilingual elementary classrooms (Sitoy & Sonsona, 2024).

The absence of a significant relationship between teachers' professional profiles and perceived CLT effectiveness suggests that theoretical alignment and practical familiarity with CLT matter more than formal qualifications or years of experience. This result challenges assumptions that advanced credentials automatically translate into effective communicative teaching. Instead, it supports a more situated view of competence, one grounded in teachers' ability to interpret and apply theory within their specific teaching contexts (Ellis et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the study illustrates how CLT serves as a bridge between theory and practice. Teachers' lived experiences show that communicative competence is not an abstract construct but a practical goal that can guide lesson design, classroom interaction, and assessment. By foregrounding teachers' voices, the study enriches theoretical discourse with empirical evidence from a context often underrepresented in research (Woyomo et al., 2024). These findings demonstrate that CLT theory can be meaningfully applied in rural elementary classrooms, where practical adaptation and teacher agency are central to effective communicative language teaching.

#### *5.16. Advancing Understanding of CLT in Elementary Education*

By bridging theory and practice, this study advances understanding of CLT by demonstrating how linguistic knowledge and communicative skills can be simultaneously developed through effective grammar instruction. It confirms that grammatical precision and communicative competence are not opposing goals but complementary outcomes when instruction is carefully planned (Ellis, 2021). The result indicates that CLT, when contextualized, can promote both internalized grammatical knowledge and authentic language use among young learners (Sitoy & Sonsona, 2024).

Ultimately, this study advances theoretical understanding by offering a context-sensitive model of CLT implementation, one that respects foundational linguistic theories while addressing the realities of rural, multilingual classrooms. By combining theory and empirical evidence, this study underscores the continuing relevance of Chomsky's and Hymes' frameworks in modern language education (Ellis, 2021) and provides detailed

insights into how grammar instruction can enhance communicative competence in elementary settings (Sato & Loewen, 2022).

By foregrounding context and teacher practice, this study shows that CLT principles are not theoretical concepts but practical strategies that can be effectively adapted to the linguistic, cultural, and resource conditions of rural elementary classrooms. Teachers' experiences show that thoughtfully designed communicative tasks allow learners to develop simultaneously in both grammatical knowledge and communicative skills, supporting the theoretical claim that form and function can be balanced within meaningful classroom practice (Ellis, 2021).

### *5.17. Practical Implications*

The findings of this study offer significant practical implications for teacher training, curriculum design, educational policy, and classroom practice, especially in the context of rural, multilingual elementary schools such as those in the District of Alegria, Cebu, Philippines. By pinpointing which Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) strategies are perceived as effective and by highlighting ongoing implementation challenges, the study offers practical directions for enhancing grammar instruction through communicative approaches.

### *5.18. Implications for Teacher Training*

The findings highlight the need for targeted, practice-driven teacher training rather than training that is solely theoretical or profile-based. Given that the study found no significant relationship between teachers' professional profiles, such as educational attainment, specialization, or years of experience, and their perceived effectiveness of CLT strategies, professional development programs should emphasize practical skills in CLT implementation rather than formal qualifications.

Teacher training programs should focus on developing specific skills such as:

- Creating communicative grammar activities such as role-plays, information-gap activities, and descriptive tasks that clearly incorporate grammatical objectives.
- Organizing lessons so that they begin with meaningful communication and later progress to explicit grammar clarification.
- Managing large classes during communicative activities by using group work, pair tasks, and simple classroom routines.
- Adapting CLT strategies to a multilingual environment by employing strategic code-switching and scaffolding from learners' first language to the target language.

Workshops should feature demonstration lessons, microteaching, collaborative lesson planning, and reflective discussions, providing teachers the opportunity to experience CLT from a learner's perspective before applying it in their classrooms. School-based learning action cells (LACs) and continuous mentoring can further support sustained development and bridge the gap between theory and practice.

### *5.19. Implications for Curriculum Design*

At the curriculum level, the findings indicate that CLT strategies should be systematically integrated into grammar instruction, rather than being regarded as optional or supplementary activities. Curriculum guides and daily lesson plan templates can clearly specify communicative outcomes alongside grammatical objectives (Shintani et al., 2021). For instance, grammar competencies can be linked with communicative functions such as describing, narrating, or asking for information (Sitoy & Sonsona, 2024).

Learning materials should include sample communicative tasks tied to specific grammar points, ensuring coherence across grade levels. Furthermore, assessment practices should reflect communicative goals by incorporating performance-based tasks such as oral descriptions, short dialogues, and role-play outputs rather than depending solely on written grammar exercises (Sato & Loewen, 2022).

By embedding CLT strategies into the curriculum, teachers are more likely to implement them with consistency and confidence, thereby reducing dependence on traditional, rule-focused instruction. Integrating communicative grammar tasks and aligning them with both instructional materials and assessment practices ensures that learners build grammatical accuracy while simultaneously developing practical communicative competence (Sitoy & Sonsona, 2024).

### *5.20. Implications for Policy and DepEd Initiatives*

From a policy standpoint, the findings have implications for the Department of Education (DepEd), especially within the context of current language-in-education policies. DepEd may consider the following:

- Enhancing both pre-service and in-service teacher education programs with explicit modules on communicative grammar teaching.
- Acknowledging the realities of multilingual classrooms by offering policy guidelines that support flexible language use, especially in early grades.
- Providing funding for low-cost, locally produced instructional materials that support communicative activities, such as visual aids, task cards, and contextualized texts.

Moreover, policy initiatives should emphasize equitable resource distribution for rural schools so that teachers have access to the essential materials needed to conduct interactive lessons. Supporting school-level innovation through grants or pilot programs focused on CLT implementation may also enhance instructional quality.

### *5.21. Implications for Classroom Practice*

At the classroom level, the study emphasizes practical approaches for teachers to strengthen grammar instruction through CLT. Highly valued strategies such as role-playing and descriptive tasks can be developed and diversified. For instance, teachers may create role-play scenarios based on learners' everyday experiences such as shopping at the market, daily family routines, to practice verb tenses or sentence patterns (Sato & Loewen, 2022).

Less frequently used strategies, such as listening-focused and writing-based grammar tasks, can be made more effective by integrating them within communicative contexts. Listening activities can include responding to short dialogues or instructions that prompt meaningful interaction, while writing tasks might follow oral activities, such as writing a short description after a role-play (Ellis, 2021). This approach ensures that all language skills contribute to communicative competence instead of functioning in isolation.

Overall, the study highlights that effective grammar instruction does not mean abandoning grammar rules but rather presenting them within the context of meaningful communication. When teacher training, curriculum design, policy support, and classroom practice are aligned, CLT can be more effectively implemented, leading to improved learners' grammatical accuracy and communicative ability in rural elementary classrooms (Sato & Loewen, 2022).

## **6. Conclusion**

### **6.1. Study's Unique Contribution**

This study contributes meaningfully to language education by providing context-specific empirical evidence on the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) for grammar instruction in rural elementary schools in the Philippines, particularly in the Visayas and Mindanao regions. In these regions, the majority of learners speak Sinugbuanong Bisaya, commonly known as Cebuano, a setting that remains underrepresented in existing literature. By examining teachers' perceptions alongside their professional profiles, the study demonstrates that effective communicative grammar instruction is not dependent on formal qualifications or years of experience but rather on teachers' familiarity with and consistent use of communicative strategies.

Furthermore, the study contributes to theory and practice by bridging linguistic competence and communicative competence in real classroom contexts, showing how grammar can be taught meaningfully through interaction, description, and purposeful communication. The integration of quantitative findings with qualitative insights from teachers' experiences strengthens the credibility of the results and highlights the practical realities of implementing CLT in multilingual and resource-constrained classrooms.

Finally, the development of a context-responsive training design grounded in actual classroom needs positions this study as both diagnostic and developmental. It moves beyond validating CLT as an approach and offers a practical pathway for improving teacher capacity, informing curriculum planning, and supporting policy-driven language instruction reforms in basic education.

### **6.2. Challenges and Limitations**

Although this study provides meaningful insights into the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) for grammar instruction in rural elementary schools, several challenges and limitations must be recognized to contextualize the findings and guide future research.

One major limitation of the study is its sample size and scope, as it involved only 30 elementary teachers from three public schools in the District of Alegria, Cebu, Philippines. Although the participants provided rich quantitative and qualitative data, the relatively small sample restricts the generalizability of the results. The findings reflect the perceptions and experiences of teachers in a specific rural district and may not fully represent elementary teachers in urban settings or other regions of the Philippines with different linguistic, socio-economic, and institutional conditions. Therefore, the findings should be understood as specific to the studied context rather than universally generalizable.

Another limitation refers to the research design, which depended mainly on self-reported data collected through survey questionnaires and Focused Group Discussions (FGDs). While these methods are suitable for examining perceptions and experiences, they may be prone to response biases, such as social desirability and recall bias. Teachers might have reported positive views of CLT strategies due to professional expectations or familiarity with communicative approaches, even if actual classroom implementation differs. The lack of classroom observations or learner performance data also limits the study's capacity to triangulate teachers' perceptions with observable instructional practices or students' learning outcomes.

The study's focus on rural context, although a strength in addressing an underrepresented setting, also presents certain inherent limitations. Classrooms in the participating schools are generally marked by large class sizes, limited instructional time, and a shortage of teaching and learning materials. These contextual challenges were evident in the FGDs, where teachers highlighted difficulties in managing communicative activities with many learners, preparing materials for interactive tasks, and balancing curriculum coverage with meaningful communication. Time constraints were also noted as a challenge, as communicative grammar activities typically require more preparation and classroom time than traditional rule-based instruction.

Despite these challenges, the limitations of the study provide valuable guidance for future research. Future studies could increase the sample size and encompass multiple districts or regions to improve generalizability of the findings. Using mixed methods designs that include classroom observations, lesson plan analysis, and learner achievement data would offer a more comprehensive understanding of CLT implementation and its effects on grammar learning. Longitudinal research could further investigate how sustained training and professional development affect teachers' implementation of CLT strategies over time.

Finally, future research could investigate the perspectives of learners and school administrators to complement the insights gathered from teachers. Examining technology-assisted CLT strategies in resource-constrained settings could also help address several challenges highlighted in this study. By recognizing these challenges and limitations, the present study not only frames its findings responsibly but also helps establish a clearer research agenda for advancing communicative grammar teaching in Philippine elementary education, specifically for Cebuano learners.

### 6.3. Future Research Directions

Drawing on the findings and limitations of the current study, several avenues for future research are suggested to enhance understanding of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in grammar instruction, especially in elementary and multilingual contexts.

First, longitudinal studies are highly recommended to assess the sustained effectiveness of CLT over time. While the present study captures teachers' perceptions at a specific point, it does not consider how continuous exposure to CLT strategies may shape teaching practices and learner outcomes over the long term. Longitudinal research could monitor teachers' use of communicative grammar strategies over several school years, alongside corresponding changes in learners' grammatical accuracy, communicative competence, and language confidence. These studies would offer more robust empirical evidence on whether CLT leads to sustained instructional and learning gains beyond its initial implementation.

Second, comparative studies across urban and rural school settings could provide valuable insights into how contextual factors influence the effectiveness of CLT. Rural schools frequently encounter challenges such as limited resources, larger class sizes, and multilingual learner populations, which contrast significantly with the conditions in urban schools. Comparative studies could investigate whether teachers in urban settings perceive CLT strategies differently, implement them more often, or face fewer challenges. Gaining insights into these contextual contrasts would enable policymakers and educators to develop differentiated training programs and support systems suited to specific school environments.

Third, future research should investigate technology-enhanced CLT strategies for grammar instruction, especially as a means to address resource constraints observed in rural classrooms. Studies may investigate the use of low-cost digital tools, mobile applications, interactive videos, or online collaborative platforms to support communicative grammar activities. Technology-assisted CLT may help teachers manage large classes, provide authentic language input, and facilitate interactive tasks even with limited physical materials. Empirical evidence on the effectiveness and feasibility of such approaches would be especially valuable for schools with restricted instructional resources.

Lastly, future studies are encouraged to employ robust mixed-methods research designs that integrate quantitative evaluations of learners' grammatical proficiency with qualitative classroom observations and interviews. Although teacher perceptions offer valuable insights, connecting these perceptions to actual classroom practices and learners' language development would strengthen the validity of research findings. Classroom observations can capture how CLT strategies are implemented in actual instructional settings, while standardized or performance-based grammar assessments can evaluate their impact on learners' language development. Combining these data sources would provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of communicative grammar instruction.

Overall, following these research directions will help the advancement of theoretical, empirical, and practical understanding of CLT, thereby supporting its more effective and context-sensitive application in elementary language education.

## 7. Recommendations

Based on the drawn conclusions, the following recommendations are put forward.

1. Teacher Training and Professional Development – The Department of Education and school administrators should offer targeted training on CLT strategies to equip teachers with skills needed to effectively implement communicative grammar activities. This may include workshops, seminars, training and continuous professional development programs.
2. Implementation of a Training Design – A structured training design informed by this study's findings should be developed, emphasizing on the CLT strategies identified as most effective and while refining those perceived as less effective, such as task-completion, information-gap, and grammar-focused writing activities.
3. Curriculum and Instructional Support – Curriculum developers and school administrators should imbed CLT strategies within English grammar curriculum frameworks, ensuring consistency with national language education policies such as Executive Order No. 210, s. 2003, and DepEd Order No. 020, s. 2025.
4. Classroom Practice – Teachers are encouraged to integrate communicative activities into grammar instructions to promote learner participation, sustained engagement, and meaningful use of the English language in everyday communication.
5. Further Research – Future research could investigate the long-term impact of CLT on learners' grammatical accuracy and communicative competence in varied contexts, including urban and multilingual classrooms, and examine the potential of technology-enhanced CLT strategies.

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## Appendix

Appendix 1 presents the Survey Questionnaire and FGD Guide on CLT Strategies for Grammar Instruction.

### Appendix 1. Survey Questionnaire and FGD Guide on CLT Strategies for Grammar Instruction.

This instrument is designed to collect data for the study on teachers' perceptions and effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) strategies in grammar instruction. Responses will be treated with confidentiality and used only for academic purposes.

#### Section A. Teacher Profile.

Profile Variable	Response Options / Description
1. School	
2. Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Below 20 years old <input type="checkbox"/> 41–50 years old <input type="checkbox"/> 21–30 years old <input type="checkbox"/> 31–40 years old <input type="checkbox"/> 51 years old and above
3. Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
4. Highest Educational Attainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Master's Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate
5. Field of Specialization	<input type="checkbox"/> GMRC/VE <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> MAPEH <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino <input type="checkbox"/> HELE/TLE <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> Others (please specify): _____

Profile Variable	Response Options / Description
	<input type="checkbox"/> Science _____
6. Number of Years Teaching English	
7. Teaching Load	Number of sections: _____ Number of learners: _____
8. Relevant Seminars/Trainings Attended (Past 5 Years)	<input type="checkbox"/> School Level <input type="checkbox"/> District Level <input type="checkbox"/> Division Level <input type="checkbox"/> National Level <input type="checkbox"/> International Level
9. Received Specific Training on CLT	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, Please Specify Details: _____ _____ _____

Scale: 4 — Strongly Agree  
3 — Agree  
2 — Disagree  
1 — Strongly Disagree

**Section B. Perceived Effectiveness of CLT Strategies for Grammar Instruction.**

CLT Strategies	4	3	2	1
Describing people, animals, places, things and events				
Role playing				
Speaking about personal experiences				
Jigsaw				
Opinion sharing				
Interviews				
Tasks, such as project-based tasks				
Task-completion				
Information-gap				
Information-transfer				
Information-gathering				
Asking and answering questions spontaneously				
Reading short stories that focus on specific rules of grammar				
Listening to a conversation that focus on specific rules of grammar				
Writing sentences applying specific rules of grammar				

**Scoring and Interpretation**

3.25–4.00 = Highly Effective  
2.50–3.24 = Effective  
1.75–2.49 = Less Effective  
1.00–1.74 = Not Effective

**Section C. Focused Group Discussion (FGD) Guide.**

Purpose	To collect qualitative insights from teachers regarding their experiences, challenges, and training needs in implementing CLT strategies for grammar instruction.
Interview Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How would you describe your current approach to teaching grammar in your class?</li> <li>2. Which CLT activities do you use most often for grammar? Can you give an example?</li> <li>3. Which CLT strategies do you find most effective for improving learners' grammar? Why?</li> <li>4. Which strategies are difficult to use and what challenges do you encounter?</li> <li>5. How do you integrate explicit grammar teaching into communicative activities?</li> <li>6. What types of training, resources, or support would help you implement CLT strategies better?</li> <li>7. If a training program on CLT for grammar were to be developed, what should it include?</li> <li>8. What changes (policy, school-level, teacher-level) would make it easier for you to teach grammar communicatively?</li> </ol>

Appendix 2 presents the Proposed Training Design.

**Appendix 2.** Proposed training design.

This shows the detailed proposal to conduct a training on Communicative Language Teaching for Grammar Instruction in the District of Alegria.

<b>Communicative language teaching for grammar instruction</b>									
<b>Proposed Training Design for S. Y. 2026-2027</b>									
<b>Areas of Concern</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Persons Involved</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Source of Budget</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>Actual Accomplishments</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Interviews	Enhance learners' communicative fluency and grammatical accuracy through structured questioning tasks	Workshop on designing interview guides; peer demonstration teaching; classroom implementation with feedback	PSDS; School Head Teachers; Learners	₱3,000	School MOOE	May 20, 2026	Increased student confidence and correct grammar use during interviews		
Project-Based Tasks	Integrate grammar learning into authentic, collaborative projects	Training on project-based learning (PBL) aligned with grammar objectives, rubric development, and sample project creation	PSDS; School Head Teachers; Learners	₱3,000	School MOOE	May 20, 2026	Students apply grammar meaningfully in real-world projects		
Task Completion Activities	Improve grammatical competence through purposeful communicative tasks	Development of task cards; simulation of classroom activities; peer coaching sessions	PSDS; School Head Teachers; Learners	₱3,000	School MOOE	May 20, 2026	Increased engagement and task-based grammar accuracy		
Information-Gap Activities	Promote spontaneous language use and questioning skills	Creation of localized information-gap materials; classroom observation and reflection	PSDS; School Head Teachers; Learners	₱3,000	School MOOE	May 21, 2026	Improved interaction and contextual grammar use		
Information-Transfer Activities	Develop learners' ability to reorganize and restate information using correct grammar	Training on converting visual/text data into oral or written outputs; collaborative lesson planning	PSDS; School Head Teachers; Learners	₱3,000	School MOOE	May 21, 2026	Enhanced comprehension and grammar application		
Information-Gathering Activities	Strengthen inquiry-based grammar learning	Guided research tasks, survey-making workshops; integration of community-based activities	PSDS; School Head Teachers; Learners	₱3,000	School MOOE	May 21, 2026	Learners demonstrate improved questioning and reporting skills		
Asking and Answering Questions Spontaneously	Encourage natural language production and real-time grammar use	Microteaching sessions; structured classroom drills transitioning to free-response interaction	PSDS; School Head Teachers; Learners	₱3,000	School MOOE	May 21, 2026	Greater fluency and reduced hesitation in grammar usage		

<b>Communicative language teaching for grammar instruction</b>									
<b>Proposed Training Design for S. Y. 2026-2027</b>									
<b>Areas of Concern</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Persons Involved</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Source of Budget</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>Actual Accomplishments</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Reading Texts Focusing on Specific Grammatical Rules	Integrate grammar analysis within meaningful reading contexts	Development of contextualized reading modules; guided reading sessions; reflective discussions	PSDS; School Head Teachers; Learners	₱3,000	School MOOE	May 22, 2026	Improved comprehension and contextual grammar awareness		
Listening to Dialogues Focusing on Specific Grammatical Rules	Increase learner engagement and comprehension during listening tasks	Audio material development; interactive listening activities; integration of multimedia tools	PSDS; School Head Teachers; Learners	₱3,000	School MOOE	May 22, 2026	Improved listening comprehension and grammar retention		
Sentence Writing Applying Grammatical Rules	Transform traditional grammar writing into communicative output	Workshop on guided writing strategies; contextual writing tasks (Journals, letters, short narratives); rubric standardization	PSDS; School Head Teachers; Learners	₱3,000	School MOOE	May 22, 2026	Writing tasks become meaningful, interactive, and grammar-accurate		

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