

Teachers' Perceptions Regarding the Efficacy of XI English Textbook Jamshoro in
Developing Students' Communication Skills

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Received: 03-02-2026

Revised: 16-02-2026

Accepted: 06-03-2026

Published: 21-03-2026

ABSTRACT

The development of communicative competence has become a main objective of modern English language teaching. In many educational systems, textbooks serve as the primary instructional resource and significantly influence teaching practices and learning outcomes. This study explored teachers' perceptions regarding the efficacy of the XI English Textbook Jamshoro in developing students' communicative skills. The study was grounded in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Littlewoods' communicative competence model, which conceptualizes communicative competence through structural, functional, social, and authentic communication stages. A qualitative research design and phenomenology method was employed, and data were collected through semi-structured interviews with English language teachers teaching intermediate classes in public colleges of Karachi region. Purposive along with Criterion sampling was used to select participants with direct experience teaching the textbook. Thematic analysis was applied to interpret teachers' perceptions. The findings revealed that while the textbook provides substantial emphasis on structural language knowledge and reading comprehension, it lacks communicative tasks, authentic interaction activities, and opportunities for meaningful language use. Teachers perceived that the textbook remains examination-oriented and grammar-focused, limiting students' development of communicative competence. The study concludes that although the textbook supports linguistic knowledge, it does not adequately promote communicative interaction. The study recommends integrating communicative activities, task-based learning strategies, and authentic communication tasks in future textbook revisions.

Keywords: *communicative competence, CLT, textbook evaluation, teachers' perceptions, communicative skills*

INTRODUCTION

English has become a global language of communication, education, and professional interaction. In non-native English contexts, the primary objective of English language education is to develop students' ability to communicate effectively in real-life situations. Modern language pedagogy emphasizes communicative competence rather than the memorization of grammatical rules or vocabulary lists.

Communicative competence refers to the ability to use language appropriately and effectively in different communicative contexts. It involves linguistic knowledge as well as the ability to interpret meaning, interact socially, and negotiate communication (Savignon, 2022). The shift toward communicative competence reflects broader changes in language teaching methodology that prioritize meaningful interaction and real-world language use.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emerged as a major paradigm in language education during the late twentieth century and continues to influence modern language pedagogy. CLT emphasizes learner participation, interaction, and authentic communication in language classrooms (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Instead of focusing solely on grammatical accuracy, CLT encourages learners to use language for meaningful communication.

Textbooks play a critical role in implementing communicative language teaching in classroom contexts. In many educational systems, particularly in developing countries, textbooks serve as the primary teaching resource and strongly influence classroom instruction (Tomlinson, 2023). Teachers often rely on textbooks to structure lessons, design activities, and guide learning outcomes. Therefore, the communicative orientation of textbooks significantly affects students' opportunities to practice communication skills.

However, several studies have suggested that many English textbooks continue to emphasize structural knowledge rather than communicative language use (Goh & Burns, 2022). Such textbooks often prioritize grammar exercises and reading comprehension while neglecting speaking, listening, and interactive communication activities.

In Pakistan, English language instruction at the intermediate level largely depends on textbooks prescribed by provincial textbook boards. The XI English Textbook published by the Sindh Textbook Board Jamshoro is widely used in public colleges across Sindh province. While the textbook provides literary texts, prose, and poetry selections, questions remain regarding its effectiveness in developing students' communicative competence.

Teachers, as primary users of textbooks, possess valuable insights into how instructional materials function in classroom practice. Their perceptions can reveal strengths and limitations of textbooks that may not be apparent in formal curriculum documents. Research on teachers' perceptions is therefore essential for evaluating the communicative effectiveness of textbooks.

This study investigates teachers' perceptions regarding the efficacy of the XI English Textbook Jamshoro in developing students' communication skills using Littlewoods' communicative competence model as a conceptual framework.

Research Objectives

The study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To explore teachers' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the XI English Textbook Jamshoro in developing students' communication skills.
2. To analyze the communicative orientation of the textbook based on Littlewoods' communicative competence model.
3. To identify challenges teachers face when using the textbook to promote communicative language learning.
4. To propose recommendations for improving communicative competence through textbook design.

Research Questions

The study addressed the following research questions:

1. How do teachers perceive the effectiveness of the XI English Textbook Jamshoro in developing students' communicative skills?
2. To what extent does the textbook support communicative competence according to Littlewoods' communicative competence model?
3. What limitations do teachers identify in the textbook regarding communicative language teaching?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emphasizes the use of language for meaningful communication rather than the memorization of grammatical structures. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), CLT views language as a system for expressing meaning and emphasizes learner interaction, negotiation of meaning, and contextualized language use.

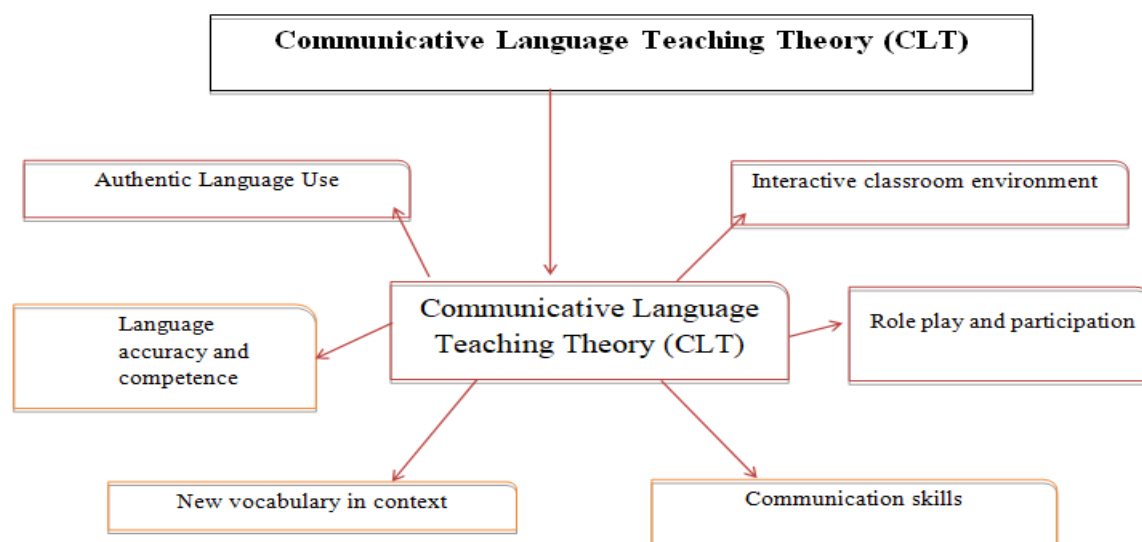


Figure 2.1 <https://study.com/academy/lesson/communicative-language-teaching-definition-overview-example.html>

Recent research indicates that CLT has evolved into a flexible pedagogical framework that integrates communicative tasks, collaborative learning, and authentic communication activities (Ellis, 2023). These activities encourage learners to use language actively and develop confidence in communication. However, implementing CLT requires teaching materials that provide opportunities for interaction, discussion, and problem-solving tasks. Without such materials, teachers may struggle to implement communicative approaches effectively.

Communicative Competence

The concept of communicative competence highlights the ability to use language appropriately in different contexts. Savignon (2022) explains that communicative competence involves linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies that enable learners to participate effectively in communication.

Communicative competence therefore includes:

- knowledge of grammar and vocabulary
- ability to use language functions
- ability to interact socially
- ability to use language in authentic contexts

These competencies enable learners to communicate effectively beyond the classroom.

Role of Textbooks in Language Learning

Textbooks play a crucial role in shaping classroom practices and guiding language learning activities. Tomlinson (2023) emphasizes that effective language textbooks should provide opportunities for interaction, critical thinking, and authentic language use.

However, many textbooks continue to focus on reading comprehension and grammar exercises rather than communicative interaction. This imbalance can limit learners' opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills (Goh & Burns, 2022).

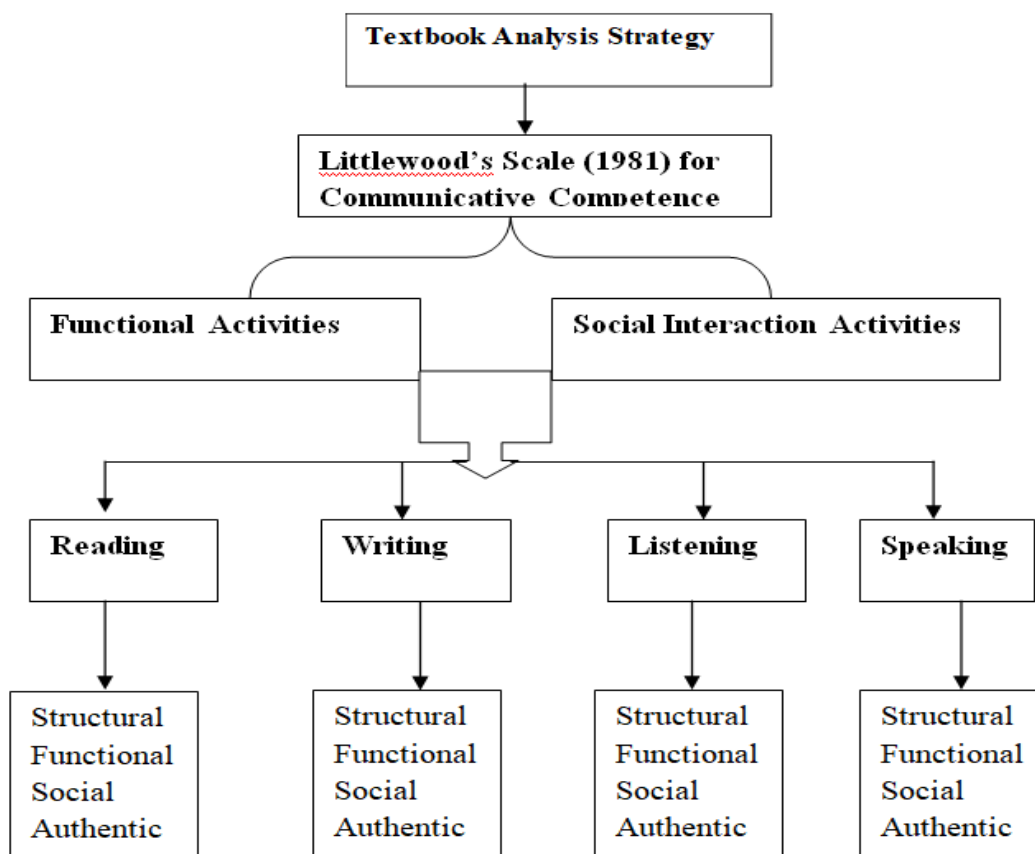
Teachers' Perceptions in Textbook Evaluation

Teachers' perceptions provide valuable insights into the practical effectiveness of textbooks. Research suggests that teachers often identify gaps between communicative teaching objectives and textbook content (Nation, 2022).

Teachers also frequently report that textbooks are examination-oriented and fail to provide sufficient opportunities for communicative practice. Understanding teachers' perspectives is therefore essential for improving curriculum design.

Conceptual Framework

This study is based on Littlewoods' Communicative Competence Model, which explains the gradual development of communicative ability through different stages of language learning. Littlewoods (1981) proposed that communicative competence develops through four stages:



Structural competence refers to learners' knowledge of grammatical structures, vocabulary, and sentence formation. At this stage, language learning focuses on accuracy and controlled practice.

Functional Communication

Functional communication emphasizes the use of language to perform communicative functions such as describing, requesting, explaining, or expressing opinions.

Social Interaction

Social interaction involves using language in social contexts where learners must consider relationships, roles, and communication strategies.

Authentic Communication

Authentic communication represents real-life communication where learners use language spontaneously to convey meaning.

Littlewoods argued that effective language instruction should gradually move learners from structural practice to authentic communication. This model was used in this study to analyze teachers' perceptions regarding the communicative effectiveness of the textbook.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a qualitative research design to explore teachers' perceptions regarding the communicative effectiveness of the XI English Textbook Jamshoro. Qualitative research allows researchers to investigate participants' experiences, beliefs, and perspectives in depth (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Research Participants

Participants included English language teachers teaching intermediate classes in public colleges. These teachers had direct experience teaching the XI English Textbook.

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was used to select teachers who had experience teaching the textbook. This sampling method ensured that participants possessed relevant knowledge about the research topic.

Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The interview questions focused on teachers' perceptions regarding:

- communicative skills in the textbook
- opportunities for speaking and listening activities
- classroom challenges while teaching the textbook
- alignment of textbook activities with communicative teaching

Semi-structured interviews allowed participants to provide detailed responses and share classroom experiences.

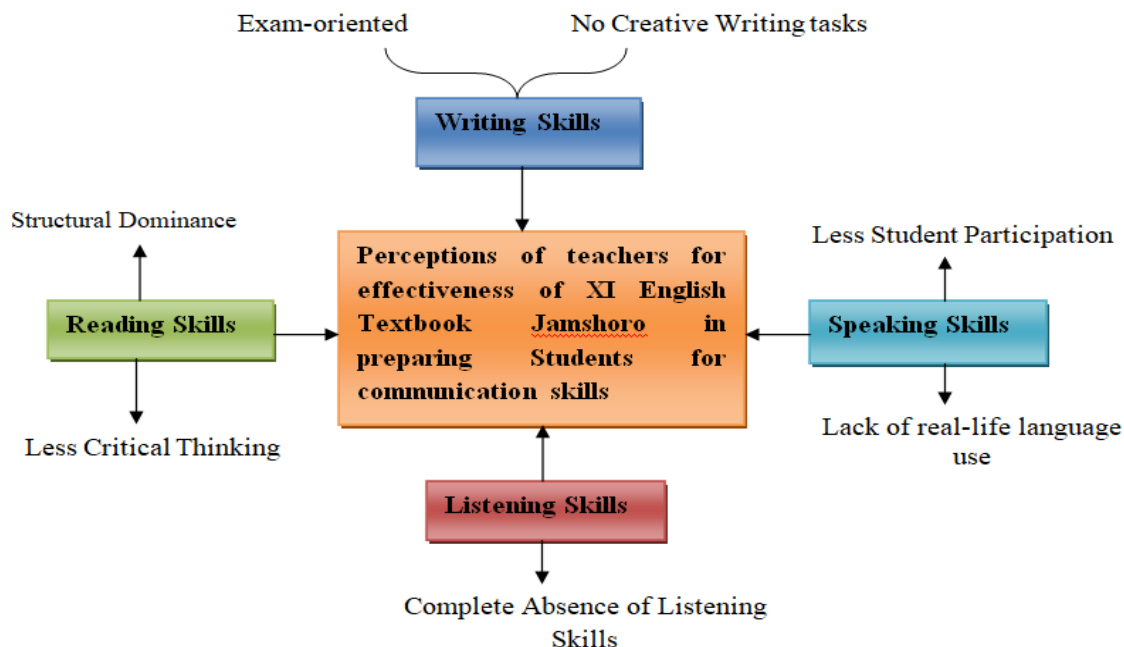
DATA ANALYSIS

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Following Braun and Clarke's (2021) framework, the analysis involved the following steps:

1. Familiarization with the data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Reporting findings

Thematic analysis enabled the identification of recurring patterns in teachers' perceptions

Figure 2: Codes, Categories, and Themes from Semi-structured interviews of the teachers



Source: Self designed

Figure 2: clearly indicates the process of generating Codes, Categories, and Themes from Semi-structured interviews of the teachers

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS (THEMATIC ANALYSIS)

The thematic analysis of teachers' perceptions revealed several recurring patterns regarding the communicative orientation and pedagogical effectiveness of the XI English Textbook Jamshoro. The responses indicated that while the textbook provides considerable emphasis on linguistic knowledge and literary understanding, it demonstrates several limitations in promoting communicative competence as envisioned in Communicative Language Teaching and Littlewoods' communicative competence framework. The major themes that emerged from the analysis are presented below:

Teachers consistently reported that the textbook places a dominant emphasis on structural aspects of language such as grammar, vocabulary, and textual interpretation. Most exercises following prose, poetry, and drama sections involve comprehension questions, paraphrasing, or grammatical explanations. Although these activities help students develop reading comprehension and linguistic accuracy, teachers believed that they provide limited opportunities for students to actively use language for communication. The strong focus on structural competence indicates that the textbook largely operates within the traditional form-focused paradigm of language teaching rather than the communicative paradigm.

Participants highlighted that the textbook provides very limited opportunities for speaking practice in classroom instruction. Teachers noted that most lessons are designed around reading passages and written responses, leaving little room for oral interaction among students. Activities such as debates, role plays, pair discussions, or group presentations are largely absent. As a result, students rarely engage in spontaneous spoken communication during classroom activities. Teachers emphasized that speaking competence is essential for communicative language development, yet the textbook does not sufficiently encourage oral language use.

Another major theme emerging from the interviews was the lack of authentic communication tasks in the textbook. Teachers explained that the exercises rarely simulate real-life communication situations where learners must negotiate meaning, share opinions, or solve problems collaboratively. Authentic communication activities such as information-gap tasks, situational dialogues, or problem-solving discussions were not commonly observed in the textbook. Teachers perceived that the absence of such tasks limits students' ability to apply language in real-world contexts and reduces opportunities for communicative experimentation.

Teachers also expressed concerns regarding the examination-oriented nature of the textbook content. According to participants, many exercises are designed primarily to prepare students for written examinations rather than to develop communicative competence. Students often memorize answers to comprehension questions and practice writing summaries or explanations that correspond directly to examination patterns. This examination-driven approach discourages interactive learning and reinforces passive learning strategies focused on memorization rather than communication.

Another pattern observed in teachers' responses was the dependence on teachers to create additional communicative activities in order to compensate for the limitations of the textbook. Several teachers reported that they regularly design their own speaking exercises, group discussions, and interactive tasks to engage students in communication. While such teacher initiatives can enhance classroom interaction, participants acknowledged that not all teachers have sufficient training, time, or resources to design supplementary communicative activities. Consequently, communicative teaching practices vary widely across classrooms depending on individual teachers' pedagogical approaches.

Teachers further noted that the literary nature of many textbook texts contributes to limited communicative engagement. Although the inclusion of literary prose and poetry enriches students' exposure to language and culture, teachers believed that many texts are complex and primarily designed for literary appreciation rather than communicative practice. Students often focus on understanding difficult vocabulary and interpreting literary meanings rather than using language for interaction.

Participants also highlighted that the textbook provides minimal integration of listening activities. Listening is an essential component of communicative competence because it allows learners to process spoken language and respond appropriately in communication. However, teachers reported that listening tasks, audio-based activities, or interactive listening exercises are largely absent from the textbook. This absence restricts students' exposure to authentic spoken English and limits the development of listening comprehension skills.

Some teachers also emphasized that the textbook does not sufficiently encourage collaborative learning. Communicative language teaching typically promotes pair work, group tasks, and interactive classroom activities that allow learners to negotiate meaning collectively. However, the exercises in the textbook are mostly individual and written in nature, which reduces opportunities for peer interaction and collaborative communication.

Overall, the thematic analysis indicates that teachers perceive the XI English Textbook Jamshoro as structurally rich but communicatively limited. While the textbook contributes to the development of reading comprehension and linguistic knowledge, it provides insufficient support for developing speaking, listening, and interactive communication skills. These findings suggest a significant gap between the communicative objectives of modern language pedagogy and the pedagogical orientation of the textbook.

DISCUSSION (ALIGNED WITH LITTLEWOODS' COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE MODEL)

The findings of this study provide important insights into the communicative orientation of the XI English Textbook Jamshoro from the perspective of English language teachers. When interpreted through the lens of Littlewood's communicative competence framework, the results demonstrate that the textbook primarily emphasizes structural competence while offering limited support for the development of functional, social, and authentic communicative abilities.

Structural Competence

The analysis of teachers' perceptions indicates that the XI English Textbook Jamshoro strongly emphasizes structural aspects of language such as grammar rules, vocabulary learning, and textual comprehension. Teachers consistently reported that most activities focus on reading passages followed by comprehension questions, paraphrasing exercises, and grammatical explanations. Such activities contribute to the development of linguistic accuracy and textual understanding but provide limited opportunities for communicative interaction.

Within Littlewoods' model, structural competence represents the initial stage of communicative competence where learners acquire the formal elements of language. This stage focuses on the mastery of grammar, sentence formation, and vocabulary knowledge necessary for constructing meaningful utterances (Littlewoods, 1981). While structural competence is essential for language learning, communicative competence requires learners to move beyond grammatical knowledge toward meaningful language use.

The findings suggest that the textbook remains largely confined to this structural stage. Teachers reported that classroom instruction often centres on explaining literary texts and guiding students to write examination-oriented responses. This observation reflects a traditional language teaching paradigm in which linguistic accuracy and textual analysis dominate classroom instruction. Similar findings have been reported in several textbook evaluation studies, which indicate that many English language textbooks continue to emphasize form-focused instruction rather than communicative language use (Novianti & Wirza, 2024; Salam & Luksfinanto, 2024).

Furthermore, the structural emphasis observed in the textbook may also reflect the examination-driven nature of the education system. Teachers noted that students often memorize answers and focus on reproducing textbook content during examinations. Such practices reinforce the dominance of structural knowledge while discouraging communicative experimentation. Consequently, students may develop grammatical competence without acquiring the ability to communicate effectively in real-life situations.

Functional Communication

Littlewoods' second stage of communicative competence involves functional communication, which refers to the ability to use language to perform communicative functions such as requesting information, expressing opinions, describing experiences, or explaining ideas. Functional communication requires learners to apply linguistic knowledge in meaningful communicative contexts.

The findings of this study indicate that the textbook provides limited opportunities for students to practice functional communication. Teachers reported that most exercises focus on comprehension and interpretation rather than communicative tasks. Activities designed to encourage learners to express personal ideas, negotiate meaning, or engage in problem-solving discussions are largely absent.

This limitation reduces students' opportunities to use English as a tool for expressing meaning and performing communicative functions. According to communicative language teaching theory, language learning occurs most effectively when learners actively use language to convey information and achieve communicative purposes (Richards, 2021).

Recent studies have emphasized that communicative language teaching promotes learners' engagement and language proficiency by encouraging interactive communication activities. Research suggests that students exposed to communicative teaching approaches demonstrate higher levels of language fluency, motivation, and communicative competence compared to those taught through traditional grammar-based instruction (Jatoi et al., 2024; Emon, 2024).

However, teachers participating in the present study emphasized that the XI English Textbook Jamshoro rarely provides communicative activities such as role plays, debates, or problem-solving discussions that encourage functional language use. As a result, students have limited opportunities to apply language in meaningful communicative contexts.

Social Interaction

The third dimension of Littlewoods' communicative competence framework involves social interaction, which emphasizes the use of language in interactive social contexts. Social communication requires learners to understand social roles, cultural norms, and pragmatic conventions that influence language use in different situations.

The findings indicate that the textbook provides minimal opportunities for collaborative learning and interactive communication. Teachers reported that most classroom activities are individual and written in nature, which reduces opportunities for students to interact with peers through pair work or group discussions.

Communicative language teaching emphasizes the importance of social interaction in language learning because communication involves negotiation of meaning between speakers and listeners. Through interaction, learners develop pragmatic competence, discourse management skills, and communication strategies.

Research in language education consistently demonstrates that collaborative activities such as group discussions, role plays, and interactive tasks significantly enhance learners' communicative competence. These activities allow learners to practice language in realistic social contexts and develop confidence in communication (Goh & Burns, 2022).

In addition, modern ELT research highlights the importance of intercultural communicative competence, which involves the ability to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries. Developing such competence requires exposure to diverse communicative contexts and interactive learning experiences (Zhou et al., 2024).

However, the findings suggest that the XI English Textbook Jamshoro provides limited opportunities for such interaction. Teachers observed that the literary orientation of the textbook often requires students to focus on textual interpretation rather than communicative engagement. Consequently, opportunities for developing social communication skills remain restricted.

Authentic Communication

The final stage of Littlewoods' communicative competence model involves authentic communication, where learners use language spontaneously in real-life situations. Authentic communication tasks require learners to interpret meaning, negotiate ideas, and respond to unpredictable communicative situations.

The findings reveal that authentic communication activities are largely absent from the textbook. Teachers reported that most exercises involve answering predetermined questions rather than engaging in open-ended communication tasks.

Authentic communication tasks such as information-gap activities, simulations, role plays, and problem-solving tasks are essential components of communicative language teaching. These activities simulate real-life communication situations and encourage learners to use language creatively and spontaneously.

Research has demonstrated that communicative language teaching significantly enhances learners' communicative competence when authentic tasks are integrated into classroom instruction. Such tasks promote fluency, confidence, and learner motivation (Singh & Siddiqi, 2025).

However, teachers in this study emphasized that the absence of authentic communication activities limits students' opportunities to practice language in meaningful contexts. Instead, students primarily focus on reading comprehension and written responses that correspond to examination requirements.

Synthesis of Findings

Overall, the findings indicate that the XI English Textbook Jamshoro primarily supports structural competence while providing limited opportunities for functional communication, social interaction, and

authentic communication. This imbalance creates a gap between the communicative objectives of modern language pedagogy and the pedagogical orientation of the textbook.

While the textbook contributes to students' linguistic knowledge and literary awareness, it does not sufficiently support the development of communicative competence as envisioned in communicative language teaching frameworks. Consequently, teachers often need to design supplementary activities to encourage communicative interaction in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

This study explored teachers' perceptions regarding the efficacy of the XI English Textbook Jamshoro in developing students' communicative skills. The findings revealed that the textbook primarily emphasizes structural language knowledge while providing limited opportunities for communicative interaction.

Teachers perceived that the textbook lacks speaking activities, authentic communication tasks, and opportunities for meaningful interaction. As a result, students may develop grammatical knowledge but struggle to communicate effectively in real-life situations.

The study concludes that while the textbook provides important linguistic input, it does not fully align with communicative language teaching principles.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Communicative activities such as role plays, debates, and discussions should be integrated into the textbook.
2. Listening and speaking tasks should be included to promote oral communication.
3. Task-based learning activities should be incorporated to encourage meaningful interaction.
4. Textbook content should be aligned with communicative language teaching principles.
5. Teacher training programs should emphasize communicative teaching strategies.

IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study have several implications for curriculum developers, teachers, and policymakers. Curriculum designers should ensure that English textbooks promote communicative competence. Teachers should incorporate interactive activities to supplement textbooks. Policymakers should support curriculum reforms that prioritize communicative language teaching.

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