

From Theory to Practice: Learners' Perspective on CLT, TBLT, and CP In a State University in Camarines Sur, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This study examined learners' perceptions of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and Critical Pedagogy (CP) in a tertiary English language classroom at a state university in Camarines Sur, Philippines. The study used a mixed-methods approach involving 55 non-English-major learners and interviews with three English language teachers. Learners responded to 15 indicators measuring TBLT, CLT, and CP practices. Results showed that all three approaches were Strongly Practiced, with CLT receiving the highest mean ($M = 4.51$), followed by CP ($M = 4.37$) and TBLT ($M = 4.28$). Teacher accounts supported these findings, describing authentic tasks, interactive activities, professional simulations, collaborative projects, and discussions of social issues. The findings also showed that the three approaches overlap in classroom practice rather than being implemented as separate methodologies. However, some dimensions were less pronounced, particularly moving beyond grammar-focused instruction, prioritizing fluency, and addressing language, power, and social transformation. The study concludes that TBLT, CLT, and CP are present and selectively integrated in the participating classroom, and recommends deeper integration through authentic, communicative, and critically responsive learning activities.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT), Critical Pedagogy (CP), ELT, tertiary classrooms

INTRODUCTION

English language teaching (ELT) has increasingly moved beyond approaches that emphasize the transmission and memorization of linguistic forms toward pedagogies that view language learning as an active, socially mediated, and communicative process. Pedagogy remains an important determinant of effective English language learning, particularly as contemporary theories of language learning emphasize interaction, social connection, engagement, and meaningful language use rather than passive reception of linguistic knowledge (Oparinde et al., 2020; Senen, 2024). This pedagogical shift has given prominence to approaches such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and Critical Pedagogy (CP), which have become influential orientations in contemporary English language education.

CLT represents a significant shift from approaches that treat grammatical knowledge as the primary goal of language instruction. Grounded in the concept of communicative competence, it emphasizes language as a resource for meaningful communication and places importance on functional competence, interaction, and fluency over grammatical accuracy in isolation (Canale & Swain, 1980; Brumfit, 1986; Qasserras, 2023). In practice, communicative classrooms are expected to provide learners with opportunities to use English purposefully through interaction, authentic communication, collaboration, and the expression of ideas. Evidence from the Philippine context likewise indicates the use of communicative strategies in classroom planning and instruction (Bargo & Go, 2021; Obenza & Mendoza, 2021). Barrot (2017), for instance, examined the implementation of CLT from the perspective of tertiary teachers in the Philippines, highlighting the importance of examining how communicative principles are translated into actual classroom practice.

Closely associated with CLT is TBLT, which places meaningful tasks at the center of instruction. It conceptualizes language learning as taking place through the performance of purposeful and goal-oriented tasks that approximate communicative demands beyond the classroom (Nunan, 2004). Rather than organizing instruction exclusively around predetermined linguistic forms, task-based instruction provides learners with opportunities to use language to accomplish particular outcomes. In recent years, research has demonstrated the continuing application of task-based learning in English language classrooms, including contexts in which learners develop oral communication through task-based activities (Bailo et al., 2025). A systematic review by Mudinillah et al. (2024) likewise demonstrates the continuing interest in TBLT as an approach that connects language learning with meaningful classroom activities and communicative purposes. These developments suggest that task-based principles have become an important component of contemporary ELT. However, their presence in the literature and in pedagogical discourse does not necessarily establish the extent to which they are realized in everyday classroom practice.

CP, on the other hand, extends the shift in language education by questioning the assumption that the purpose of English instruction is limited to linguistic or communicative competence. Drawing from critical educational traditions, CP emphasizes critical consciousness, learner agency, empowerment, and the examination of the social and ideological dimensions of language (Norton & Toohey, 2004). In English language education, critical pedagogy positions the classroom as a space where learners can examine social experiences, question dominant narratives, and consider the relationships among language, identity, culture, and power. Bozkurt and Topkaya (2023) describe CP as an orientation that brings critical perspectives into English language teaching, while Abad-Celleri et al. (2025) emphasize its potential to enable learners to question dominant narratives and use language as a means of empowerment. Participatory critical pedagogy has likewise been associated with increased learner participation and engagement in English language classrooms (Mousavi & Ketabi, 2021).

The relevance of these approaches becomes particularly important in multilingual and postcolonial contexts such as the Philippines. English occupies a significant position in Philippine education and is extensively used in academic, professional, and institutional domains. At the same time, English education takes place within a linguistically and culturally diverse society in which learners bring varied linguistic resources, cultural experiences, and identities into the classroom. Consequently, the implementation of contemporary approaches in ELT cannot be understood independently of the local context in which teaching and learning occur. The communicative orientation of CLT, the authenticity and goal orientation of TBLT, and the critical and socially responsive orientation of CP all have potential relevance in Philippine English language education.

The theoretical prominence of these approaches, however, raises an important empirical question – are established approaches to English language teaching actually being practices in Philippine classrooms? The adoption of an approach in curriculum documents, teacher education, or professional literature does not necessarily mean that its underlying principles are consistently enacted in classroom instruction. Teachers may incorporate selected elements of an approach without implementing all of its principles, while learners may experience classroom practices differently from how those practices are formally conceptualized by teachers or curriculum designers. Examining actual classroom experiences is therefore necessary to determine whether established pedagogical principles are reflected in the instructional practices encountered by learners.

This distinction is particularly important because CLT, TBLT, and CP share several characteristics while maintaining distinct pedagogical emphases. All three challenge purely passive models of language learning and foreground learner participation and meaningful engagement. Constructivist perspectives, for example, conceptualize learning as a process of meaning-making through engagement, interaction, and reflection (Bada, 2015; Chand, 2022; Saldivar, 2025). In ELT, this perspective supports the use of authentic communication, collaborative tasks, problem-solving, and learner agency (Faridi & Izadpanah, 2024; Guo, 2024). Studies in higher education further suggest that learners develop language proficiency through opportunities that allow them to negotiate meaning, engage with real-world issues, and express their identities through language (Gu et al., 2019; Huong & Diem, 2024; Moharami, 2024). These commonalities make it useful to examine the three approaches together while also identifying the specific practices through which each orientation becomes visible in the classroom.

Learners' perspectives are much valuable for such an examination. Because learners directly encounter classroom activities, interactions, tasks, discussions, and feedback, their experiences provide an important basis for determining whether pedagogical principles are being enacted in practice. Rather than relying solely on teachers' stated pedagogical orientations or curriculum prescriptions, learner perceptions can reveal the extent to which classrooms actually provide opportunities for meaningful communication, authentic and goal-oriented tasks, personal expression, critical engagement, and consideration of social and cultural dimensions of language.

The Philippine literature provides evidence that communicative and learner-centered practices are present in English language education. Studies have examined the use of CLT strategies in Philippine classrooms and their alignment with curriculum standards (Bargo & Go, 2021), while Obenza and Mendoza (2021) examined the effectiveness of communicative language learning activities in developing learners' communicative competence. More recent work has likewise investigated the use of CLT strategies as part of innovative teaching and learning (Sonsona & Sitoy, 2024). Research on task-based instruction in the Philippine setting has also reported its use for developing learners' oral communication skills (Baillo et al., 2025). These studies provide important evidence that contemporary pedagogical approaches are present in Philippine ELT. Nevertheless, there remains a need to examine the extent to which these established approaches are experienced as actual classroom practices by tertiary learners, primarily within specific regional contexts.

This concern is especially relevant in the Bicol region, where English language learning takes place within a distinctive multilingual and sociocultural environment. While national and international scholarship provides a substantial theoretical basis for CLT, TBLT, and CP, evidence from specific Philippine regions can contribute a more context-sensitive understanding of how these approaches are translated into classroom practice. Hence, examining learners' experiences in this setting can help determine whether the pedagogical principles advocated in contemporary ELT literature are visible in actual tertiary English language classrooms.

This study addressed this concern by examining current English language teaching practices as perceived by tertiary learners in the Bicol region of the Philippines. Specifically, it investigated the extent to which classroom practices reflect the principles of CLT, TBLT, and CP. The study did not seek to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention or to establish the superiority of one approach over another. Rather, it sought to provide empirical evidence concerning the translation of established ELT approaches from theory into classroom practice. With its lens focused on the learners, this study offers a context-specific account on how contemporary English language pedagogies are currently enacted in tertiary education in the Bicol region and contributes to the broader discussion of the relationship between established ELT theory and actual classroom practice.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive mixed-methods design to examine the extent to which established approaches to English language teaching—Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and Critical Pedagogy (CP)—were reflected in the classroom experiences of tertiary learners in a state university in Camarines Sur, Bicol Region, Philippines. The quantitative component examined learners' perceptions of pedagogical practices through a researcher-developed questionnaire, while qualitative data from teacher interviews were used to provide contextual and corroborative evidence concerning the practices reported by learners.

The study formed part of a broader investigation of the PICS (Pedagogy, Integrated Technology, Culture, and Space) Model. The present article focuses specifically on the pedagogical dimension of the model and examines existing classroom practices associated with CLT, TBLT, and CP. The data analyzed in this study represent the baseline or current-practice component of the broader investigation, prior to the implementation of the instructional intervention. Other components of the broader research project were not included in the present analysis.

The quantitative component was primarily descriptive and was intended to determine the extent to which learners perceived specific pedagogical practices to be present in their English language classroom. The qualitative component was used to contextualize and corroborate the quantitative findings. Teacher accounts were not

treated as an independent measure of the extent of implementation but as contextual evidence concerning how the reported practices were enacted in the classroom.

Because the investigation was conducted within a single institutional setting, the study was treated as context-specific. The findings are therefore not intended to statistically represent tertiary English language classrooms throughout the Bicol Region or the Philippines. The study provides an empirical account of how selected contemporary ELT principles were experienced and enacted within the participating classroom context.

Participants and Research Locale

The study was conducted in a state university in Camarines Sur, Bicol Region, Philippines. The university serves learners from the region and provided the institutional setting in which the English language teaching practices examined in this study were experienced.

The participants were 55 tertiary-level students enrolled in a GE5 Purposive Communication course during the second semester of Academic Year 2024–2025. The participants were drawn from a non-English major discipline. The participants were non-English majors, thereby providing perspectives from tertiary learners whose academic specialization was not English language education.

The learners were included because they had direct experience of the English language classroom practices examined in the study. Their responses were therefore treated as learner-based evidence of the extent to which CLT, TBLT, and CP principles were reflected in their classroom experiences.

The sample was treated as a context-specific group rather than as a statistically representative sample of tertiary English learners in the region. The purpose of the study was to describe and interpret learners' experiences within the selected institutional setting rather than to make population-level estimates. Accordingly, the findings are interpreted within the limits of the participating classroom and institutional context.

Research Instrument

Data on existing English language teaching practices were collected through a researcher-developed questionnaire. The complete instrument consisted of 40 items developed for the broader PICS Model investigation and covering the dimensions of Pedagogy, Integrated Technology, Culture, and Space. For the present study, only the 15 pedagogical items were included in the analysis.

The 15 pedagogical indicators were organized into three theoretical clusters – TBLT for items 1 to 5, CLT for items 6-10, and CP for items 11-15.

The items were designed to represent observable or experienced classroom manifestations of the three pedagogical orientations. The TBLT indicators addressed the use of real-world tasks, organization of lessons around task completion, collaborative task performance, reflection on task effectiveness, and feedback based on task performance. The CLT indicators addressed communication over memorization, opportunities for personal expression, attention to fluency, use of authentic materials, and simulation of real-life communication. The CP indicators addressed discussion of societal and global issues, learner empowerment and critical engagement, critical evaluation of social and cultural dimensions of language, language use for social change or community improvement, and attention to language, power, and social structures.

The questionnaire underwent content validation by three subject-matter experts with backgrounds in English language teaching, educational research, curriculum development, and sociocultural pedagogy.

In terms of its reliability, internal consistency of the pedagogical component was examined using Cronbach's alpha. The 15-item pedagogical scale demonstrated high internal consistency ($\alpha = .911$). Reliability was also examined separately for the three theoretical clusters. The TBLT items demonstrated acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .754$), while the CLT ($\alpha = .792$) and CP ($\alpha = .818$) clusters demonstrated good internal consistency.

These results provide evidence of adequate internal consistency among the items used to measure the pedagogical practices examined in the present study.

To provide contextual and corroborative evidence for the learner-reported practices, semi-structured interviews were conducted with three English language teachers who handled the classes included in the study. The teachers were therefore selected based on their direct involvement in teaching the participating learners.

The interview protocol focused on teachers' descriptions of existing English language teaching practices, particularly classroom activities and instructional strategies associated with CLT, TBLT, and CP. The interviews also sought to identify contextual factors and challenges that influenced the implementation of these pedagogical practices.

The interviews were recorded using a cellphone with the teachers' permission and were subsequently transcribed verbatim. The researchers manually coded the transcripts to identify statements and recurring descriptions related to the pedagogical practices examined in the study. The coding process focused on classroom practices corresponding to the three theoretical orientations and was used to identify qualitative evidence that could contextualize the quantitative findings.

To enhance the credibility and accuracy of the interview data, the completed transcripts were returned to the respective teachers for confirmation of their statements. The teachers were given an opportunity to verify whether the transcribed accounts accurately represented what they had said during the interviews. This process served as a form of member checking and helped ensure that the qualitative evidence presented in the study accurately reflected the participants' accounts.

The teacher interviews were treated as supporting qualitative evidence rather than as an independent basis for determining the extent of implementation. Learners' quantitative responses remained the primary basis for assessing the perceived prevalence of CLT, TBLT, and CP practices, while teacher accounts provided contextual explanation and corroboration.

Data Collection Procedure

Prior to data collection, the researchers secured the necessary permission from the appropriate university authorities. The participants were informed of the purpose and nature of the study and the intended use of the information gathered.

The learner questionnaire was administered during the second semester of Academic Year 2024–2025. The questionnaire gathered learners' perceptions of the English language teaching practices they experienced in their classroom.

Following the administration of the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the three teachers who handled the participating classes. The interviews were recorded using a cellphone, transcribed verbatim, and manually coded. After transcription, the interview transcripts were returned to the respective teachers for confirmation of the accuracy of their statements. Confirmed interview accounts were then used as qualitative evidence to contextualize and corroborate the learner-reported practices.

The quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed separately but were brought together during interpretation. The learner responses served as the primary source for determining the perceived extent of implementation of the three pedagogical orientations, while teacher accounts were examined to provide contextual explanations for the patterns observed in the quantitative data.

The present study was limited to the baseline/current-practice data relevant to the pedagogical dimension of the PICS Model. Other components of the broader research project were not included in the analysis presented in this article.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed using means and standard deviations. The mean was used to determine the extent to which each pedagogical practice was perceived by learners to be implemented in the classroom, while the standard deviation was used to describe the variability of learners' responses.

The mean scores were interpreted according to the following scale:

Table 1. Mean score range and corresponding interpretation

Mean Score	Interpretation
4.21 – 5.00	Strongly Practices (SP)
3.41 – 4.20	Practiced (P)
2.61 – 3.40	Moderately Practiced (MP)
1.81 – 2.60	Rarely Practiced (RP)
1.00 – 1.80	Never Practiced (NP)

Meanwhile, the teacher interview data were analyzed thematically. The analysis focused on identifying descriptions of classroom practices corresponding to TBLT, CLT, and CP.

Ethical Considerations

The study followed established ethical procedures for educational research. Formal permission to conduct the study was obtained from the appropriate university authorities before data collection. Participation in the qualitative component was voluntary, and the interviews were conducted to provide supporting evidence for the investigation of current ELT practices. The data reported in this article are limited to the pedagogical practices relevant to the study's research purpose.

The researchers manually coded the verbatim transcripts and grouped relevant statements according to recurring pedagogical practices and themes. Particular attention was given to descriptions that corresponded to the indicators included in the learner questionnaire. Teacher accounts were then compared with the quantitative findings to identify areas of convergence and to provide contextual explanations for learner-reported patterns.

Several procedures were used to enhance the trustworthiness of the qualitative data. First, the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim to preserve the teachers' accounts accurately. Second, the transcripts were manually reviewed and coded according to recurring descriptions of classroom practices relevant to the study. Most importantly, member checking was conducted by returning the transcribed interviews to the respective teachers for confirmation of their statements. This allowed participants to verify the accuracy of the transcripts and helped minimize errors in the representation of their accounts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings on current pedagogical practices provide an empirical picture of how established approaches to English language teaching are enacted in the tertiary classroom. Specifically, the study examined three pedagogical orientations identified in previous sections as particularly relevant to contemporary English language teaching – Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and Critical Pedagogy (CP). These approaches were examined through learners' reported classroom experiences, with teachers' accounts used to provide qualitative corroboration and contextual explanation.

Task-based Language Teaching Practices

The first cluster comprised five indicators of Task-Based Language Teaching: real-world task assignment, task-based rather than grammar-focused instruction, collaborative task completion, reflection on task effectiveness, and feedback based on task performance. These indicators correspond to the conceptualization of TBLT as an approach in which language learning is facilitated through authentic, purposeful, and goal-oriented tasks that reflect meaningful communicative demands (Baillo et al., 2025; Nunan, 2004).

As shown in Table 2, The overall mean of 4.28 indicates that TBLT-oriented practices were Strongly Practiced in the participating classrooms. Four of the five indicators received Strongly Practiced ratings. Reflection on task effectiveness obtained the highest mean ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 0.63$), followed by group/pair work ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.59$), feedback based on task performance ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.68$), and real-world task assignment ($M = 4.44$, $SD = 0.76$). These results suggest that learners regularly encounter tasks that involve purposeful language use, collaboration, reflection, and performance-based feedback. Such practices are consistent with the view of TBLT as emphasizing authentic and goal-oriented language use (Baillo et al., 2025; Nunan, 2004).

Table 2. Learners' Perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching Practices

TBLT Practices	M	SD	Interpretation
1. Real world task assignment	4.44	0.76	SP
2. Task-based over grammar focused	3.71	1.05	P
3. Group/pair work for task completion	4.36	0.59	SP
4. Reflection on task effectiveness	4.51	0.63	SP
5. Feedback based on task performance	4.36	0.68	SP
	4.28	-	SP

The qualitative evidence provides further explanation for the strong quantitative results. One teacher described the use of activities that require learners to accomplish tasks through English:

“Pigpapagibo mi sinda kang mga activities that require them to accomplish some tasks that will allow them to use the English language.”

[We give activities that require them to accomplish some tasks that will allow them to use the English language.]

This account reflects a central characteristic of TBLT, which poses that language is used as a means of accomplishing a meaningful outcome rather than being treated solely as an object of study. The teacher's description therefore converges with the learners' strong perception of real-world task assignment.

The teachers also described tasks connected to learners' anticipated professional roles. One teacher reported asking learners to simulate managing a multicultural classroom using English because they are prospective teachers. Another described CV preparation and mock job interviews as classroom activities. These activities extend task-based instruction beyond conventional language exercises by connecting English use with professional and social contexts.

“One of the activities I ask my students to do is to simulate how to manage a multicultural classroom using the language effectively, since they are would-be teachers.”

Another teacher recalled:

“Nagirumduman ko, saro sa mga pigpagibo ko ang pagpripara kang mga aki para sa job interview. Digdi, the learners were tasked to make their own CV, tsaka kami nag-mock interview.”

[I remember, one of the activities I gave is preparing them for a job interview. As such, learners were asked to make their own CV, and we do the mock interview.]

Similarly, teachers reported the use of advocacy campaigns, podcasts, vlogs, and mini-research projects. These activities require learners to collaborate, use English purposefully, and produce tangible outputs. Their characteristics are consistent with research associating authentic task-based activities with interaction, fluency, and strategic competence (Baillo et al., 2025; Chen, 2025; Sholeh, Nur, & Salija, 2020).

The highest TBLT rating, reflection on task effectiveness ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 0.63$), is also noteworthy. Reflection indicates that learners are not merely completing assigned tasks but are provided opportunities to consider the effectiveness of their performance and the learning value of the activity. This adds a reflective dimension to task-based instruction and strengthens the interpretation that TBLT is enacted through more than simple activity completion.

Group and pair work likewise received a Strongly Practiced rating ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.59$). The relatively low standard deviation indicates considerable consistency in learners' perceptions of collaborative task work. Such collaboration is compatible with the constructivist and sociocultural foundations of the study, which conceptualize learning as active and socially mediated through interaction, scaffolding, and shared meaning-making.

Feedback based on task performance was also Strongly Practiced ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.68$). This suggests that performance feedback forms part of the task-based classroom experience. Such feedback is important because TBLT concerns not only whether learners use language but also how effectively they accomplish meaningful tasks.

The comparatively lower rating was for task-based instruction over grammar-focused instruction ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 1.05$). Although still Practiced, this result deserves particular attention. It indicates that task-based instruction has not necessarily displaced grammar-focused teaching. The relatively higher standard deviation also suggests greater variation in learners' experiences regarding the balance between task-based and grammar-oriented instruction. Thus, the findings should not be interpreted as evidence that the participating classrooms have become exclusively task-based. Rather, they suggest that TBLT principles have been incorporated into existing classroom practices, particularly through authentic tasks, professional simulations, collaborative activities, projects, reflection, and performance-based feedback.

This finding illustrates an important distinction between the presence and depth of implementation. TBLT is clearly present in the participating classrooms, but the extent to which it serves as the dominant organizing principle of instruction appears less consistent. The findings therefore suggest adaptation rather than wholesale replacement of established instructional practices.

Communicative Language Teaching Practices

The second cluster concerned Communicative Language Teaching. CLT conceptualizes language primarily as a means of communication and emphasizes functional competence, interaction, meaningful language use, and fluency rather than isolated grammatical accuracy (Canale & Swain, 1980; Brumfit, 1986; Qasserras, 2023). Philippine research has likewise documented the use of communicative strategies in classroom planning and instruction (Bargo & Go, 2021; Obenza & Mendoza, 2021).

Table 3. Learners' Perceptions of Communicative Language Teaching Practices

CLT Practices	M	SD	Interpretation
1. Emphasis on communication over memorization	4.53	0.63	SP

2. Expression of personal opinions and ideas	4.58	0.63	SP
3. Fluency prioritized over grammatical accuracy	4.20	0.65	P
4. Use of authentic materials	4.64	0.52	SP
5. Simulation of real-life communication	4.58	0.57	SP
	4.51	-	SP

Table 3 shows the learners' experiences of CLT practices. The overall mean of 4.51 indicates a particularly strong communicative orientation in the participating classrooms. Four of the five indicators were rated Strongly Practiced. The highest-rated practice was the use of authentic materials ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 0.52$), followed by expression of personal opinions and ideas and simulation of real-life communication (both $M = 4.58$). Emphasis on communication over memorization also received a Strongly Practiced rating ($M = 4.53$).

The high rating for communication over memorization suggests that learners experience English instruction as emphasizing actual language use rather than primarily relying on rote learning. This finding is consistent with the theoretical foundations of CLT, particularly its emphasis on communicative competence, interaction, functional language use, and meaningful communication (Canale & Swain, 1980; Brumfit, 1986; Qasserras, 2023)

The strong rating for expression of personal opinions and ideas ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.63$) further indicates that learners are given opportunities to generate and communicate their own meanings. This is an important feature of communicative instruction because learners are expected not merely to reproduce predetermined linguistic forms but to use language for personally meaningful purposes.

The result for simulation of real-life communication ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.57$) likewise demonstrates the strong communicative orientation of the classrooms. Teacher accounts provide qualitative corroboration. Teachers reported using individual and group presentations, storytelling, structured dialogues in dyads or triads, information-gap activities, and other activities requiring purposeful use of English. These practices provide opportunities for learners to interact, exchange information, express ideas, and negotiate meaning.

The use of authentic materials received the highest mean in the cluster ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 0.52$). This result suggests that learners regularly encounter materials that connect classroom language learning with language use beyond the immediate instructional setting. The finding is consistent with research cited in the manuscript concerning the role of authentic materials in motivation and language learning, including Yaldaz (2022), Norte (2025), and Vo and Huynh (2024).

In contrast, fluency prioritized over grammatical accuracy obtained the lowest mean in the CLT cluster ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.65$). Although this falls within the Practiced range, it is notably lower than the other CLT indicators. This suggests that grammatical accuracy remains an important consideration in the participating classrooms. The finding does not necessarily contradict CLT. Rather, it suggests that teachers may be adopting a balanced orientation in which meaningful communication is emphasized while formal accuracy continues to receive attention.

The results indicate that learners experience frequent opportunities to communicate, express personal ideas, use authentic materials, and participate in realistic communication. However, the relatively lower rating for prioritizing fluency over accuracy suggests that communicative instruction has been integrated with, rather than substituted for, form-focused learning.

Critical Pedagogy Practices

The third cluster concerns Critical Pedagogy. In the present study, CP extends the objectives of English language teaching beyond communicative competence toward critical thinking, learner agency, social responsibility, and

examination of the relationships among language, culture, identity, and power. This conceptualization is consistent with the broader theoretical framing of Critical Pedagogy in the manuscript (Freire, 1958; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Bozkurt & Topkaya, 2023; Abad-Celleri et al., 2025).

As presented in Table 4, the overall mean of 4.37 indicates that Critical Pedagogy was also Strongly Practiced. Four indicators were rated Strongly Practiced, while attention to language, power, and social structures was rated Practiced.

Table 4. Learners' Perceptions of Critical Pedagogy Practices

CP Practices	M	SD	Interpretation
1. Discussion of societal and global issues	4.56	0.63	SP
2. Critical engagement and learner empowerment	4.24	0.84	SP
3. Critical evaluation of social and cultural aspects of language	4.53	0.63	SP
4. Language use for social change or community improvement	4.40	0.68	SP
5. Language, power, and social structures	4.13	0.75	P
	4.37	-	SP

The strongest indicator was discussion of societal and global issues ($M = 4.56$, $SD = 0.63$). This indicates that learners regularly encounter classroom discussions extending beyond language itself toward issues of social relevance. Teacher interviews strongly corroborate this finding. One teacher explained:

“I personally bring social topics into our class discussions. Topics such as the increasing vulnerabilities of youth in terms of mental health and the social and academic pressure they face, as well as gender issues allows critical thinking and provides an avenue for learners to express their thoughts freely.”

The statement illustrates how English can function as a medium through which learners discuss issues connected to their social realities.

This practice is consistent with Valdez (2020), who argues that socially relevant classroom topics can provide opportunities for learners to express and question social norms and pressing issues while simultaneously developing English language skills. Such an approach moves English instruction beyond the transmission of linguistic knowledge and positions language as a medium for participation in social discourse.

The second-highest CP indicator was critical evaluation of social and cultural aspects of language ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.63$). This finding suggests that learners are exposed to opportunities to consider connections between language, culture, and society. Such a result is particularly relevant in the Philippine context, where English operates within a multilingual and historically postcolonial environment. English instruction in such contexts is connected with broader questions involving colonial legacy, inequality, and access.

The remaining indicators—critical engagement and learner empowerment ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 0.84$), language use for social change or community improvement ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 0.68$), and language, power, and social structures ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 0.75$)—show a more differentiated picture. Notably, the first four indicators remain Strongly Practiced, while explicit attention to language, power, and social structures is only Practiced.

This distinction is theoretically important. The presence of social-issue discussions should not automatically be equated with the full realization of transformative Critical Pedagogy. Critical Pedagogy requires learners to interrogate assumptions, examine relationships of power, question dominant narratives, and potentially use language as a means of agency and social transformation.

The teacher interviews provide useful context for this finding. Teachers reported that learners sometimes experience difficulty engaging with abstract societal issues because of limited background knowledge. Topics such as extrajudicial killings, political dynasties, and press freedom were identified as issues that learners may find difficult to discuss. Critical engagement therefore requires more than linguistic competence; learners also need background knowledge, conceptual resources, confidence, and opportunities to encounter multiple perspectives (Garinto & Valdez, 2019; Madiaga, 2025; Ugalingan, Valdez, & Flores, 2020).

These qualitative findings help explain why explicit attention to language, power, and social structures received the lowest mean in the CP cluster. Teachers may create spaces for learners to discuss socially relevant issues, but moving from discussion of issues toward systematic interrogation of power relations and social structures requires additional conceptual and pedagogical scaffolding.

Nevertheless, the findings indicate that Critical Pedagogy is not absent from the participating classrooms. Garinto and Valdez (2019) and Ugalingan et al. (2020) similarly point to the increasing presence of critical pedagogy and advocacy-oriented English instruction in Philippine English language classrooms. The present findings provide learner-based evidence that social issues and opportunities for expressing views through English are likewise part of classroom experiences in the participating context.

Convergence of TBLT, CLT, and CP in the Context of the State University

The findings indicate that the participating tertiary English language classrooms were characterized by the coexistence and convergence of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and Critical Pedagogy (CP). Rather than appearing as three isolated or mutually exclusive methodologies, the practices reported by learners and described by teachers overlapped in ways that reflect the realities of classroom instruction. The quantitative findings showed that all three orientations were strongly represented: TBLT obtained an overall mean of 4.28 (Strongly Practiced), CLT 4.51 (Strongly Practiced), and CP 4.37 (Strongly Practiced). The teacher interviews provided contextual evidence that helps explain how these orientations were manifested through actual classroom activities. As intended in the study design, these interviews served as supporting qualitative evidence rather than as a separate basis for determining the prevalence of the three approaches.

The qualitative coding further demonstrates that teachers' reported practices were organized around recurring principles of purposeful language use, authentic communication, collaboration, social engagement, and learner expression. Table 5 presents the progression from teacher evidence to initial codes, broader categories, and interpretations.

The TBLT evidence shows that task-based practices extended beyond the simple inclusion of classroom activities. Teachers described activities in which learners were expected to use English to accomplish concrete outcomes, including professional simulations, CV preparation, mock interviews, advocacy campaigns, podcasts, vlogs, and mini-research projects. This qualitative evidence complements the strong learner ratings for real-world task assignment, collaborative task completion, reflection, and performance-based feedback. It also reinforces the conceptualization of TBLT as an approach in which language serves as a resource for accomplishing purposeful and goal-oriented tasks (Nunan, 2004; Baillo et al., 2025). The teacher description that learners were given activities that “require them to accomplish some tasks that will allow them to use the English language” particularly illustrates this orientation, as the emphasis is placed on using language to accomplish something, rather than simply demonstrating knowledge of linguistic forms.

The CLT evidence similarly demonstrates that communication was embedded in a range of interactive classroom activities. Presentations, storytelling, structured dialogues, and information-gap activities provide learners with opportunities to exchange information, express ideas, and interact with others. These practices correspond with the communicative orientation of CLT, which views language as a resource for meaningful communication and interaction rather than as an object of memorization alone (Canale & Swain, 1980; Brumfit, 1986; Qasserras, 2023). The particularly high learner rating for CLT ($M = 4.51$) is therefore consistent with teachers' descriptions of classroom activities that require purposeful and meaningful language use. This convergence is also consistent

with Philippine scholarship documenting communicative strategies in English language instruction (Bargo & Go, 2021; Obenza & Mendoza, 2021).

The qualitative evidence for CP reveals both its presence and its limits. Teachers reported incorporating social and contemporary issues, including youth vulnerability, mental health, social and academic pressure, and gender, into classroom discussions. Such practices create opportunities for learners to express their views and engage with issues that extend beyond language itself. This supports the relatively strong CP rating ($M = 4.37$) and is consistent with the view of Critical Pedagogy as an orientation that positions language learning within broader social, cultural, and ideological realities (Norton & Toohey, 2004; Bozkurt & Topkaya, 2023; Abad-Celleri et al., 2025).

Table 5. Integration of Qualitative Evidence on TBLT, CLT, and CP

Pedagogical Approach	Teacher Evidence/ Condensed Statement	Initial Code	Category/ Theme
TBLT	Teacher described giving activities that require learners to accomplish tasks using English.	Language use for task accomplishment	Purposeful and goal-oriented tasks
	Teacher described a simulation of managing a multicultural classroom using English.	Professional simulation	Authentic professional tasks
	Teacher described CV preparation and mock job interviews.	Employability-oriented task	Real-world/professional communication
	Teachers reported advocacy campaigns, podcasts, vlogs, and mini-research projects.	Collaborative production of tangible outputs	Project-based and collaborative tasks
CLT	Teachers reported individual and group presentations, storytelling, structured dialogues, and information-gap activities.	Interactive language use	Meaningful communication and interaction
	Teachers described activities requiring learners to use English purposefully.	Purposeful communication	Communication-centered instruction
CP	Teacher reported bringing social topics into class discussions, including youth vulnerability, mental health, social and academic pressure, and gender issues.	Socially relevant discussion	Engagement with social realities
	Teacher described using social and contemporary issues to provide an avenue for learners to express their thoughts freely.	Learner voice and expression	Critical participation
	Teachers identified issues such as extrajudicial killings, political dynasties, and press freedom as difficult topics for some learners.	Difficulty engaging with complex issues	Challenges in critical engagement
	Teachers' accounts indicated that learners sometimes struggle with abstract societal issues.	Need for instructional scaffolding	Constraints on critical pedagogy

At the same time, the interview evidence provides an important qualification to the quantitative findings. Teachers identified complex issues such as extrajudicial killings, political dynasties, and press freedom as difficult for some learners to engage with. Learners' struggles with abstract societal issues suggest that exposure to critical topics does not automatically result in deep critical engagement. Meaningful participation in such discussions may require adequate background knowledge, conceptual resources, confidence, and opportunities to encounter multiple perspectives, as also suggested in Philippine discussions of critical pedagogy (Garinto & Valdez, 2019; Madiaga, 2025; Ugalingan, Valdez, & Flores, 2020). Thus, while CP is clearly present in the participating classrooms, its more transformative dimensions, particularly explicit examination of power, empowerment, and the use of language for social change, appear less consistently foregrounded. This distinction is important because the presence of a critical topic should not be equated automatically with the full implementation of Critical Pedagogy.

More importantly, the evidence points to considerable overlap among the three orientations. A mock job interview, for example, can simultaneously be understood as a TBLT activity because learners work toward a concrete professional outcome and as a CLT activity because successful completion requires meaningful interaction. Likewise, advocacy campaigns, podcasts, vlogs, and mini-research projects involve task completion, collaboration, and communication with an audience. When these activities address social or community concerns, they may also incorporate elements of CP. Such overlap is consistent with research associating authentic and collaborative task-based activities with interaction, fluency, and strategic competence (Baillo et al., 2025; Chen, 2025; Sholeh, Nur, & Salija, 2020).

This convergence suggests that teachers in the participating context do not necessarily implement CLT, TBLT, and CP as rigid or exclusive methodological packages. Instead, they appear to draw selectively from the principles of each orientation according to the demands of the lesson, learners, subject matter, and classroom context. Such an interpretation is particularly appropriate given that contemporary English language teaching has increasingly emphasized meaningful, interactive, and socially situated language use.

The findings also point to an important distinction between the presence of a pedagogical orientation and the depth of its implementation. Although all 15 indicators were rated either Practiced or Strongly Practiced, the individual means reveal that certain principles are more strongly embedded than others. In TBLT, authentic and reflective dimensions were particularly strong, whereas positioning task-based instruction explicitly over grammar-focused instruction was less pronounced. In CLT, communication, personal expression, authentic materials, and real-life communication were strongly practiced, while prioritizing fluency over grammatical accuracy was comparatively less pronounced. In CP, discussion of social issues and critical evaluation of sociocultural aspects were strongly practiced, whereas the more explicit dimensions of language, power, empowerment, and social transformation were less strongly established.

The findings suggest that the participating classrooms have moved substantially toward learner-centered, communicative, meaningful, authentic, and socially responsive English language teaching, while retaining some established instructional practices such as attention to grammar. The three approaches therefore appear less as competing alternatives and more as overlapping pedagogical resources that teachers adapt to their particular instructional circumstances. This provides a more nuanced interpretation of contemporary ELT practice in the study context: CLT, TBLT, and CP are not simply “implemented” or “not implemented”; rather, their principles are present to varying degrees and are combined in ways that respond to the needs of learners and the realities of the tertiary classroom. The findings consequently support the argument that contemporary pedagogical approaches in the Philippine tertiary English classroom are being practiced, adapted, and combined rather than adopted as rigid methodological packages.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings indicate that TBLT, CLT, and CP are all evident in the participating tertiary English classrooms, with learner perceptions indicating strong practice across the three orientations. The teacher accounts further show that these approaches are not implemented as rigid or separate methodologies but are selectively combined through authentic tasks, meaningful communication, collaborative activities, and discussions of socially relevant issues. At the same time, the findings point to differences in the depth of implementation: while authentic

communication and purposeful tasks are strongly established, the more explicit dimensions of moving beyond grammar-focused instruction, prioritizing fluency, and engaging learners in questions of power, empowerment, and social transformation have greater room for development.

In light of these findings, teachers are encouraged to deepen the integration of TBLT, CLT, and CP rather than simply increase the number of activities associated with each approach. Authentic and collaborative tasks can be designed to simultaneously promote meaningful communication and critical engagement, while appropriate scaffolding can help learners participate more confidently in complex social discussions. Professional simulations, advocacy projects, podcasts, vlogs, and similar tasks may be further developed to connect English learning with learners' academic, professional, and social realities.

Future instructional planning may therefore focus on creating learning experiences in which English is not only learned as a system of linguistic forms but used to accomplish meaningful tasks, communicate ideas, examine social realities, and, where appropriate, explore possibilities for social action. Given the context-specific nature of the study, further research involving other tertiary institutions, larger groups of learners, and additional sources of classroom evidence may help determine how these integrated pedagogical practices can be strengthened across diverse Philippine English language teaching contexts.

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