

1 The Role of Clt in Innovating the Intensive Reading Course for 2 Second-Year English Majors in China

3 Dayan Liu¹

4 ¹ Chongqing Jiaotong University

5 *Received: 13 December 2016 Accepted: 5 January 2017 Published: 15 January 2017*

6 **Abstract**

7 Since its initiation in the 1970s, communicative language teaching (CLT) has so far been well
8 established as the dominant ELT model. Despite its great advantages and huge popularity in
9 language teaching arena, it still meets with some resistance in certain highly-regarded yet
10 tightly-constrained courses. This paper intends to explore the possibility of applying CLT in
11 such a course in the Chinese context, i.e. the Intensive Reading Course (IRC), and the
12 potential to initiate some changes in the course. The paper starts by probing CLT
13 theoretically, analyzing its social and linguistic underpinnings, some key models of
14 communicative competence, the major principles and features of CLT, as well as some
15 theoretical problems and issues. It then discusses the innovation of IRC in a CLT framework,
16 in such areas as reading materials, learner-centredness, communicative activities and teacher
17 training, with a view to pushing for possible reforms in the teaching syllabus and assessment
18 for the course.

20 **Index terms**— communicative language teaching (clt); communicative competence; english language teaching
(elt); intensive reading course (irc)

21 The Role of Clt in Innovating the Intensive Reading Course for Second-Year English Majors in China
22 Introduction ver since the 1970s, communicative language teaching (CLT) has gained momentum and now "is
23 well established as the dominant theoretical model in ELT [English language teaching]" ??Thompson, 1996: 9).
24 The popularity of CLT can be explained in part by the perception of the main function of language, which is, as
25 Richards and Rodgers (2001: 161) point out, "interaction and communication". Communication and the role of
26 language in it are thus given greater prominence in language teaching.

27 CLT was also introduced to remedy the deficiencies found in previous rule-or structure-based methods, such as
28 grammar-translation method, audiolingual method, the direct method, etc. (Bax, 2003), which were discredited
29 for "their inability to prepare learners for the interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning" ??Savignon,
30 2013: 138). CLT, in contrast, is given credit because its key concept of communicative competence "revolutionized
31 language teaching by redefining its goals and the methods to achieve them" ??Littlewood, 2011: 545).

32 Originating in Europe and the United States, CLT, as "a more functional and practical approach to language
33 education", is now gaining worldwide recognition from educators ??Duff, 2014: 20). However, its application in
34 some Asian countries (see Littlewood, 2007) has met with problems, especially in face of the fact that traditional
35 grammar-based approaches still have a strong hold and there are practical constraints in specific teaching contexts.

36 This study explores the possibility of applying CLT in a Chinese context for a specific course, i.e. the Intensive
37 Reading Course (IRC), which is viewed to have the most constraints and is thus the hardest to initiate changes.
38 The paper first reviews CLT theoretically. It then outlines IRC and raises some issues of applying CLT in the
39 course. Last, the paper discusses what innovations towards a more communicative approach can be introduced
40 to the course, in an attempt to push for deeper reforms in such areas as the teaching syllabus and assessment.

43 1 II.

44 A Theoretical Review of CLT a) Theoretical underpinnings i. Social and linguistic underpinnings Starting in the
45 1970s, the CLT movement was attributed to a number of factors, mainly social needs in Europe and the United
46 States, and developments in some academic disciplines, such as linguistics and psychology (Duff, 2014).

47 Socially, "a very pragmatic and learner-centered approach" was required to respond to the needs of migrants
48 to learn languages for practical purposes, such as job seeking and interaction with others, etc. ??Duff, 2014:
49 18). Savignon (2013) documents the concurrent developments of CLT in both Europe and the United States,
50 picturing social and linguistic contexts.

51 Meanwhile, linguistics exhibited some social and functional orientations. Particularly, the work of two linguists,
52 Halliday and Hymes, "was seminal in laying the conceptual basis of CLT" ??Littlewood, 2011: 543). ??alliday
53 (1973 ??alliday (, 1978)) researched sociosemantic domains of language, who holds that linguistic goals are
54 socially oriented ??Canale & Swain: 1980: 19). Hymes' (1972) "communicative competence", proposed in
55 opposition to Chomsky's pure linguistic competence, consists of four types of knowledge and abilities, namely,
56 grammatical, psycholinguistic, sociocultural and probabilistic systems of competence ??Canale & Swain: 1980:
57 16). Hymes' concept "may be seen as the equivalent of Halliday's meaning potential" ??Savignon, 2013: 135).
58 Communicative competence later became the central concept and goal of ??LT (Richards, 2006). Canale and
59 Swain (1980) found that their theories failed to be integrative, with discourse-level connection of individual
60 utterances neglected and components of communicative competence unintegrated. ii. Models of communicative
61 competence

62 2 a. Canale and Swain model

63 Discovering limitations of many so-called integrative theories, Canale and Swain (1980) proposed their own
64 framework of communicative competence, which is made up of three key components: first, grammatical
65 competence, which includes lexical, morphological, syntactic, semantic and phonological knowledge; second,
66 sociolinguistic competence, which encompasses sociocultural rules and rules of discourse, the former dictating
67 the contextually appropriate ways of producing and understanding utterances and the latter being understood
68 in terms of the cohesion and coherence of utterances; third, strategic competence, which consists principally of
69 verbal and non-verbal communicative strategies, at play when there are breakdowns in communication. ??anale
70 (1983) later added discourse competence to the framework, accenting texts at the discourse level ??Duff, 2014:
71 19).

72 3 b. Other models of communicative competence

73 Other models of communicative competence are more or less based on or influenced by Canale and Swain model,
74 re-labeling the terminology, regrouping the components, or adding some more. Littlewood (2011) slightly adapts
75 their terminology and adds one more dimension, in whose version there are linguistic, discourse, pragmatic,
76 sociolinguistic and sociocultural competence. Saville and Hargreaves (1999) also draw on Canale and Swain model,
77 describing the spoken language ability in terms of language competence and strategic competence. ??achman
78 (1990) (Littlewood, 2011). New types are continuously being added, such as intercultural communicative
79 competence (Alptekin, 2002), metaphoric competence (Littlemore & Low, 2006), interactional competence
80 (Young, 2008).

81 4 b) Principles and key features

82 The aforementioned models of communicative competence can be used as frameworks for teachers to conduct
83 CLT classes. CLT "is best considered an approach rather than a method", in which a number of principles are
84 formulated to guide classroom procedures (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 172):

85 ? Learners learn a language through using it to communicate ? Authentic and meaningful communication
86 should be the goal of classroom activities. ? Fluency is an important dimension of communication.

87 ? Communication involves the integration of different language skills. ? Learning is a process of creative
88 construction and involves trial and error.

89 (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 172) Those principles stress communication and the learner. Communication is
90 not only the goal of class activities, but also the means by which to learn a language, whose key elements are the
91 integration of language skills and fluency. The principles also approach pedagogy from a learner's perspective to
92 "reflect a communicative view of language and language learning" (ibid.).

93 Lately, informed by psycholinguistic research findings, Dörnyei (2009: 41-42) works out seven principles of
94 what he terms "the principled communicative approach (PCA)" to reflect "the state of the art of our research
95 knowledge of instructed second language acquisition". The essence of this approach, as Dörnyei (2009: 42) puts it,
96 is "the creative integration of meaningful communication with relevant declarative input and the automatisation
97 of both linguistic rules and lexical items".

98 Two versions of CLT are developed, originating from different language teaching and learning traditions.
99 A strong version, in the American tradition, resorts more to experiential strategies, i.e. to learn through
100 communication, whereas a weak version, in the European tradition, employs function-and grammarbased analytic
101 strategies along with experiential strategies (Littlewood, 2011). Simply speaking, a weak version drives at

102 "learning to use" English while a strong one at "using English to learn it" (Howatt, 1984: 279, cited in Richards
103 and Rodgers, 2001: 155). A typical strong version is task-based language teaching (TBL) (see Willis, 1996; Ellis,
104 2003; ??unan, 2004, Long, 2015) and a weak version is Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) model (see
105 Skehan, 1996, Harmer, 2007), which has increasingly been discredited ??Richards, 2006). All four components
106 reflect "interrelated aspects" of speakers' ability to put language to effective use for communicative purposes
107 and the endeavour to "operationalize communicative competence" for instructional purposes ??Duff, 2014: 19).
108 ??ittlewood (2011: 546) believes that Canale and Swain model is still "[A]n important orientational framework
109 in discussions of the nature of communicative competence in a second language".

110 **5 Volume XVII Issue VII Version I**

111 **6 Year 2017 c) Problems and issues**

112 In light of its well-recognised benefits and the positive results reported in some earlier research projects (Savignon,
113 2013), CLT is widely accepted in the language teaching profession and remains popular today. However, there
114 are still some issues about CLT, such as its indefinability, conflict with form-focused instruction and context-free
115 prescriptions, with the Chinese context brought to the fore.

116 **7 i. Issue of indefinability**

117 One problem with CLT is its identity issue, i.e. there is not a uniform definition of CLT, which can refer to
118 "an increasingly diverse array of practices, principles, and contexts" ??Duff, 2014: 20). ??armer (2003: 289)
119 agrees that it means "a multitude of different things to different people". Richards and Rodgers (2001: 155)
120 therefore conclude that "[T]here is no single text or authority on it, nor any single model that is universally
121 accepted as authoritative". This ambiguity gives rise to the situations in which different people focus on different
122 characteristics of CLT and there is a discrepancy between the principles accepted by teachers and their actual
123 classroom practice (Sakui, 2004; Beaumont & Chang, 2011).

124 **8 ii. Conflict with form-focused instruction iii. Context-free 125 application**

126 Another problem with CLT is that it does not give due attention to the teaching context. Duff (2014: 28)
127 questions its omnipotence, arguing that "[C]learly CLT cannot offer a common template or prescription for all
128 L2 teaching and learning contexts, all the different ages and stages of learners, or all the different purposes for
129 learning". Similarly, Bax (2003: 278) criticises the "CLT attitude" adopted by many language teachers, warning
130 that "the consequences of this are serious, to the extent that we need to demote CLT as our main paradigm?".
131 Aware of this danger, some scholars have researched CLT in specific contexts, such as in China (Hu, 2002(Hu,
132 , 2005)), Japan (Sakui, 2004), South Korea (Beaumont & Chang, 2011) or East Asia as a whole (Littlewood,
133 2007). Those studies further attest to the view that CLT means "a multitude of different things to different
134 people" ??Harmer, 2003: 289).

135 **9 iv. Application in China and other constraints**

136 In a context-specific approach, Beaumont and Chang (2011: 294) list some practical constraints on implementing
137 CLT shared in Asian classrooms, such as big class size, unsuitable materials, grammar-focused exams, limited
138 time, inadequate training and teacher's lack of confidence in language skills. Studying the Chinese context, Hu
139 (2002: 93) acknowledges that CLT was introduced in an effort to reform its ELT but it "has failed to make
140 the expected impact on ELT in the PRC [China]". He approaches this issue from a sociocultural perspective
141 and probes into one constraint, i.e. the Chinese culture of learning (*ibid.*). Other constraints relevant to the
142 implementation of CLT in China include teacher education, the huge gap between different regions in the quality
143 of English teaching, etc. (Hu, 2005).

144 **10 III. Basic Information of Intensive**

145 Reading Course (IRC) In the Chinese context of ELT, IRC is one of the core courses for English majors at the
146 foundation stage, which has the tightest constraints and is hence one of the toughest areas to implement CLT.

147 **11 a) An overview of IRC**

148 IRC is offered under The National Curricula for English Majors in Higher Education Institutions (2000) (hereafter
149 The Curricula). The Curricula (2000: 1) serves "as the guidelines for English majors in the higher education
150 institutions of various kinds in the country".

151 The 4-year undergraduate program for English majors is divided into the foundation stage (1 st -2 nd year) and
152 the advanced stage (3 rd -4 th year). The foundation stage aims to lay a solid foundation for the advanced stage
153 by teaching the basics of English, training the basic language skills, improving students' language competence,
154 etc. (The Curricula, 2000: 2). As to teaching methodology, The Curricula clearly stipulates that teachers

155 should encourage students' active participation in "various communicative activities" to cultivate "the basic
156 communicative skills" and fulfill the objectives specified for basic language skills (e.g. listening, speaking, reading,
157 writing and translation) (The Curricula, 2000: 23).

158 IRC, also called Close Reading Course, Essential English or Basic English in different institutions, is defined
159 as "an integrated language skill training course" offered at the foundation stage, with the teaching aim being
160 "to cultivate and improve students' ability of an integrated use of English skills" (The Curricula, 2000: 23). Its
161 objectives touch upon vocabulary, sentence patterns, genres, reading comprehension, etc., as prescribed in The
162 Curricula ??2000: 23). The course description quite evidently shows that vocabulary and grammar are still
163 stressed in IRC, It seems that there is a clear divide between CLT and the traditional form-focused instruction,
164 as is evidenced by communicative competence underlying CLT. In the early years of CLT, the avoidance of
165 form-focused instruction was almost a consensus among proponents of CLT. However, the avoidance of explicit
166 grammar teaching is seen by ??hompson (1996: 10) as "the most persistent?and most damaging?misconception".
167 ??örnyei (2009: 41) in his PCA advocates finding the "optimal balance between meaning-based and form-focused
168 activities". Littlewood (2011) tries to integrate the two, giving equal weight to language experiences and language
169 analysis. along with reading comprehension ability and an awareness of genres.

170 12 b) Issues of applying CLT in IRC i. Course syllabus

171 Under The Curricula, each institution might have its own course syllabus for IRC, but follows a similar format,
172 with such key elements as basic information (e.g. course type, code, etc.), course nature and task (e.g. aims
173 and requirements, focal and difficult points, etc.), and teaching content, in which text titles are listed with key
174 words and grammar focuses in each text. This type of syllabus bears features of a Type A syllabus categorised
175 by ??hite (1988: 44), which is not appropriate for CLT. First, it is still determined by authority, with teachers
176 as decision-makers and objectives set in advance. Further, it focuses on what is to be learnt rather than how.
177 It gives priority to "analytic L2 knowledge" about language parts, rules and organization, which is not ready in
178 use in spontaneous communication or "unplanned discourse", where "there is no time or opportunity to prepare
179 what will be said" ??White, 1988: 46).

180 13 ii. Coursebooks

181 Guided by The Curricula, the IRC coursebooks adhere to similar writing principles and even formats. They either
182 simply number the texts or group them under specific themes, all spelling out the vocabulary and grammar to
183 be mastered in each text or unit. Furthermore, those texts, mostly classic or literary texts and often abridged or
184 adapted to cater to students' level of proficiency, are not "authentic (nonpedagogic) texts" linked to the real-world
185 communication ??Littlewood, 2011: 549).

186 14 iii. National exam

187 When students finish the foundation stage (2 nd year), they will be assessed by a standard national test, Test
188 for English Majors -Grade 4 (TEM4). The test is set under The Syllabus for TEM4 (2004) (hereafter The ST4)
189 and aims to give students an overall assessment on the language skills specified in The Curricula, an integrated
190 use of those basic skills and their mastery of grammar and vocabulary (The ST4: 2004: 2).

191 The test takes the form of a 130-minute written test, consisting of 6 question types, such as cloze, grammar
192 and vocabulary, reading comprehension, etc. (The ST4: 2004: 3). Strangely, when The ST4 (2004: 2) stipulates
193 the scope of the test, it leaves out the speaking skill, which is clearly set as a teaching objective in The Curricula.
194 That being the case, how to assess an integrated use of all the skills? In Savignon's (2013: 137) words, "learner
195 performance on tests of discrete morphosyntactic features was not a good predictor of their performance on a
196 series of integrative communicative tasks". This high-stakes test has a "negative washback" effect ??Duff, 2014:
197 25). On the one hand, teachers have to cater to students' need to sit the written test, which still rewards lexical
198 and grammatical knowledge. On the other hand, since the test is "a standard informative test to assess teaching
199 quality" (The ST4: 2004: 2), teachers have to compromise the principles of CLT to return to the traditional
200 study of grammar, vocabulary and texts.

201 15 iv. Traditional IRC teaching procedure

202 Since IRC has been a core course ever since the 1990s, it has some distinct characteristics of traditional English
203 teaching in China. Typically, teachers of IRC follow a 6-step teaching procedure In step 1, lead-in section, there
204 are pre-reading discussions or activities. In step 2, text introduction, teachers introduce the author, background
205 information and the synopsis. Step 3, text study, is a detailed study of important language points, e.g. words'
206 meanings and usage, grammar structures. At the text level, teachers explain the main and supporting ideas,
207 implications and cultural information to help students with their text comprehension. In step 4, exercises,
208 teachers check the textbook exercises, followed by a dictation or quiz. In step 5, writing, the written work is
209 often a short essay of about 200 words on a text-related topic or theme. In step 6, further reading materials are
210 supplied to help students deepen their understanding of the text or related themes.

211 This procedure shows that there really is not much space for communicative activities or even speaking
212 opportunities for students. It is characteristic of a teacher-fronted instruction, often found in grammartranslation
213 method, though a communicative approach is clearly directed in The Curricula.

214 **16 IV.**

215 Innovation of IRC in a CLT Framework ??u (2004: 43) Step 1: lead-in section 6-step teaching procedure of IRC
216 Step 2: text introduction
217 Step 3: text study
218 Step 4: exercises
219 Step 5: writing
220 Step 6: further reading aforementioned constraints and issues, it is quite hard to implement CLT fully in
221 IRC, especially in such a topdown manner. However, it is possible that innovations in a CLT framework can
222 be fostered in certain respects, such as reading materials, learner-centredness, teaching procedure and teacher
223 training, in an effort to push for greater changes in the course, e.g. course syllabus and test format.

224 **17 a) Reading materials**

225 Using authentic texts is one of the key principles of CLT (Duff, 2014). The word "authentic", literally meaning
226 "genuine", as opposed to "contrived", "bookish", or "artificial", designates naturally-produced written or spoken
227 language and also the communication in which such language is used ??Duff, 2014: 22). Richards (2006: 20)
228 lists four major benefits of authentic sources, i.e. they provide cultural information, exposure, a closer link to
229 learners' needs and a more creative approach to teaching.

230 As supplementary materials to the contrived texts in IRC coursebooks, it is desirable that authentic texts are
231 provided wherever possible in the teaching procedure, in line with the view that "[T]he purpose of reading should
232 be the same in class as they are in real life" ??Richards, 2006: 20). The suggested authentic materials for IRC
233 are magazine or newspaper articles, unabridged literary works, etc. as long as they "represent contemporary
234 written language produced or used by native speakers for purposes other than language teaching" ??Duff, 2014:
235 22-23).

236 Those authentic texts can be used to cultivate communicative competence, in this case, sociolinguistic
237 competence in terms of the rules of discourse, which are understood from the perspectives of "cohesion (i.e.
238 grammatical links) and coherence (i.e. appropriate combination of communicative functions)" ??Canale & Swain,
239 1980: 30). Teachers can analyse and teach conventions of global text structure above sentence level.

240 At the same time, grammatical competence should not be neglected, which embraces "knowledge of lexical
241 items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology" ??Canale & Swain, 1980:
242 29). They can be integrated into the study of the reading materials, as ??anale and Swain (1980: 30) insist that
243 it be "an important concern for any communicative approach whose goals include providing learners with the
244 knowledge of how to determine and express accurately the literal meaning of utterances".

245 **18 b) Learner-centredness**

246 Learner-centredness is an essential quality of CLT classroom. The transition from a teacher-centred instruction to
247 a student-centred CLT is described as "a quantum leap" (Chow & Mok-Cheung, 2004: 158, cited in Littlewood,
248 2011: 551). Learner-centred approaches are those that "take into account learners' backgrounds, language needs
249 and goals, and generally allow learners some creativity and role in instructional decisions" (Wesche & Skehan,
250 2002: 208, cited in Littlewood, 2011: 549).

251 Learner-centredness can be realised through students' greater involvement in the learning process. CLT
252 requires students to "take on a greater degree of responsibility for their own learning" (Richards, 2006: 5).
253 Accordingly, in IRC, students can be entrusted with some of the tasks originally assumed by the teacher. For
254 instance, the text introduction section (step 2) can be alternatively done by students after adequate preparation.
255 Additionally, greater involvement is achieved through "a cooperative rather than individualistic approach to
256 learning" (Richards, 2006: 5). Some of the IRC procedures, such as exercises (step 4), writing (step 5) and
257 further reading (step 6), which depend largely on individual work, can become "cooperative learning" in the form
258 of pair or group work (Littlewood, 2011; ??ichards & Rodgers, 2001).

259 IRC can be made more learner-centred by relating class content to the outside world and students' own lives,
260 interests and perspectives (Duff, 2014), in other words, to ensure social relevance (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). ??uff
261 (2014: 24) once observed a CLT class of English for academic purposes at a Canadian university, in which this
262 principle was applied and good learner feedbacks were reported that "they appreciated being able to discuss real-
263 life problems, learn more about Canadian society and culture, talk about issues that are personally meaningful
264 to them?".

265 **19 c) Communicative activities**

266 Communicative activities are central to CLT class. By ??anale and Swain's (1980: 33) standards, they should
267 be meaningful and have the characteristics of "genuine communication", such as "basis in social interaction, the
268 relative creativity and unpredictability of utterances, its purposefulness and goal-orientation, and its authenticity

21 CONCLUSION

269 ?". Richards (2006: 16) distinguishes 3 types of practice, namely, mechanical, meaningful and communicative
270 practice, with the last type referring to activities to use language in real communicative situations where "there is
271 information change and unpredictable language use". This type is similar to ??littlewood's (1981) communicative
272 activities, which are subdivided into functional communication activities, for information or problem-solving
273 purposes, and social interactional activities, attending to contexts and participants as well as the appropriate use
274 of language ??Richards, 2006:18).

275 Richards (2006) lists the activities typically used in CLT classrooms. When applied in IRC classroom, they
276 can be adapted and geared to genres, as exemplified in the following: firstly, for narrative texts, information-
277 gap activities or role plays; secondly, for expository texts, task-completion activities (e.g. puzzles, map-reading,
278 games), information-transfer activities (e.g. from written descriptions to graphs) or reasoninggap activities (e.g.
279 inference, practical reasoning); thirdly, for argumentation, opinion-sharing activities (e.g. a ranking task) or
280 information-gathering activities (e.g. surveys, searches and interviews). Preferably, communicative activities are
281 as varied as possible, subject to different texts, contents or topics.

282 Those communicative activities have great advantages. Firstly, they encourage cooperative learning in "a
283 variety of social participation formats" ??Duff, 2014: 24), with such benefits as a great amount of language
284 produced, higher motivational level, more chance for fluency development, exposure to other language learners'
285 input ??Richards, 2006: 20). Secondly, they are able to "facilitate negotiated interaction" (Kumaravadivelu,
286 2003), in which information is exchanged, problem solved, appropriateness of language use stressed (Littlewood,
287 2011) and creativity promoted (Harmer, 2003). Further, students need to negotiate meanings with others to
288 develop communicative abilities (Duff, 2014). In brief, those activities conform to Richards' (2006: 13) principle
289 of "[make] real communication the focus of language learning".

290 20 d) Teacher training

291 Teachers play a key role in initiating changes in the classroom. Teacher training is therefore of primary
292 importance, which covers such aspects as a correct understanding of CLT, a change of teachers' roles and the
293 improvement of their language proficiency. Firstly, teachers should thoroughly understand the CLT framework,
294 including its characteristics, benefits and limitations (Harmer, 2003). This task becomes even more urgent in light
295 of the fact that CLT is often misunderstood or misinterpreted, largely due to its identity issue. In an early study
296 of CLT classroom, Spada (1987) reported a mismatch between teachers' self-claims of CLT teaching processes
297 and actual practices which were similar to traditional approaches ??Duff, 2014: 25). Similarly, imparities are
298 found in Sakui's (2004: 162) study of language teaching in Japan between "the teachers' definition of CLT and
299 the situated understanding of CLT".

300 Secondly, teachers should be educated in the change of roles. Traditionally, they are simply viewed as
301 knowledge-transmitters or "a model for correct speech and writing", who also have the responsibility of making
302 students' production accurate ??Richards, 2006: 5). Yet, in a CLT classroom, a teacher is supposed to be "a
303 multi-role educator" (Littlewood, 2011: 551), a facilitator in language learning (Richards, 2006: 5), "an instigator
304 of and participant in meaningful communication" ??Canale & Swain: 1980: 33). Overall, a teacher's principal
305 role is "to create a nurturing, collaborative learning community and worthwhile activities for students" ??Duff,
306 2014: 20).

307 Thirdly, the improvement of teachers' language proficiency is clearly marked as one of the expected changes
308 from teachers in China (Littlewood, 2011). CLT has quite high demands on teachers' language proficiency (Maley,
309 1986) and that teachers are not always confidently competent in their English often makes them feel reluctant to
310 carry out communicative activities (Beaumont & Chang, 2011). ??anale and Swain (1980: 33) also suggest that
311 teacher training should cultivate communicative competence as well as its components, as they put it, "Certainly
312 such teacher training will be crucial to the success of a communicative approach?".

313 V.

314 21 Conclusion

315 CLT is generally believed to be employed for teaching language for communicative purposes. It therefore seems
316 more suitable to be applied in speaking courses. The possibility to apply CLT in other courses has not been
317 explored enough. This study shows that it is even possible to implement CLT in a reading course like IRC
318 with quite tight constraints. Nevertheless, many issues about the implementation of CLT are still hotly debated,
319 such as the relation between form-focus instruction and CLT, or that between controlled practice activities and
320 communicative activities, context-specific adaptation of CLT principles, just to name a few.

321 As regards an overall view of CLT, Savignon (2013: 138) argues that instead of being another "method"
322 just added to the previous ones, CLT represents "an approach to language teaching" that changes in purpose,
323 emphasis, linguistic and cultural goals of instruction. Littlewood (2011) acknowledges that CLT is constantly
324 evolving. He suggests "a more inclusive account of CLT", trying to integrate experiential and analytical aspects
325 of teaching and learning, noncommunicative and genuine communicative activities, oral and written activities
326 ??Littlewood, 2011: 549). CLT should not be seen as the panacea for all the problems in language pedagogy.
327 Since the ultimate aim of CLT is to promote better teaching and learning, whatever the label is, be it CLT or not,

328 does not matter much. This perception might keep CLT full of vitality and in constant evolution to accommodate
329 more changes and innovations in the future.¹

¹The Role of Clt in Innovating the Intensive Reading Course for Second-Year English Majors in China © 2017
Global Journals Inc. (US)

330 [Willis and ; R ()] 'A framework for task-based learning'. J R Willis , ; R . *Language and Interaction* 1996. 2008.
331 Longman Young. p. Routledge.

332 [Skehan ()] 'A Framework for the Implementation of Task-based Instruction'. P Skehan . *Applied Linguistics*,
333 1996. 17 p. .

334 [Maley ()] 'A Rose is a Rose'. A Maley . *or is it?: can communicative competence be taught?* in Brumfit, C, J
335 C Richards, T S Rodgers (ed.) (Oxford; Nunan, David; Cambridge; Richards, J. C.; Cambridge; Cambridge)
336 1986. 19. 2004. 2006. 2001. Cambridge University Press. 20. () *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*.
337 nd ed.)

338 [Saville and Hargreaves ()] 'Assessing speaking in the revised FCE'. N Saville , P Hargreaves . *ELT Journal* 1999.
339 53 (1) p. .

340 [Kumaravadivelu ()] *Beyond methods: Macrostrategies for language teaching*, B Kumaravadivelu . 2003. New
341 Haven: Yale University Press.

342 [Beaumont and Chang ()] 'Challenging the traditional/communicative dichotomy'. Mike Beaumont , Kyung-Suk
343 Chang . *ELT Journal* 2011. 65 (3) p. .

344 [Hu ()] 'CLT is best for China"? an untenable absolutist claim'. G Hu . *ELT Journal* 2005. 59 (1) p. .

345 [Littlewood ()] *Communicative and taskbased language teaching in East Asian classrooms*, *Language Teaching*,
346 W Littlewood . 2007. 40 p. .

347 [Savignon (ed.) ()] *Communicative language teaching*, S J Savignon . Byram, M. & Hu, Adelheid (ed.) 2013.

348 [Littlewood ()] 'Communicative language teaching: An expanding concept for a changing world'. W Littlewood
349 . *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning*, E Hinkel (ed.) (New York; NY) 2011.
350 Routledge.

351 [Ellis ()] Rod Ellis . *Task-based language learning and teaching*, (Oxford) 2003. Oxford University Press.

352 [Harmer ()] Jeremy Harmer . *How to teach English*, (Harlow) 2007. Pearson Longman. (New ed.)

353 [Long ()] Michael H Long . *Second language acquisition and task-based language teaching*, (Oxford) 2015. Wiley-
354 Blackwell.

355 [Littlemore and Low ()] 'Metaphoric competence and communicative language ability'. J Littlemore , G Low .
356 *Applied Linguistics*, 2006. 27 p. .

357 [Hu ()] 'Pedagogical practices in Chinese EFL classrooms'. G Hu . *Asian Englishes* 2004. 7 (1) p. .

358 [Harmer ()] 'Popular culture, methods, and context'. Jeremy Harmer . *ELT Journal* 2003. 57 (3) p. .

359 [Hu ()] 'Potential cultural resistance to pedagogical imports: the case of communicative language teaching in
360 China'. G Hu . *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 2002. 15 (2) p. .

361 [Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning] *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and
362 Learning*, (London) p. Routledge. (2nd ed.)

363 [Thompson ()] 'Some misconceptions about communicative language teaching'. Geoff Thompson . *ELT Journal*
364 1996. 50 (1) p. .

365 [Duff ()] 'Teaching English as a second or Foreign Language'. Patricia A Duff . *National Geographic Learning*
366 Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, Donna M. & Snow, Marguerite A. (ed.) 2014. (4) . (Communicative Language
367 Teaching. th ed.)

368 [Dörnyei ()] 'The 2010s communicative language teaching the twenty-first century: the principled communicative
369 approach'. Z Dörnyei . *Perspectives* 2009. 36 (2) p. .

370 [Bax ()] 'The end of CLT: A context approach to language teaching'. Stephen Bax . *ELT Journal* 2003. 2017. 57
371 (3) p. .

372 [The English Group of the National Foreign Language Teaching Advisory Board ()] *The English Group of the
373 National Foreign Language Teaching Advisory Board*, 2000. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education
374 Press. The National Curricula for English Majors in Higher Education Institutions

375 [The revision group of The Syllabus for TEM4 The Syllabus for ()] 'The revision group of The Syllabus for
376 TEM4'. *The Syllabus for* 2004. Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press. 4.

377 [Canale and Swain ()] 'Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing'.
378 M Canale , M Swain . *Applied Linguistics* 1980. 1 (1) p. .

379 [Alptekin ()] 'Towards intercultural communicative competence in ELT'. Cem Alptekin . *ELT Journal* 2002. 56
380 (1) p. .

381 [Sakui ()] 'Wearing two pairs of shoes: language teaching in Japan'. K Sakui . *ELT Journal* 2004. 58 (2) p. .

382 [White ()] R White . *The ELT Curriculum: Design, Innovation and Management*, (Oxford) 1988. Basil Blackwell.